

Course Information

Costa Rica Field Trip—Environmental Sustainability & Conservation

Course Number: ISIS 3390, Section 01 (undergraduate)

Course Number: MAIS 5390, Section 01 (graduate)

Semester: Summer 2016 (includes 9-days of travel to Costa Rica, June 9-17, 2016)

The University of Texas at Dallas—School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Credit Hours: 3

Course Meeting Dates/Times

This course will be divided into three segments, as follows:

1) Pre-Travel Sessions at UTD: We will have a total of 3 class sessions, as indicated below. It is mandatory that you attend/participate in all three or you will not be permitted to participate in the 9-day study trip.

- Wednesday, May 25, 2016 (6-10 p.m.)
- Wednesday, June 1, 2016 (6-10 p.m.)
- Wednesday, June 8, 2016 (online session)

2) 9-day study trip to Costa Rica: Our group will depart early on June 9, 2016, from DFW airport and travel to the Central Valley of Costa Rica, specifically near the community of La Fortuna, to work on projects and participate in various activities related to the course theme: the relationship between environmental health and human health. We will return to DFW on June 17, 2016.

3) Post-travel creation and presentation of final projects: Working in conjunction with the course instructor, students will create and present a final project that reflects their educational experiences in Costa Rica. You have a good deal of flexibility with your project—it can be a more traditional academic project such as a research paper or something more creative. Final presentations will take place on Wednesday, July 27. 2-16, from 1-4 p.m., in an open forum (open to other students, faculty, and staff at UTD) on the UTD campus (details about specific location will be forthcoming)

Students are required to successfully complete all three segments of the course in order to pass the course.

Professor Contact Information

This course will be taught by the following faculty member of UTD's School of Interdisciplinary Studies:

Dr. Jillian M. Duquaine-Watson

Office Phone: 972-883-2322

Email: jillian.duquaine-watson@utdallas.edu

Office location: Hoblitzelle Hall 2.122

Course Prerequisites

This course is designed for undergraduate and graduate students with an interest in international, comparative perspectives, particularly in local or community-based development and as such initiatives

are interconnected with environmental issues and the relationship between environmental health and human health as well as cultural identity and conservation efforts in Costa Rica. It is also suitable for students with an interest in Latin American cultures, Spanish language, and/or poverty. Students must complete a 1-credit-hour prerequisite “Costa Rica Prep” course during the spring 2016 semester (2nd 8 weeks). In addition, students must meet requirements for Study Abroad as set forth by the UTD Office of Education Abroad. Instructor permission is required to register for and participate in this course.

Furthermore, all participants must complete required forms and submit them to our service provider, Rustic Pathways, prior to travel. These forms include but are not limited to: medical history, emergency contact sheet, waiver forms, and code of conduct agreement.

Course Description

This course explores environmental sustainability and conservation in Costa Rica, specifically as a means of fostering a better understanding of the relationship between environmental health and human health. Students will, during a 9-day field trip, learn about environmental sustainability and conservation efforts in Costa Rica as well as traditional/indigenous health practices and ongoing health issues in the country. They will also learn about Tico culture, including social, political, and economic aspects. Students will engage in a unique type of educational endeavor: service-learning. By participating in academic as well as service fieldwork activities, students will gain a sound understanding of the ways in which environmental well-being and human health are intrinsically intertwined.

In addition to more traditional academic lectures and discussion which will take place on the UTD campus, this course includes a practical component wherein participants will learn about environmental sustainability and conservation via a 9-day study trip to Costa Rica. During their time in Costa Rica, students will complete service projects and fieldwork assignments (such as interviews and participant observation) as a means of gaining a more thorough understanding of central course themes and to develop a more nuanced understanding of Tico culture, environmental issues, health practices, and related initiatives.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Undergraduate students who successfully complete this course will gain an increased understanding of:

1. Principles and practices of environmental sustainability and conservation, including biodiversity.
2. Various sustainability initiatives.
3. Traditional/alternative health practices.
4. Practical problem-solving skills through engagement in service projects that focus on environmental sustainability and conservation as well as traditional health practices.
5. Costa Rican culture.
6. The social and political dynamics of Costa Rica, specifically as they pertain to poverty, gender, and racial dynamics.

It is also expected that undergraduate students who complete this course will:

1. Enhance their awareness of global issues and diversity.
2. Increase their ability to analyze social and development-related issues via comparative, international frameworks.
3. Further their skills in the areas of cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence.

Graduate students who successfully complete this course will gain an increased understanding of:

1. Conservation, environmental sustainability, and biodiversity as core features of Costa Rican development strategies.
2. Contemporary political and social issues in Costa Rica.
3. Economic, social, and environmental concerns in contemporary Costa Rica.
4. Traditional/alternative health practices.
5. Practical problem-solving skills through engagement in service projects that focus on environmental sustainability and conservation as well as traditional health practices.
6. Key strategies for successful community-based development and conservation including the balanced interaction between the use of natural and cultural resources, the improvement of the quality of life and health among the local communities, and economic gains.

It is also expected that graduate students who complete this course will:

1. Enhance their awareness of global issues and cultural diversity.
2. Increase their ability to analyze social and environmental issues via comparative, international frameworks.
3. Engage in practical problem-solving via fieldwork activities and service projects.

Required Textbooks and Materials

The following books are required for all students (both undergraduate and graduate) enrolled in this course and are available at the UTD bookstore and at Off-Campus Books:

- Biesanz, Maria Hiltunen, et al. *The Ticos: Culture and Social Change in Costa Rica*. Lynne Reiner Publishing, 1998.
- Navakadukaran, Anne. *Our Global Environment: A Health Perspective*. 7th ed. Waveland Press, 2011.

In addition to the above texts, the following book is required for **graduate** students:

- Galt, Ryan E. *Food Systems in an Unequal World: Pesticides, Vegetables, and Agrarian Capitalism in Costa Rica*. University of Arizona Press, 2014.

All students, both undergraduate and graduate, will also be required to read a variety of journal articles, news stories, and other readings that are available through the course eLearning site.

All students are also required to keep a “travel journal” (hand-written) for “fieldwork” assignments and directed reflection assignments during their time in Costa Rica. Thus, each student will need to purchase a composition notebook and take it to Costa Rica with them—it should be in your backpack and with you AT ALL TIMES while we are traveling in Costa Rica.

Academic Calendar and Activities

This course will be divided into three segments:

1. Sessions at UTD completed PRIOR TO travel to Costa Rica

2. Sessions completed during a 9-day field trip to Costa Rica (June 9-17, 2016)
3. Student project preparation and presentations at UTD, completed AFTER travel to Costa Rica

The sessions at UTD completed prior to travel will include the following:

Session/Date/Time	Topics/Required Reading/Assignments/Due Dates/Deadlines
Session 1: Wednesday, May 25: 6-10 p.m.	Topic #1: Tico Life and Society Required readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6, “Community” in <i>The Ticos</i> • Chapter 7, “Housing, Health, and Everyday Living” in <i>The Ticos</i> • Chapter 8, “The Family” in <i>The Ticos</i> • Chapter 9 “Education” in <i>The Ticos</i> Topic #2: Learning through fieldwork (part I) Team-building exercises (part I) Reading quiz #1
Session 2: Wednesday, June 1: 6-10 p.m.	Topic #3: Costa Rica—Economics and Ecotourism Required readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3, “The Economy” in <i>The Ticos</i> • Chapter 11, “Leisure” in <i>The Ticos</i> • “Chapter 5: Costa Rica: On the Beaten Path” (eLearning) • “Chapter 2: The Environmental Problem” (eLearning) Topic #4: Learning through fieldwork (part II) Team-building exercises (part II) Reading Quiz #2
Session 3: Wednesday, June 8: (online session)	Topic #5: Ecological Principles & the Impact of Humans on Environmental Health Required Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Chapter 1: Introduction to Ecological Principles” (in OGE) • “Chapter 2: Population Dynamics” (in OGE) • “Chapter 5: Impacts of Growth on Ecosystems” (in OGE) Reading Quiz #3: Discussion board participation (details/requirements posted on course eLearning page)

The sessions completed during the 9-day study trip to Costa Rica will include the following topics, assignments, activities, and due dates:

6/9/16 (Thursday)	<p>Morning: airborne/depart for Costa Rica; arrive at SJO airport at approx. 12 p.m.</p> <p>Afternoon: Travel by bus to the community of La Fortuna</p> <p>Evening: Educational session—overview of the La Fortuna area, “briefing” on EcoCentro Danaus (history, mission, and projects) ; directed writing and reflection time</p>
6/10/16 (Friday)	<p>Morning: Tour of EcoCentro Danaus and its ongoing projects</p> <p>Afternoon: Start service project at EcoCentro Danaus</p> <p>Evening: Directed reading, writing, and reflection time; discussion of assigned readings and projects</p> <p>Required Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palada, “Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Agroforestry Systems” (eLearning) • Newman, “Earth’s Vanishing Medicine Cabinet” (eLearning)
6/11/16 (Saturday)	<p>Morning: Continue Service Projects at EcoCentro Danaus</p> <p>Afternoon: Medicinal plants educational session & cultural activity</p> <p>Evening: Directed reading, writing, and reflection time; <u>discussion of assigned readings—graduate students lead reading discussion tonight!</u></p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Chapter 4: The People-Food Predicament” (in OGE) • “Chapter 7: Toxic Substances” (in OGE) • “Chapter 8: Pests and Pesticides” (in OGE)
6/12/16 (Sunday)	<p>Morning/afternoon: Guided tour of and activities at Rancho Margot</p> <p>Evening: Participant observation—immersion in nature via ecotourism activities, part I</p>
6/13/16 (Monday)	<p>Morning: Service projects at Rancho Margot</p> <p>Afternoon: Participant observation—immersion in nature via ecotourism activities, part II</p> <p>Evening: Directed reading, writing, and reflection time; <u>discussion of assigned readings—graduate students lead discussion tonight;</u> overview of biodigesters, its function, and benefits</p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Chapter 15: Water Resources” (in OGE) • “Chapter 16: Water Pollution” (in OGE)
6/14/16 (Tuesday)	<p>Morning: Overview of sustainable garden at elementary school; begin service project</p> <p>Afternoon: Service project, continued</p> <p>Evening: Directed reading, writing, and reflection time; discussion of assigned readings</p> <p>Required readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Chapter 11: The Atmosphere” (in OGE) • “Chapter 12: Clean Energy Alternatives” (in OGE)

6/15/16 (Wednesday)	Morning and afternoon: Service projects at elementary school, continued Evening: Directed reading, writing, and reflection time; discussion of assigned readings Required readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Chapter 13: Air Pollution” (in OGE) • “Chapter 14: Noise Pollution” (in OGE)
6/16/16 (Thursday)	Morning: Participant observation—immersion in nature via ecotourism activities, part III Late Afternoon: travel by bus to San Jose Evening: “Farewell” dinner with Costa Rican leadership team; discuss ideas for final projects
6/17/15 (Friday)	Morning: transfer to SJO international airport Mid-Day: Depart for the U.S. Evening: arrive at DFW international airport

NOTE: Following travel in Costa Rica, students will have several weeks to create a final presentation on a specific topic related to their educational experiences in Costa Rica. Final presentations will take place on Wednesday, July 27, 2016, from 1-4 p.m., in an open forum on the UTD campus (open to other students, faculty, and staff at UTD).

Assignments & Grading Policy

The following assignments are required for undergraduate students participating in this course:

- **Reading-based quizzes** (pre-departure sessions; 3 quizzes x 10 points each = 30 points)
- **Directed writings/field journal** (100 points)
- **Participation in educational, service, fieldwork, and ecotourism activities during travel to Costa Rica** (200 points)
- **Final Project & Presentation** (100 points)

Undergraduate students may earn up to 430 points in this course. Final course grades for undergraduate students will be assigned in conjunction with the following grading scale:

Grade	Range (%)
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

The following assignments are required for graduate students enrolled in this course:

- **Reading-based quizzes** (pre-departure sessions; 3 quizzes x 10 points each = 30 points)
- **Directed writings/field journal** (100 points)
- **Leading discussion of readings during travel** (2 x 25 points each = 50 points)
- **Participation in educational, service, fieldwork, and ecotourism activities during travel to Costa Rica** (200 points)
- **Book Review** (100 points—due Wednesday, July 27, 2016)
- **Final Project & Presentation** (100 points)

Graduate students may earn up to 580 points in this course. Final course grades for graduate students will be assigned in conjunction with the following grading scale:

Grade	Range (%)
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
F	69 and below

Course & Instructor Policies

Assignment Format

Please follow the following format for your final project/paper (for more traditional papers):

- Put your name, date, the course name/number, and the assignment title on cover page
- Font of your document should be Times New Roman, 12-point type.
- The body/content of your document must be double-spaced.
- Choose a standard citation style—APA, MLA, or Chicago.
- Graphics, tables, and illustrations need to be clearly identified and explained.
- Documents must be free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
- Sources must be documented and/or quoted appropriately in the text as well as in the References/Bibliography at the end of your document.
- Multiple pages MUST be stapled together.
- Paper will only be accepted in HARD COPY format; electronic assignments will not be accepted under any circumstances.

NOTE: Failure to adhere to formatting requirements may result in your assignment being considered “incomplete” and, therefore, unacceptable.

Attendance and Participation: **Attendance and participation are mandatory.** If you miss a pre-departure class session, you may be dropped from the course without refund of course or trip fees. Students are required to attend and fully participate in all class sessions at UTD and to attend and fully participate in all educational and service-learning/fieldwork activities included in this course. Any student who does not fully participate in educational and project-related activities during travel portion of the course may have their grade docked and/or may be sent home early at their own expense and dropped from the course without refund of course or trip fees.

Late Work: Deadlines are a serious matter. Missed deadlines cause delays and administrative headaches. In the professional world, they can also compromise professional reputations and careers. For these reasons, late or incomplete work is not acceptable in this course. Technological problems are not valid excuses for late work, so plan accordingly. Moreover, no late or makeup submissions will be accepted without appropriate documentation.

Extra Credit: This course does not include “extra credit” opportunities.

Classroom Citizenship: All members of our classroom learning community are expected to communicate in a civil, respectful, and professional manner. Disagreement is acceptable (and even expected in college-level courses); disrespect, however, has no place in this or any classroom. Remember—our “classroom” will also travel with us to Costa Rica. Thus, you should conduct yourself in a civil, respectful, and professional manner throughout our “field trip.”

Technology Requirements: The course is taught using eLearning, and you should develop the habit of checking both eLearning and your UTD email often for assignments and announcements. Reliable and frequent internet connectivity is indispensable. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to the course through eLearning for the duration of the semester. Failure to check UTD or eLearning email, errors in forwarding email, and email bounced from over-quota mailboxes are not acceptable excuses for missing course-related emails or announcements.

Additionally, to protect your privacy rights, we will only send email through your official UTD email address or eLearning email. If you choose, you can redirect both of these addresses to external addresses.

NOTE: During the study trip to Costa Rica, we will have no access to the Internet. Therefore, students are expected to print eLearning readings prior to departure for Costa Rica and pack those readings with your composition notebook (which will serve as your journal), your course books, and course-related materials for the trip.

Classroom and Equipment Use Policies: **No laptops, cell phones, pagers, or other electronic messaging services may be used in the classroom during class session at UTD.** I recognize that many of us carry cell phones and other electronic communication devices so we can be contacted in the event of emergencies or other serious situations. During class time, however, all members of our classroom learning community are required to turn these off or set them to vibrate/silent.

I recognize that you may be tempted to bring cell phones to Costa Rica. This decision is up to each individual. However, during scheduled educational and service projects/fieldwork activities, cell phones must be off and put away—no exceptions! Under no circumstances may students bring laptop computers or any other computing equipment to Costa Rica—past trips have taught me that this presents SIGNIFICANT issues in terms of security and “distractions” and, therefore, they will not be permitted on this trip.

Detailed information about UTD academic policies, including student conduct and discipline, incomplete grading policy, and similar matters can be found at: <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address

http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html>

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources available to the university for investigating suspected cases of scholastic dishonesty.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying,

reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes "fair use" under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution's copyright policy (Policy Memorandum 84-I.3-46). For more information about the fair use exemption, see <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm>

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Please note: withdrawal from the class does **NOT** entitle you to a refund of any money you have paid in conjunction with the travel portion of this course.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals

Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities equal educational opportunities. Disability Services provides students with a documented letter to present to the faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for accommodation. If accommodations are granted for testing accommodations, the student should remind the instructor five days before the exam of any testing accommodations that will be needed. Disability Services is located in Room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday – Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You may reach Disability Services at (972) 883-2098.

Guidelines for documentation are located on the Disability Services website at <http://www.utdallas.edu/disability/documentation/index.html>

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.