

Auburn University at Montgomery Honors Program & College of Education *Costa Rican Ecosystems and Culture*

May 26-June 2, 2020

Join us on an eight-day study abroad experience in Costa Rica. All students will study tropical ecology and Costa Rican culture. The experience will include service-learning projects that will be completed in area elementary schools.

Education majors will develop elementary science curriculum related to rainforest ecology.

Honors students will study tropical ecology and Costa Rican culture through an interdisciplinary approach that includes Costa Rican tropical ecology, politics, history, and literature.



Program cost per AUM student: \$2,226.00.

The Office of Global Initiatives will provide funding of \$500 to the first eight students who pay their deposit (If you sign up for the course credit, you must also pay AUM tuition for the course.)

Site locations include La Selva Biological Station, Sevla Verde, and San Jose. Lodging, meals, transportation, and on-site course fees are included in the program costs. Activities include tropical rainforest exploration with guides provided by the Organization for Tropical Studies and service activities at several local elementary schools. A complete schedule of activities is provided on following page of this document.

Hours/Credit:

- Education: ECEL 4973/6973 (1-3 hrs.) optional
- Honors: HONR 1957 (1 hr.)

Contact: Dr. Nicholas Bourke at nbourke@aum.edu or Dr. Lynn Stallins at lstallin@aum.edu

Deadlines:

- November 18, 2019: Application deadline
- February 28, 2020: Balance of cost due.
- Accepted students will be required to pay a \$500 deposit.
- Interested students should complete page 2 of this document.

AUM Study Abroad Student Application (Faculty-Led)

109 Administration Building

334-244-3544

studyabroad@aum.edu

Requirements for Acceptance into the AUM Study Abroad Program

1. Minimum institutional cumulative GPA of 2.75 for undergraduate students, 3.0 for graduate and professional students
2. Age 19 before the start date of the program
3. No pending judicial actions and be in good academic standing. Students with pending judicial actions will not be eligible for AUM Study Abroad program enrollment
4. Complete all forms and return them to your faculty director by the specific date

Last Name:

First/Middle:

AUM E-Mail:

AUM S#:

Date of Birth:

Gender:

Male

Female

Program City:

Program Country:

Program Period:

AUM Sponsor:

Personal information:

Current Level:

FR

SO

JR

SR

Grad Student

PT

Major:

College of

GPA:

Permanent Mailing Address in the US:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone:

Citizenship:

I hereby certify that the above information is true and correct. I understand the purpose and the activities of this program and will adhere to the program policies, preparation and on-site requirements of this program. I understand that I am responsible for paying the ***nonrefundable program fees*** and I understand the refund and cancellations policies of this program.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

As the student's adviser, I have checked the student's GPA and verify that the information given in this application is true and the student is eligible to study abroad with AUM.

Academic Adviser Signature: _____

Date: _____

Itinerary-May 26-June 2

Costa Rican Culture and Ecology

Day 1 (Travel to Costa Rica. Evening in La Selva)

Tuesday, May 26

Participants travel to San Jose, Costa Rica and are oriented to their first site-the La Selva Biological Station. They also visit Puerto Viejo and are welcomed into the home of a Costa Rican family for a meal and sharing of culture.

Depart Atlanta at 6:00 AM for San Jose. Arrive 12:00 PM.

Arrive La Selva Biological Research Station. Meet with station staff for orientation.

PM-Trip to the local village of Puerto Viejo (Pharmacy/Grocery store, etc.)

Costa Rican cooking class organized through the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center.

Students will prepare a typical Costa Rican meal with a local family in their home to experience first-hand the culture of the region.

Day 2 (Rainforest/Bats at La Selva)

Wednesday, May 27

Participants explore the tropical rainforest ecosystem and are treated to first-hand experiences with local bat species.

AM and PM: Rainforest exploration with the staff of La Selva. Participants visit an old growth tropical rain forest to experience the unique biome. As we explore the forest, our guide will help us locate and identify the various species of plants and animals that make up the forest ecosystem and we will experience first-hand the amazing ecological interactions that take place in this unique biome.

Night "Bat program" at La Selva. A local bat researcher will set-up mist nets with our group as we capture and identify the local bat species. Our group will also learn about the adaptations of the various bat species and their importance to the ecosystem.

Day 3 (White Water Rafting and Night Hike at La Selva)

Thursday, May 28

Participants will explore the Sarapiquí River via raft and end the day with a night hike conducted by OTS guides.

AM and PM: Our group will enjoy a white-water kayaking tour with Green Rivers. The staff of Green Rivers will lead us on an expedition of the Sarapiquí River to experience this unique biome focusing on the plants, animals, and ecological interactions of the various biological communities there. At mid-day, we will stop along the river for lunch with a local family.

Evening: After the sun sets, the staff of La Selva will lead us on a "night hike". The nocturnal animals will be active, and we will have a chance to experience first-hand the unique adaptations of these organisms to the night.

Day 4 (School visit and service project at Selva Verde)

Friday, May 29

Participants participate in a service project at a local elementary school in which they observe an elementary classroom and have the opportunity to teach.

Our group will transfer to the Selva Verde Lodge located near La Selva. Our hosts from the Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center will pick us up and transport us to a local elementary school. There we will have a chance to observe classroom teachers as they interact with their pupils. We will also have a chance to teach the children English lessons that we will prepare prior to our trip. Our group will also serve lunch to the pupils and school staff and finish the school day with a group activity.

Day 5 (Morning Float tour, Zip line, and Chocolate Tour)

Saturday, May 30

Participants rise early for a float tour of a local stream, explore the rainforest canopy during a zip line experience, and tour a local sustainable farm involved in the production of chocolate.

AM: Morning river float tour: Green Rivers will guide us on rafts as we silently float down a branch of the Sarapiquí River. The early morning experience will allow us to observe the animals when they are the most active. Their expert guides will help us locate and identify the various life forms present and point out the unique aspects of the stream community
PM: The staff of Green Rivers will organize a zip line experience for us through the rainforest canopy. This unique activity gives us a chance to see the canopy firsthand and view the beauty of the rainforest from a different perspective. Following dinner, we will be treated to a tour of a local farm where chocolate is produced. We will learn first-hand about the various stages of chocolate production and growth of cacao trees.

Day 6 (Plantation Tour and Macaw Conservation Experience)

Sunday, May 31

Participants visit a sustainable farm and learn about efforts underway to conserve the Great Green Macaw.

AM: Participants will visit an organic sustainable farm where they will interact with the farm staff learning about sustainable farming techniques and the variety of agricultural products grown at the farm. We will participate in farm activities as we help the staff as they harvest pineapples. We will have the opportunity to see familiar agricultural products, like black pepper, in their natural state on the farm.
PM: Our group will be treated to a lecture by a local researcher working with the Great Green Macaw. We will learn about the efforts to conserve this amazing species and have a chance to visit research sites to see the Macaws first-hand.

Day 7 (Poas Volcano and San Jose market)

Monday, June 1

Participants will visit Poas, an active volcano, and have a chance to tour San Jose.

AM: As we leave the beautiful tropical rainforest, we will visit an active volcano, Poas. We will see the volcanic crater first-hand and visit the interpretative center to learn about the geology of Costa Rica and the importance volcanoes have played in shaping the local landscape.
PM: We arrive in San Jose and have a chance to tour the city and visit local artisans.

Day 8 (Depart)

Tuesday, June 2

Participants travel back to Montgomery.

After breakfast, we load our bus and travel to the airport. Our return flight leaves from San Jose at approximately 1:00 PM.