CSES/ENSC/ALS 3954  Study Abroad: Ecuador

Experiential Learning Through Service Based Engagements: Impact of Human Activities and Climate Change on Fragile Ecosystems in Ecuador

First Summer Session, 2015

May 23-June 6, 2015

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ecuador is one of the world’s “biodiversity hotspots”. Unfortunately, due to activities such as deforestation, mining and oil drilling, road building, burning, agriculture, and herding of animals the biodiversity of several ecosystems is threatened. In the last decade, threats to ecosystem functions and integrity have been further exasperated by population growth in high diversity areas and climate change. The course will explore several biodiversity hotspots in Ecuador including the tropical Andes and western Ecuador. The impact of human activities on vegetation structure, composition, species diversity, soil degradation and water holding capacity of the natural vs managed ecosystems of the Andes and western Ecuador will be explored.

COURSE CREDIT

Students will register for 3 credits in Summer I 2015:

CSES 3954 or ENSC 3954 or ALS 3954.

These credits count toward the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences International Minor and Area 2 and 7 of the CLE. Check with your advisor to see how they may apply towards your major.

ITINERARY

• Depart from Washington, DC May 23
• Arrive in Quito, Ecuador
• Imbabura province (North of Quito)
• Otavala and Cayambe
• Cotopaxi
• Santa Domingo
• Arrive back in DC, June 6

COSTS

Program fee (ground travel, lodging, meals, excursions):
$3,000*

*does not include air fare, tuition, or other pre-departure expenses such as passport, visa, and immunizations.

Summer session tuition (3 credits): $1,021.75 (in state), $2,642.25 (out of state)

RESOURCES AND FINANCIAL AID

Scholarship and Financial Aid Office (www.finaid.vt.edu) See scholarship information below.

Scholarship information sessions Tuesday March 17th Graduate Life Center: Meeting Room B.
Times: 11:00 am, 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm.
EXCURSIONS

**Quito** - *Quito* is the capital of Ecuador. A city of 2 million, it was founded in 1534 on the ruins of an ancient Inca city. At 2,800 meters above sea level is the world’s highest official capital.

**Coastal region** – Manabi and Santo Domingo provinces are the major rich agricultural areas. The warm climate, fertile soils and proximity to ports has led to large-scale production of export crops such as coffee, bananas, sugar, cacao, palm oil and rice.

**The western chain of the Andes region:** Including Riobamba, the third largest city in Ecuador, it is located in the Andes highlands and is known locally as the "Sultan of the Andes". The western Chain of the Andes region contains Ecuador's highest peak, 6,267 meter Mount Chimborazo. This region also contains many endemic plants and wild life, cloud forest, Paramo highlands which with its spongy plant vegetation soak up water and distribute to the local inhabitants. In the Paramo’s, we will do several service learning projects.

**Imbabura:** The province of Imbabura includes municipalities of Ibarra, Atuntaqui, Otavalo (the famous market) and Cotacachi (famous leather market). The ecological reserve of Coatacachi-Cayapas is located in this province. Agriculture and tourism are the most important economic activity in the province. Over 25 varieties of maize are grown and the traditional cropping system is composed of mainly beans, quinoa, fava beans and cucumbers.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Contact Dr. Ozzie Abaye ([cotton@vt.edu](mailto:cotton@vt.edu)) or Matt Eick ([eick@vt.edu](mailto:eick@vt.edu))

**HOW TO APPLY**

Visit the GEO website for application materials. Global Education Office (GEO) ([www.educationabroad.vt.edu](http://www.educationabroad.vt.edu))

Students from CSES/ENSC/CALS have priority for the program until March 1, when it will open to all students. A completed application, letter of reference, and $500 deposit are required to be considered for inclusion in this program. Application materials are available from the GEO website ([www.educationabroad.vt.edu](http://www.educationabroad.vt.edu)). Submit completed application online and bring $500 deposit (check made out to Treasurer of Virginia Tech) to the CALS Associate Dean’s Office, 1070 Litton Reaves Hall. Upon acceptance, the Bursar’s Office will bill students for the remaining program fees.