

DRAFT**COSTA RICA: ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

IDH 4007 (Spring A, 2022) and IDH 4008 (Summer A, 2022)

Instructor: Carlos Roberto Chavarría M.Sc. (info@costaricarainforestexperience.com)

The Honors College

Florida International University

Spring A 2020: Fridays 8:30 am - 11:20 pm (January 14, 2022, to April 22, 2022)

Summer A 2022 in Costa Rica: May 12 to June 02, 2022

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This program will distinguish itself with a special focus on conservation, sustainability, and culture, allowing the students to dive into the Costa Rican culture, its way of life, its biodiversity at the time in which it accomplishes academic goals to give participants an accurate picture of environment and sustainability, as well as an understanding of these subjects to excel in any field in harmony with the environment. Through all the first-hand experiences, students will have during this program, exposition to many unique activities which at the end of the day, will reaffirm or even help develop new skills sets, as well as the ability to adapt and succeed in a wide array of situations, professionally and personally.

The students will learn and understand the importance of eco/sustainable activities and integrate these theories to effectively market and sell a destination, activity or product while sustaining the preservation of the community and its environment. They will experientially gain knowledge actively participating in fieldwork, nature-based and adventure activities that are included in this program. Through the exercises and activities, students will recognize the impact of environmental and cultural issues related to tourism and general business practices.

Costa Rica is determined to be the first Carbon Neutral country in 2022. On this premise, the country has been developing in all the areas of the economy actions in those directions, which offer a learning opportunity. There has been a strong prominence placed on the effects of global warming. It is important for our students to completely understand elements and the inter-relationship of eco-tourism and sustainable tourism, the impact of our actions (at an organization and individual level) regarding the environment globally and locally and to differentiate between organizations taking action or “greenwashing”.

Students will focus on the country’s initiatives in conservation of biodiversity, social responsibility, sustainable development, with an emphasis on tropical ecosystems, indigenous community, and mitigating the effects of global warming. At Malecu Indigenous Territory, students will work on service projects alongside local community.

PROGRAM COST

The estimated cost of \$1650 includes housing for the duration of the trip, local transportation, admission to required national parks, biological reserves, theaters and museums, adventure and educational tours, most meals, and mandatory international health insurance. The program cost does not include the \$500 Honors College non-refundable fee, FIU instructional fee, airfare, meals, and personal expenses (including out-of-class transportation).

IDH 4007**STUDENT PROJECTS**

All students will conduct a research project which will be presented in the second part of the Spring Semester. All the projects should be focused on Costa Rica, but the general importance of the subjects you choose should include the impact on Latin American regional as well as global issues. The projects (and sharing them with the rest of the class) will be a springboard and preparation for our trip.

Each project will be presented to the class (20-minute presentations with additional time for discussion). Each project should generate a 1000-word paper and appropriate visual materials for the presentation. Please submit a copy of your slides (and other relevant material) electronically.

Suitable topics to consider will be explored both in class and during instructor office hours. Once the research methodology to investigate the topic has been established, we will decide on how each individual paper will be structured.

GRADES

Attendance and Participation: 50%

Student Project Presentation: 50%

IDH 4008

The most significant part of the assignment is your participation in and experience of the activities of the experience of travelling in Costa Rica.

Journal: Please keep a daily journal of your own experience in a diary notebook. You may include images (drawings/photographs). These diaries will serve as the basis for the evening sessions when all students will discuss the activities and how they will help you investigate the questions that the instructor will pose during the travels around Costa Rica.

Writing assignment: Each student will work on an Instagram publication, related with one of the visits during the Costa Rica program. The structure of the publication will be provided during IDH 4007.

Cultural Ambassador/Citizenship evaluation: We are not tourists and the purpose of study abroad programs is to learn about the country (in this case Costa Rica) and to be of service to local people working in sustainable tourism and agriculture. All of us must be aware of and show respect for local cultural norms of dress and behavior. No drinking of alcohol will be permitted.

Communication and direction: As the trip director, Carlos Roberto Chavarría, is the one who is responsible for making sure all Honors College and FIU guidelines and rules are followed. I am available 24/7 to help you. If any problems arise, I am the person that you should contact first.

Required Travel Documents: A current valid passport.

Sponsors: The Costa Rica Rainforest Experience. The organization prepare a program in Costa Rica, that include presentations from professionals, from different organizations and institutions, that we will visit. We will travel by bus from location to location.

Local currency: The unit of currency is the Colon and ATMs are available in every town we visit.

Wireless Communication/Electricity: Cell and internet service will be available in most locations. Electricity and outlet plugs are the same as in the US.

Travel belongings: You will be provided with a list of recommended clothing for informal settings, field work hiking and any service projects and the attire for when formally representing the Honors College. A field (waterproof) notebook/journal is required and binoculars and LED headlamps to observe wildlife are recommended.

GRADING POLICY

Spring

Class Participation: 50 points

Declaration Project: 50 points

Summer (Dynamic Session)

Participation in all activities: 50 points

Daily journal: 25 points

Reflective/Analytical term project (essay): 25 points

Final grade/total points equivalency

100.0 – 90.00: A

80.00 – 89.99: B

70.00 – 79.99: C

60.00 – 69.99: D

00.00 – 59.99: F

Class Participation Criteria IDH 4007

1. Participation in class discussions
3. Attendance to class and class excursions
4. Preparation for class
5. Concentration in class

ATTENDANCE POLICY IDH 4007

Each student will be allowed one unexcused absence per semester. Every absence in excess of this will drop the student's final semester grade by one full letter grade. Three or more absences will result in an "F" for the semester.

REQUIRED TEXTS & FILMS**Texts**

The Ticos: Culture and Social Change in Costa Rica. Mavis Hiltunen Biesanz. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

The New Neotropical Companion. John Kricher. Princeton Press.

HONORS COLLEGE STUDENT PORTFOLIOS

Please review the following policy:

<http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/improvement/portfolio/>

HONORS COLLEGE CITIZENSHIP

Please review the following policy:

<http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/policies/citizenship/>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: HONOR IN HONORS

Please review the following policy:

<http://honors.fiu.edu/academics/policies/misconduct/>

HONORS STUDY ABROAD RULES

By [registering to study abroad](#) students commit to making their payments on time, to complying with the requirements on time, and to remaining with the program. Refunds are not awarded, and switching programs is not allowed.

Note: - IDH 4007 is the pre-travel class on campus; IDH 4008 is the class abroad.

- Deadline dates that fall on weekends and/or holidays are NOT moved to the next business date.

Documentation:

Before securing their spot, students must (1) complete, initialize, and sign the [Honors Study Abroad Contract](#), (2) apply online at abroad.fiu.edu, and (3) apply online at <https://honors.fiu.edu/studyabroad/applications>. Their documentation will be subject to approval at registration.

Students must upload ALL Office of Education Abroad (OEA) required documentation to abroad.fiu.edu by NOVEMBER 19, 2021, 11:59PM. Students who fail to comply by then will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4007 and/or IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed

The documentation required by OEA includes the Medical Form, copy of valid passport, [Course Registration Form](#), and four questionnaires: 1) personal information form, 2) emergency contact form, 3) special needs form, and 4) financial information form.

The Medical Form is valid for only one year as of the date it is signed by a physician licensed in the United States and cannot expire before the end of the program.

Students are strongly encouraged to review vaccination requirements for countries they plan to visit, including against COVID-19. Failure to abide by vaccination requirements may prevent a student from entering a country and continuing participation in the Study Abroad program, in which case, refunds will NOT be awarded. FIU provides many vaccinations, including against COVID-19, for students on campus.

Passport must remain valid for at least 6 months after the last day of the program.

Should the student not have a valid passport by the deadline mentioned above, they must instead submit proof that the passport application/renewal process has been initiated and must replace it with a copy of their actual passport no later than APRIL 15, 2022. Students who fail to comply by then will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed

ONLY FOR STUDENTS WHO SECURE THEIR SPOT ON OR AFTER NOVEMBER 15, 2021:

The deadline to upload the required documentation will be extended until JANUARY 7, 2022, 11:59pm (before final DROP date). Students who fail to comply by then will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4008 or travel with the program Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students must clear any existing holds by DECEMBER 1, 2021, 11:59PM and again by APRIL 1, 2022, and are responsible for ensuring that they have no new holds before being enrolled in both IDH 4007* and/or IDH 4008*. Students who fail to comply by the deadlines will not be allowed to participate in the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

*Students with holds on their account cannot be enrolled for classes.

While taking the IDH 4007 class, students will have to complete the online *mandatory* pre-departure orientation on the study abroad application portal. Students must complete the session and associated quizzes, sign the paperwork, and upload it to their application at the abroad.fiu.edu portal by APRIL 1, 2022, 11:59pm.

Physicality:

The faculty leader and/or support staff do not administer medical care or provide medication.

Academics:

In order to participate in an Honors study abroad program, students must *maintain* a minimum cumulative FIU GPA of 3.2. Students who fail to comply will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4007 and/or IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

A minimum grade of C in IDH 4007 is required to be enrolled in IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded if the student cannot be enrolled and posted charges will not be removed.

Behavior:

Students who have been sanctioned under the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code (<https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/student-conduct-and-honor-code/index.php>), which results in loss of privileges, and/or other sanctions that result in the student not being considered to be in good standing with the University (e.g., conduct probation), are not be eligible to participate in IDH 4008, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students found responsible for an Academic Misconduct Violation will be dismissed from the Honors College upon notification of findings and will not be allowed to participate in, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Students studying abroad are expected to represent the Honors College and FIU honorably and maturely. The faculty director and/or staff are authorized to end the program early for students whose behavior becomes disruptive (and/or violates the FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code.)

Payments:

Once students apply online, they must secure their spot with the Honors College with a blank, non-refundable \$500 cashier's check or money order (ONLY,) and all the required documentation.

Study abroad payments are *non-refundable* and are made in 3 installments. The OEA will post the charges on the students' accounts approximately 3 weeks before each payment deadline. Once the charges are posted, they cannot be removed.

Students who secure their spot *after* charges for an installment(s) have been posted will have the overdue payments added to the next deadline's charges.

Students are responsible to ensure with Student Financials that any payment made towards their study abroad program is indeed applied to that program.

Students who pay their program through a scholarship are still responsible for having the payments made on time and in their entirety. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to contact Financial Aid to ensure compliance. If any delays are foreseen, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Honors College of the situation. If the scholarship will not cover the full amount due, it is the student's responsibility to pay the remaining balance. Students who fail to comply will not be allowed to participate in, or travel with the program. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges will not be removed.

Payments must be made no later than the deadline (December 1, 2021, January 3, 2022, and February 1, 2022) published at <https://honors.fiu.edu/studyabroad/payments>. If students fail to make them on time, the university will apply a \$100.00 late fee to their account. Late fees cannot be removed.

After each payment deadline there is a one-week grace period, an *extended* deadline, when payments are still accepted. However, the late fee will still be applied, and students may get a hold on their accounts*. If students fail to complete their payment within exactly that *one-week* grace period, and had not notified the Honors College in advance, they will be withdrawn from the program and will not be allowed to participate in IDH 4007 and/or IDH 4008, or travel with the program, depending on the time the payment was missed. Refunds will NOT be awarded. Posted charges and late fees will not be removed.

*Students with holds on their accounts cannot be enrolled for classes.

FIU and the Honors College strongly discourage making big purchases, such as airline tickets, before the programs are confirmed by OEA. If canceled, FIU cannot refund these or any other expenses related to the programs not paid directly to FIU.

Switching, Withdrawals, and Cancellations:

Once students are registered, they are not allowed to switch programs. Students who still want to change programs will have to withdraw from the initial one, first, with no refunds. Then secure their spot in the new program, pay the \$500 deposit again, and complete all the new program's missing payments. Permission to apply for the second program is at the full discretion of the Honors College.

Withdrawal from a program will only be permitted for medical reasons. In order to request a medical withdrawal, students must provide appropriate medical documentation from a physician licensed in the United States. Otherwise, they will remain responsible for all charges.

Students that are dropped from a program for lack of payment, lack of documentation, or due to FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code sanctions, will still be responsible for the charges already posted to their account. That balance will still be due.

FIU and/or the Honors College reserve the right to cancel study abroad programs—the *only* case in which a refund *will* be made. The refund will cover the program's cost and the \$500 deposit. Late fees will not be refunded or removed. Students will be responsible for fees or losses incurred in cancelling or changing their airfare ticket and any other expenses not covered by the program fee. Consideration to purchase Trip Cancellation insurance coverage is recommended. Refunds for the \$195 OEA fee will be at OEA's discretion.

By signing up to participate in a study abroad program, students are assuming all the above-mentioned responsibilities and are committing to comply with them without further notices.

Course Calendar

Jan 14, 2022. Introductory Meeting. Costa Rica Trip Overview: Student Project Guidelines. Costa Rica Historical Facts and development of contemporary culture and society.

Jan 21. The Ticos. Chapter 1. The Land and The People. Discussion. Assign Lectures and Presentations for IDH 4007.

Jan 28. Why is Hot, Humid, and Rainy in the Tropics. The New Neotropical Companion. Chapter 2.

Feb 4. Ecology of Costa Rica. Life Zones, History of Conservation. Protected Areas System: Challenges and Opportunities. Sustainability and sustainable development.

Feb 11. The Realm of the Plants. The New Neotropical Companion, Chapter 4.

Feb 18. Tropical Intimacy: Mutualism and Coevolution. The New Neotropical Companion Chapter 10.

Feb 25. The Future of the Neotropics.

Mar 11. Tourism on the World, and Costa Rica. / Tourism modalities in Costa Rica: Ecotourism, Adventure, Community Rural Tourism, Agro-tourism. Program for Sustainable Tourism. The case of the Sustainable Tourism Certificate.

Mar 18. Video. Cracking the Golden Egg. Situation of the Tourism in the Pacific Coast. Costa Rica Marketing Strategy. Campaigns: Happiest Country of the World, Save the Americans, Essential Costa Rica.

Mar 25. Costa Rica Political Organization. Government. How the system works? History of Democracy.

Apr 1. Politics and Economy. State of the Nation Program

Apr 8. Neutral Carbon Strategy. Energy and Industry. Challenges and Opportunities.

Apr 15. Final Student Presentations and group discussion.

Apr 22. Preparation for IDH 2008

May 12, 2022 Depart to San Jose, Costa Rica

June 2, 2022 Return to Miami, Fl, USA