

The following is a list of frequently asked questions and answers related to the Avian Biology Maymester trip. While these questions and answers should address many of your concerns, if there is a question that you have that is not answered please feel free to contact Dr Davis ([ajdavis@uga.edu](mailto:ajdavis@uga.edu)). In addition there will be a required and detailed predeparture orientation in April in which we will cover all logistical concerns in detail. The predeparture orientation will be open to parents and friends of students participating in the program.

**Question:** Is there financial aid/scholarships available for this trip?

**Answer:** Yes, scholarships and financial aid are available. If you receive the HOPE scholarship, this scholarship will cover the tuition portion of the trip expenses. Student loans can also be used to cover the tuition costs. For students enrolled in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences you will receive financial support for study abroad participation through the Dean's promise program (<http://www.caes.uga.edu/academics/promise/travelScholar.html>). In addition, The College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences also offers several college-wide scholarships <http://www.caes.uga.edu/academics/scholarships.html> and the money from these can be used for study abroad expenses as well. For avian biology and poultry majors the department of Poultry Science awards numerous scholarships and you can apply for these by simply filling out the college-wide application form by February 1, 2010. Finally, University-wide financial assistance can be accessed through <http://www.uga.edu/osfa/announcements.html> and [http://www.uga.edu/oie/sa\\_scholarship.htm](http://www.uga.edu/oie/sa_scholarship.htm)

**Question:** Does the program accept transient students from other colleges and universities?

**Answer:** Yes, we do accept and encourage students from other institutions to participate. We encourage transient students to apply as early as possible, because once accepted to the program you have to apply to the University of Georgia as a transient student by March 1, 2010. The following website provides detailed step by step instructions for transient students once they have been accepted to the participate in the program [http://www.uga.edu/costarica/program\\_nonuga\\_undergrad.htm](http://www.uga.edu/costarica/program_nonuga_undergrad.htm)

**Question:** What are the airline flight arrangements?

**Answer:** Course fees do not include airline tickets. Each student will be responsible for purchasing their airline tickets. We will provide recommended flights. The reason we handle flights in this manner is because it allows the student to be able to use frequent flyer miles/sky miles/employee discounts etc for the purchase of their tickets.

**Question:** Do I need to know Spanish?

**Answer:** No, knowledge of Spanish is not required.

**Question:** What are the pre-requisites for this course?

**Answer:** Poultry 1010 or permission of the professor.

**Question:** What are the course work requirements for the trip?

**Answer:** Grades are based on class participation in the daily activities and class discussions as well completing class projects. Last year the class projects included maintaining a list of birds seen, producing an advertising brochure and informative video for the program.

**Question:** How many students, professors and TAs are coming?

**Answer:** There will be 3 instructors and at most 20 student participants.

**Question:** What course work supplies will be available for students during the course?

**Answer:** 2 spotting scopes, 2 laptop computers, 4 pairs of binoculars (so you are encouraged to bring your own binoculars), 2 HD video cameras, 2 SLR cameras each equipped with a zoom lens, 3 Birds of Costa Rica Field Guides.

**Question:** Should I bring and can I use my cell phone/laptop/camera?

**Answer:** Yes, you may use these items on the trip. Each student took 500-1500 pictures last year so a camera is highly recommended. A laptop can be handy and a couple places have wireless internet coverage, however, remember you will be carrying it around at times and they can be heavy. Cell phone reception is not available in some of the more remote areas that we will be visiting. Check with your cell phone provider to see about their coverage and costs in Costa Rica. Cingular had the best coverage last year throughout the country. Calling cards can be used at any of the local phones; however it is best to purchase the cards once we arrive in Costa Rica.

**Question:** Do I need to buy electricity conversion kits?

**Answer:** No, you do not have to buy convertor kits because the electrical outlets are under the same standards as found in the U.S.

**Question:** What should I pack?

**Answer:** A packing list will be handed out during the preliminary meeting but in addition to light, breathable quick to dry clothes, suggested items to bring are: a pair of binoculars, a wildlife/bird guide of Costa Rica, and a camera. In addition, rain showers are common so you will want lots of ziplock bags to keep important documents dry, a waterproof rain jacket, and even a pair of rain pants and an umbrella are highly recommended. There are mosquitoes and other insects so a supply of bug spray is highly recommended.

**Question:** What will the food be like?

**Answer:** The Costa Rican menu includes many fruits, vegetables, beans, rice, different types of meats, fresh milk, coffee, and fruit juices but be advised that we will not have much access to tofu and other vegetarian/vegan soy products.

**Question:** What vaccines are required?

**Answer:** No additional vaccines are needed besides the ones required for attending UGA. However, if you would like to get optional vaccines, feel free to visit the UGA Health Center which offers a travel clinic that covers Costa Rica.

**Question:** What will happen if I do get sick?

**Answer:** If severe illness/injury occurs, we will always be within reach of clinics and/or hospitals. Each location of the trip was selected with this in mind. As part of your fees you will be purchasing international travel health insurance.

**Question:** Should I bring any medications?

**Answer:** Please bring any supplements and/or prescription medications that you take on a daily basis because getting these medications if you forget them will be very difficult. In addition, having a supply of motion sickness pills, Imodium, Tylenol, and Benadryl may be useful.

**Question:** What are the physical requirements?

**Answer:** The trip involves hiking but it is not too rigorous and accommodations will be provided for those physically unable to do some of the hikes.

**Question:** How likely is it that my belongings will be stolen?

**Answer:** We will be moving between hotels and research stations where cleaning staff have access to our rooms. However, the chances of having anything stolen are very low and safes will be available in most of the locations where we will be staying. Nonetheless, it is advised that you do not bring or openly display highly valuable articles of clothing and personal items that would attract the attention of thieves.

**Question:** Will I have access to an ATM/Bank?

**Answer:** Yes, there will be limited access to ATMs. ATM's will mostly be available during the initial and final portions of the trip.

**Question:** How much money should I bring?

**Answer:** Enough to cover the \$26.00 exit cash fee in order to leave Costa Rica. We would recommend about \$300 to allow you to purchase souvenirs, snacks, pay for laundry service and any additional activities such as horseback riding in Ensenada.

**Question:** What is included in the Program Fees?

**Answer:** Everything related to meals, accommodations, and study abroad student insurance is included in the program fees. In addition, the entrance fees for all the locations to be visited and all of the activities listed in the itinerary are covered by the program fees.

**Question:** What travel documents do I need.

**Answer:** A current passport is all that is required.