

# Ecotourism, Arts and Culture in

# Costa Rica

maryville college, january 2008

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

January 5-20th, 2008, Costa Rica, Central America

## **INSTRUCTORS**

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## **OFFICE HOURS**

En Espanol, on the bus, after dinner and during dessert...

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES**

This experiential course will have students travel to Costa Rica, and expose them to a series of artistic, cultural and ecotourism events and experiences in that nation. The goal of the course is to make participants more aware of the complexities created, and choices made, when immersed in a range of experiences where nature and modern society intersect.

Our course’s guiding question is: “In what ways do humans see their planet?”

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

It is expected that by the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate competency in:

- The ability to travel and interact with local persons in developing and industrialized nations beyond just the surface level
- Understand the basic principles of ecotourism, sustainability and biodiversity as it is related to the region of Costa Rica and how it affects the local population
- Evaluate and analyze art and architecture from the region of Costa Rica and have a working knowledge of the culture and visual style of Pre-Columbian and Post modern Costa Rican artworks
- Awareness of the complexities created, and choices made, when immersed in a range of experiences where nature and modern society intersect.
- Ability to critically evaluate and analyze their travel interactions through written, verbal and visual forms of expression
- Gain a greater appreciation for the natural and human-made objects that we interact with everywhere on the planet

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

Students will be required to complete all class assignments. Failure to turn in a single assignment will result in a failing grade for the course. Work will be evaluated based on research, development of ideas, evidence of critical awareness and analysis and class participation.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

**Travel Journal/Blog (25%)**- This course requires that each student keep both a travel journal/blog of their experience, questions, realizations and development during their time in Costa Rica. The travel journal/blog should have at least 2 daily entries and can include sketches, photos, copies of other images, written words and statements, links to other websites of influence and any other pertinent materials that relate to this experience. You may select either a written or online journal (blog) and the online journal may be housed in blogger.com, your own web hosting space or travelblog.org. In addition to your entries, you should respond with critical analysis to at least 2 peer blogs a week. **They may not be on MySpace or Facebook.**

**Art Exhibit (25%)** - The class will work together to either submit work related to their Costa Rica experience; curate &/or assist with installation of the exhibit; or provide on site narration/commentary of the exhibit. The exhibit will be held on the Maryville College Campus in Bartlett Hall in Spring 2008.

**Ecotourism Presentation to local high school (25%)** - Small groups of 3 will work together to prepare and deliver a presentation to a non-MC student audience about their Costa Rica experience.

**Reflection Paper (25%)** - Each individual will respond to the course goals and experiential education goal statements and write a reflection paper describing how he/she did (or did not) meet those goals, and why.

## **GRADING STANDARDS**

This course will be graded as S/U. The S grade is understood to be the equivalent of at least a C (see Maryville College 2007-2008 Catalog). To receive an S for the course requires an S on all activities including discussions, blogs, reflection papers and daily activities. Should a U be received on one or more of these activities, at the discretion of the instructors a student may complete a make-up activity. However, if the final grade for the activity is a U, then the student will make a U for the course.

## **ATTENDANCE & INCOMPLETES**

Attendance is essential at every organized event during the trip and missing even one scheduled event will result in a failing grade. There are no incompletes given in this class except for situations of medical emergencies. An official letter from a physician must be submitted for an incomplete grade to be considered. Incompletes must be made up within the following semester, otherwise, a failing grade will result.

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty in any portion of academic works for the course shall be grounds for awarding a failing grade for the entire course and will be pursued to the highest course possible.

## **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, HARASSMENT**

This course follows Maryville College policies and procedures regarding academic misconduct and harassment. To review these policies, please see the Maryville College Handbook.

### **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY**

It is important to note that the faculty leaders, the International Programming Committee and Maryville College have taken every precaution to maximize safety and minimize risk in this course. However, studying and traveling abroad can involve risks and students are and must be responsible for their own actions and decisions. Abiding by the NAFSA's Responsibilities of Participants listed below will assist in minimizing any risks you might encounter during travel. Additionally, this course requires that you complete the following before travel departure:

- 1) MC Travel Health Insurance, Supplemental Medical Information Form
- 2) Medical and Liability Release
- 3) IPC Conduct Form

### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FOREIGN STUDENT ADVISERS (NAFSA) RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS**

In this course, as in other settings, participants can have a major impact on their own health and safety through the decisions they make before and during their program and by their day-to-day choices and behaviors.

Participants should:

- A. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
- B. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country(ies).
- C. Conduct their own research on the country(ies) they plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
- D. Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
- E. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
- F. Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
- G. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
- H. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
- I. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
- J. Obey host-country laws.
- K. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
- L. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
- M. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well being.
- N. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host county.

For more information, please review <http://www.nafsa.org/safetyabroad/> (this also includes recommendations for parents and guardians as well).

This course also abides by the MC's Crisis Management Plan for Study Abroad found at <http://www.maryvillecollege.edu/academics/studyabroad/crisis-management.asp>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>DATES</b>	<b>AGENDA</b>
jan 04	Return to Maryville to prepare for travel on 01.05.08
jan 05	<b>San Jose:</b> Travel from Maryville College to San Jose Costa Rica, Dinner and Discussion
jan 06	<b>San Jose:</b> AM/PM: Contemporary Museum of Art & Design, San Jose City Tour.
jan 07	<b>San Jose:</b> AM/PM: Group immersions and museum explorations
jan 08	<b>Turrialba:</b> AM/PM: Travel to Turrialba on the way stop at Basilica Los Angeles, the Coffee plantation and Processing Plant
jan 09	<b>Turrialba:</b> AM/PM: Visit Catie
jan 10	<b>Sarapiquí:</b> AM/PM: Trip to the Pacuare river, View "Eco Art"
jan 11	<b>Sarapiquí:</b> AM: OTS/La Selva Biological Station, Guided Hike; PM: Boat Ride
jan 12	<b>Arenal:</b> AM: Travel to Arenal; PM: Canopy
jan 13	<b>Arenal:</b> AM/PM: Volcano Trip/Creative Development
jan 14	<b>Monteverde:</b> AM: Travel to Monteverde; PM: Gallery Visits
jan 15	<b>Monteverde:</b> AM/PM: Cloud Forest/Hummingbird Garden and Gallery/Museum
jan 16	<b>Tamarindo:</b> AM: City tour Monteverde; PM: travel to Tamarindo
jan 17	<b>Tamarindo:</b> AM/PM: Surfing and work at the Turtle project
jan 18	<b>Tamarindo:</b> AM/PM: Gallery Hopping, surfing and work at the Turtle Project
jan 19	<b>San Jose:</b> AM: Guaitil/Nicoya Peninsula, Chorotega Pottery; PM: San Jose
jan 20	Return to Maryville College