

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE / NUMBER: SCI 296: NATURAL HISTORY:
TROPICAL ECOSYSTEMS IN COSTA RICA
(Tri-Country Semester Course with Costa Rica
Rainforest Outward Bound School)

OR

SCI 297: NATURAL HISTORY:
TROPICAL ECOSYSTEMS (Individual or small
group travel to any tropical ecosystem in the world)

(Continuous enrollment course. Participants have
the equivalent of two quarters to complete
coursework.)

CREDITS: Variable: 5-10 credits (quarter hour credits)

Students who plan to use this course to fulfill
specific curriculum areas should discuss transfer
options, and obtain written approval from a
counselor or study abroad advisor at their own
college/university PRIOR to enrollment in this
course.

These are experiential learning credits and are
considered electives for Washington State
residents at Seattle Central Community College
and apply toward the elective area of the Associate
of Arts degree.)

Note: 10-credit option includes coursework for 5-
credit course plus additional travel/research time
(length to be negotiated with instructor) AND three
additional research/critical thinking papers.
Students may choose to intern or volunteer in a
related capacity as part of the time requirement;
however, the hours must be verified and
documented. Additional assignments can relate to
the volunteer or intern project.

FEES: Refer to website: www.seattlecentral.edu
Click on Courses & Programs, Travel Study and
Policies & Procedures
(Course fees subject to change)

PREREQUISITES: None

Seattle Central Community College is fully accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges
and Universities.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Designed to provide hands-on learning opportunities for undergraduate students and other individuals who undertake domestic and/or foreign travel. It offers the participant an opportunity to learn outside the classroom; affords an opportunity to take advantage of cross cultural materials, flora and fauna, geographic locations, geologic formations, museums, terrestrial ecosystems, regional customs and foods, natural history, marine ecosystems, field trips, etc. which are available only through travel.

COURSE GOALS:

Participate in environmental learning activities through the Costa Rica Rainforest Outward Bound School or through individual or small group travel to any tropical ecosystem in the world. Also provides students with an opportunity to learn about the history, culture, economy, politics, and/or development of the host country.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES:

1. Document research skills as evidenced by selection of books, scholarly journals, outside readings, oral interviews, web site research, online journals, and critical analysis of these works.
2. Examine differences in geography, forests, volcanoes, offshore islands, national parks, flora, fauna, marine life, and cultural traits as evidenced in assignments submitted to instructor.
3. Recognize and understand the concept of Eco-tourism in the world as evidenced by discussion of such in journal writings.
4. Investigate a specific topic based on travel experience using active learning methods such as on-site study, rainforest visitation, marine ecosystems study, attendance at cultural events, field trips to study forests, flora & fauna, etc.
5. If on organized tour: Join field study groups with guides and experts, identify plant and animal relationships in terrestrial and marine ecosystems.
6. Participate in discussion groups and assess worldwide ecosystem conservation needs.

INSTRUCTOR: To be determined

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with your instructor, or if you need special arrangements, contact your instructor as soon as possible.

INSTRUCTOR'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY:

Experiential education is but one tool to help nurture the learning desire of undergraduate students. Course participants will describe themselves and their experiences, if

appropriate, as members of the global community, and will value the views of diverse peoples, cultures, places, etc.

STUDENT OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe tropical plant and animal species, geographic features, ecosystems, protected zones, and historical sites of Costa Rica (or other researched ecosystem) through a research paper.
2. Relate the importance of tropical ecosystem conservation to the survival of all ecosystems worldwide – included as part of the research paper.
3. Recognize ethnic, cultural, scientific, leisure-time, and diversity in host country.
4. Select articles and journals related to the travel/study experience and analyze them critically.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

1. Classroom study, on-site instruction with local guides, group field trips, independent travel, and guest speakers.
2. If appropriate, books, periodicals, and videos provided by on-site organization/tour operator.
3. This course meets electronically or by mail (E-mail, phone, fax, snail mail). There is no physical site or classroom.
4. Course instructor usually available via E-mail 12 hours daily.
5. Optional: Students will use the Internet / WWW to access resources and evaluate information sources according to the external criteria, such as the author's credentials, the timeliness of the information, the genre of the source, etc.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS:

1. A DAILY JOURNAL must be maintained during the travel/study period. It is to contain notes, observation of historic places, personal contacts, interviews, geographic features studied, leisure-time activities, tropical plant and animal species identified, specific cultural traits noted, field-trips to ecosystems and protected zones. This may be submitted electronically via E-mail or PC diskette (high density) or in hardcopy format.
2. RESEARCH PAPER on a topic agreed upon in advance with instructor (eight page minimum, typed double spaced) based on the travel/study experience including but not limited to the value of tropical ecosystem conservation; cultural diversity; ethnography report; leisure-time activities in different cultures and/or societies. Use

standard research paper formats i.e. MLA, APA, Stanford, Turabian, etc. Paper may be submitted on PC diskette (high density, either size) or via E-mail.

INTERNET OPTION: If you have access to Internet / WWW, you may submit the following in lieu of research paper.

- a) Locate 10 sites on Internet / WWW related in some way to your travel/study experience. Sample sites might relate to rainforest development and protection, ecosystems, ecology, conservation, cultural traits, leisure activities, economic development of regions and nations, tourism, etc.
- b) Evaluate all 10 sites in terms of accuracy, usefulness, authoritativeness of Webmaster (site development/author), timeliness, and research potential.
- c) Provide the URL (WWW) address for each site.
- d) Trace your steps by telling what search engine(s) you used to locate each site; links you followed to each site. Do for each of the sites. Possible search engines to use include, but are not limited to, Google, Yahoo, Ask.com, Infoseek, Webcrawler and MSN.

CRITICAL THINKING PAPERS:

Read and analyze two articles * from two different journals (try if possible to locate a scholarly journal which usually means it is a signed article with a bibliography written by expert(s) in their field) from fields such as ecology, history, culture, cross-cultural studies, Latin American studies and interdisciplinary studies or on a topic related to any aspect of the travel/study experience. Answer the following questions and staple a photocopy of the article to your sheet.

***In lieu of articles, two oral interviews may be substituted.**

** Journal and Magazine Article Links

http://weststudyabroad.com/html/related_links.html#13

** Travel Links/-free online databases to search for your articles if you don't have access to your college library. Try using "Travel Study" web links for locating websites for research on study abroad and international topics.

http://weststudyabroad.com/html/related_links.html#13

- a) Title of article, full title of journal, date, and page numbers.
- b) Author of article, author's qualifications or basis of authority. Was this author qualified to write on this topic? Why or why not? If no information is available, what do you think, based on the article and your critical judgement? Explain. (Hint: Use Contemporary Authors, Directory of American Scholars or other library reference tools to locate biographical data).
- c) Brief summary of the article (main points and conclusion).

- d) Validity of information: What type of evidence does the author give for any claims that are made? Are sensational claims made? Are several viewpoints or just one presented?
- e) Author's motivation: Why was this article published? (Example: to sell something, to publicize new research data, to provide information or clarification).

INTERNET OPTION: If you have access to Internet / WWW, you may submit two articles from electronic journals appearing on the Internet. These may be submitted via electronic format to instructor.

CALENDAR/SCHEDULE:

Students may enroll anytime. All course requirements must be submitted to the instructor for grading before the end of the quarter (or within two quarters from date of enrollment).

FEEDBACK TO STUDENT/COURSE POLICIES:

Daily Journal (200 points): Evaluation criteria includes, but is not limited to, clearly presented observations, creative thought, imagination and appropriateness.

Research Paper (500 points): Evaluation criteria includes, but is not limited to, research format, content appropriateness, organization skills, and analysis of topic.

Critical Thinking Papers (150 points each = 300 total): Evaluation criteria includes, but is not limited to, journal selection, critical thinking research and analysis, author critique and article summarization.

GRADING STRUCTURE:

A	4.0-3.9	Excellent	900+ points
A-	3.8-3.5		
B+	3.4-3.2		
B	3.1-2.9	High	800-899 points
B-	2.8-2.5		
C+	2.4-2.2		
C	2.1-1.9	Average	600-799 points
C-	1.8-1.5		
D+	1.4-1.2	Minimum	500-599 points
D-	0.8-0.7		
E	0.0	Failure	0-499 points

Note: Seattle Central Community College awards numerical grades.

****IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR STUDENTS ENROLLING IN 10-CREDIT OPTION****

Additional Course Requirements:

1. Additional research paper (can relate to volunteer project, employment and/or internship). 500 points.
2. Two additional critical thinking papers (can relate to volunteer project, employment, and /or internship). 300 points total.

Grading Structure for 10-credit Option:

A	4.0-3.9	Excellent	1620+ points
A-	3.8-3.5		
B+	3.4-3.2		
B	3.1-2.9	High	1501-1619 points
B-	2.8-2.5		
C+	2.4-2.2		
C	2.1-1.9	Average	1260-1500 points
C-	1.8-1.5		
D+	1.4-1.2	Minimum	1080-1259 points
D-	0.8-0.7		
E	0.0	Failure	0-1079 points

EVALUATING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT FORMS:

Upon enrollment a questionnaire will be sent to each enrollee to study whether this “self-guided” and “self-paced” aspect of learning met with their needs and approval. It will ask how valuable the course was to them in this manner, what they felt was missing, and what portion of this course was the most helpful to them in their educational plans.

HONOR SYSTEM

It is expected that each student will prepare his or her own assignments and that any assignments submitted will be the sole work of the student.

Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information, will not be tolerated.

Violation of these rules will be considered **Misconduct** under the student code WAC 132-F-120-110. Students suspected of misconduct will be referred the Dean of Student Development Services. Students found guilty of misconduct will forfeit all fees and credit will be denied.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Terms of Enrollment: Enrollment in travel/language courses does not constitute admission to the college. Students who are not attempting to earn a degree or certificate are registered as non-matriculated students.

Time Limitations: Students have two quarters to complete courses and will receive a “Y” (on-going) grade on grade reports until all coursework is completed. One extension (for one additional – or 3rd – quarter) will be granted at a cost of \$50/extension. (Please note: The “Y” will remain on transcripts if students do not complete courses.)

Please note: Seattle Central is on a quarter system. Approximate dates are as follows:

Summer:	Last week in June through mid-August
Fall:	Last week in September through mid-December
Winter:	First week in January through March
Spring:	First week in April through mid-June

Refund Policy: To receive a refund, a student must submit a written request (mailed, e-mailed, or faxed) to the Cooperative Education Office. No refunds will be given once the quarter officially ends. Please note: If you are taking two quarters to complete coursework, no refunds will be granted during the second quarter.

Final Grade/Transcripts: If you receive a "Y" for your course, the Cooperative Education Office will submit a grade change to the Registrar's office as soon as the grade is received from the instructor.

To request an official or unofficial transcript of grades, students should call (206) 934-3805 (8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Pacific Standard Time) or go online to www.seattlecentral.edu. Click on Enrollment and Transcripts and scroll down to Request an Official Transcript. There is a fee for official transcripts. Unofficial transcripts are available at no cost to the student.

Change of Name/Address: Students are responsible for providing current contact information to the Cooperative Education Office. Delivery of mail to the last address on record constitutes official notification to students.

Cooperative Education Program, SEATTLE CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 1701 Broadway, Room BE 1103, Seattle, WA 98122. Phone: 206-934-5422 FAX: 206-934-5529
<http://seattlecentral.edu/coop/index.php>