Costa Rica Spring Break Program – Spring 2013
IAP PROGRAM HANDBOOK

The Costa Rica Spring Break program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbooks or materials you receive from the UW-Madison School of Education as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

This program handbook contains the following information:

CONTACT INFORMATION .......................................................................................................................... 2
PROGRAM DATES ...................................................................................................................................... 2
PREPARATION BEFORE LEAVING ....................................................................................................... 3
TRAVEL AND ARRIVAL ............................................................................................................................. 4
THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM ....................................................................................................................... 5
LIVING ABROAD ....................................................................................................................................... 6
Contact Information

ON-SITE PROGRAM INFORMATION

Your primary contacts will be:

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UW Madison Faculty  
262-6975  
nienhuis@wisc.edu  
Cell Phone: +506 88 56 76 16  
Landline in Sardinal: +506 26 97 10 59  

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Tecnológico de Costa Rica (TEC) Faculty  
carlosramirezvargas@yahoo.es  
Cell Phone: +506 88 83 05 89  
Address:  
Tecnologico de Costa Rica  
Apdo. Postal 159-7050  
Cartago, Costa Rica

UW-MADISON INFORMATION

International Academic Programs (IAP)  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
106 Red Gym, 716 Langdon Street  
Madison, WI 53706  
Tel: 608-265-6329, Fax: 608-262-6998  
Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

Kate Hamoonga  
IAP Study Abroad Advisor  
(608) 265 6296  
hamoonga@studyabroad.wisc.edu

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 265 6329 between 7:45 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff on call at (608) 516 9440.

EMBASSY REGISTRATION

All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register on-line at https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate. Use the ITCR address when completing your registration.

U.S. Embassy in San Jose  
Calle 120 Avenida 0  
Pavas, San Jose  
Costa Rica  
TEL: +506 25 19 20 00  
After Hours/Emergency Tel: +506 25 19 22 80, +506 25 19 22 79  
Fax: +506 25 19 23 05  
Web: http://sanjose.usembassy.gov/
Program Dates

2013 SPRING BREAK
March 23 – 31 (see detailed daily schedule below)

Preparation Before Leaving

IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

Passport: A passport is needed to travel to Costa Rica and a copy of this passport is an application requirement. If you do not already have a passport, please contact your study abroad advisor immediately. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website http://travel.state.gov/passport/. If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

MY STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM ACCEPTANCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Accepting a spot on your program
Upon acceptance into the program, you will receive an email inviting you to log into your My Study Abroad account where you will find information about accepting a spot on your program and a program cost sheet. The program cost sheet includes specific program cost information (total program fee, a payment schedule, estimated additional expenses, payment policies, etc.) You will need to fill out acceptance forms and pay a $100 deposit to confirm your space on the program.

Financial Aid
UW-Madison students are only able to utilize financial aid for IAP study abroad programs that are four weeks or longer in duration.

Billing
The UW-Madison Bursar Office will send you an e-bill for the term you are studying abroad. This bill will most likely go out in mid-February with a due date of mid-March.

HANDLING MONEY ABROAD

The official currency of Costa Rica is the Colon (CRC). As of 12/28/2012 the exchange rate was $1 USD to 491 colones.

Budget: The only thing you will need to budget for during your program is spending money. All food, excursion fees and housing is included in your program fee. Please also be prepared to pay a $26 exit tax when you are flying out of Liberia airport. You will need to have this money in US dollars. Have a back-up plan to get additional funds in the case of an emergency.

ATM/Debit cards: It’s increasingly easy to find cajeros automáticos (ATMs) in Costa Rica, even in the smallest towns. The Visa Plus network is the standard, but machines on the Cirrus network, which accepts most foreign ATM cards, can be found in larger cities and tourist towns. The airport in Costa Rica is the best place to withdraw your spending money. Inform your financial institution of your expected
time abroad so they do not stop processing any of your ATM/debit card transactions due to belief that your card has been stolen. Also confirm with your bank any fees that you will be charged for withdrawing money internationally.

Safety with Money
Use the same precautions with money abroad that you would when traveling in any large city in the United States. Be aware of pickpockets in crowded areas and on public transportation. Carry your money and other documents in a money pouch worn inside your clothing. Use the same precautions you take at home when using an ATM; keep your pin number separate from your ATM/debit card and use machines inside banks or other buildings. Maintain a copy of all credit card numbers, traveler check numbers, and any PIN numbers in a safe place, and do not carry these with you at any time. Leave a copy of these documents with your Financial Representative in the United States.

PACKING
- Important documents (passport, emergency contact information, insurance card, ATM card, money, etc.) should be in your carry-on luggage. Also, make sure that you make a copy of important documents and leave them with a friend or family member back home to access in the case of an emergency.
- Take enough prescription medication to last the duration of the program. Keep prescription medication in their original packaging and carry a letter/prescription from your doctor explaining your condition and use of medication. Prescriptions should be packed in your carry-on luggage.
- Leisure clothes (jeans, casual shoes, long shorts, tshirts etc.)
- Jacket or fleece
- Swimsuit
- Water drinking bottle
- Photos/memorabilia from home (to share with host family)
- Diarrhea medicine
- Sunblock, hat and sunglasses for protection from harmful effects of UV sun rays.
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Camera
- Small flashlight
- Pocket knife (if you have one)
- Sleep sack, sleeping pad or bed sheets (if you prefer to use your own – the beds will have sheets)
- Valuable items, expensive jewelry, and items that cannot be replaced should be left at home.

Electronics
It is recommended that students only bring a camera with them and no other electronic items. Students should bring an electrical converter if they need to recharge their camera batteries. It is best to bring a number of rechargeable batteries since electricity may not be entirely reliable.
Travel and Arrival

Bus to/from Chicago
Participants on this program will be traveling on a bus from Madison to Chicago O’Hare airport with other program participants. This bus will depart from the Memorial Union early on Saturday March 23. The time will be communicated over email. If, for some reason, you do not want to travel on this bus, please talk with your study abroad advisor. The bus will also pick you up from O’Hare Airport on March 31st and bring you back to the Memorial Union.

Flight
From Chicago, students are required to take the US Airways group flight with other program participants. Even though you might be able to find a cheaper ticket on your own, because of the short duration of the program and the tight itinerary, unfortunately there is not an option to take a different flight. **Wait for instructions from IAP regarding purchasing a ticket on this group flight.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flight Number</th>
<th>Departure City</th>
<th>Arrival City</th>
<th>Flight Time</th>
<th>Stop Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US114</td>
<td>Chicago O’Hare</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>740A</td>
<td>1038A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US1707</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>San Jose</td>
<td>1125A</td>
<td>130P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US1858</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>240P</td>
<td>845P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US1788</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>Chicago O’Hare</td>
<td>1025P</td>
<td>1124P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arrival
Upon arrival, students will be picked up at the San Jose airport and transported to San Carlos.

The Academic Program

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM
Students will be hosted by the Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica (ITCR) in San Carlos. The class will visit with growers, cooperatives and marketers involved in organic and sustainable agriculture in two ecologically distinct regions of Costa Rica, San Carlos (humid) and Guanacaste (dry).

DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday Mar 23</td>
<td>Leave in morning to take 5:30 am flight to Miami, then on to San Jose, arriving at 1:10 pm Have lunch on road to ITCR campus in city of Sarchi. Note, we will have to be at O’hare at 4:00 am, so we will have to depart Memorial Union on LAZAR bus at 12:30 AM on Saturday morning!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Mar 24</td>
<td>In morning visit organic Pineapple and Cassava production in San Carlos region at Pablo’s farm. Later in afternoon relax at local Spa (Ecotermales).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Domingo de Ramos)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday Mar 25</td>
<td>Pack bus with luggage. Drive to Palmares and visit organic coffee production (Paulina Quesada). Light lunch. After lunch continue on to UGA center in Monteverde. Spend night in Monteverde.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday Mar 26</td>
<td>Hike and see waterfall in Monteverde. Breakfast and lunch at UGA center. Then travel from Sta. Elena to Sardinal Guanacaste. In village of Sardinal you will stay with local families we will have dinner together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wednesday  
Mar 27  
Melon, tomato and chili pepper production in Nadayure and Hojancha region of Guanacaste (near Nicoya)

Thursday  
Mar 28  
Canopy tour of dry land tropics ecosystem. Afternoon at Mata Palo Beach.

Friday  
Mar 29  
Snorkeling adventure in Pacific Ocean islands near Playas del Coco followed by visit to onion production on Volcano Miravalles. Dinner at volcanic hot springs spa – Yoko.

Saturday  
Mar 30  
River trip on Rio Tempisque  
In evening local marimba band

Sunday  
Mar 31  
Morning free for shopping or traveling or you may choose to attend Easter Mass in local Church. Depart at 12:50 pm from Liberia airport (about 20 min from village of Sardinal). Will need to leave Sardinal about 10:30 am.

REGISTRATION AND CREDIT

Students will receive 1 credit of LACIS 440 for the study abroad component of the course. Students should register on their own for the classroom component of LACIS 440 for 1 credit.

GRADING

Students will be graded on their written and oral presentation. More information provided in the class syllabus.

Living Abroad

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica is in Central America, bordering both the Caribbean Sea and the North Pacific Ocean, between Nicaragua and Panama and has a population of 4,509,290. The country is slightly smaller than West Virginia. Costa Rica is both tropical and subtropical with a dry season from December to April and a rainy season from May to November. While the country has only about 0.1% of the world’s landmass, it contains 5% of the world’s biodiversity. Historically, Costa Rica has generally enjoyed greater peace and more consistent political stability compared with many of its fellow Latin American nations.

HOUSING

During the first few days of the program, students will be housed in dormitories of the Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica (ITCR) located in San Carlos, Costa Rica. Since it is Easter week students will not be on campus. The dorms are located on-campus, which is a gated community with a security guard. Students are housed in double rooms and share a bathroom facility on their floor. Kitchen facilities are not provided in the dorm. Students will eat at local cafeterias and restaurants on and near the ICTR campus.

In the remaining five days of the field trip students, will stay with host families in the village of Sardinal de Carrillo in Guanacaste, Costa Rica. Keep in mind that because of the tight daily itinerary and short
duration of the program, there won’t be a significant amount of time for culture sharing and bonding with your host family. This may at times make the homestay experience feel slightly artificial. Living with a host family is meant to give you a glimpse of Costa Rican rural life, and a contrasting living situation from a university dormitory. The families understand that you will only be with them for a few days and have offered to welcome you into their home for this time. The RDs will be staying at a house within approximately 2-3 blocks from all homestay families. These homestay families are selected by James Nienhuis, who personally knows the families and has visited their homes.

More information about specific host families, selection process etc. can be found on the class website.

Homestay Expectations

1. Show sensitivity to Costa Rican culture, values, ideas and family norms regarding hours, manners, customs, dress and religion.
2. Be willing to learn about a different culture and language.
3. Arrive at your homestay before dark (7:00pm) every evening. It is not always safe to be out after dark.
4. Use your program facilitators as your main resource persons if issues arise in your placement.
5. Keep personal possessions in your backpack/suitcase when you are away from the house so that they are out of sight of family members.

HEALTH

It is recommended that you read through the Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for travel to Costa Rica [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/costa-rica.aspx](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/costa-rica.aspx) as well as meet with your doctor or a travel doctor prior to departure. Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities.

The group will be moving from a cold and dry winter climate to a hot and wet tropical environment. This often affects allergies. Diseases from food and water are the leading cause of illness in travelers. Follow these tips for safe eating and drinking:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before eating. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel (with at least 60% alcohol).
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes.
- Do not eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Make sure food is fully cooked.
- Avoid dairy products, unless you know they have been pasteurized.
Diseases from food and water often cause vomiting and diarrhea. Make sure to bring diarrhea medicine with you so that you can treat mild cases yourself.

**Alcohol and drug use**
Cross-cultural differences exist in the consumption of alcohol. Depending on your host country, you may find the availability and public consumption of alcohol greatly increased or decreased. Often, rules about the acceptability of alcohol use in certain situations or contexts are very different than in the United States. Excessive drinking can impact your health during the program, impair judgment, lead to risk or harm to yourself or others and have an effect on your academic performance.

Penalties for use or possession of illegal drugs can include jail terms, hard labor, and even the death penalty. Neither the U.S. Embassy nor the program offices are able to exercise effective pressure to moderate these penalties. If you are arrested, you are subject to the host country’s laws and neither the UW-Madison’s IAP office nor the U.S. Embassy can protect you from the local legal consequences. While on an IAP study abroad program, you are responsible for obeying all local laws. If IAP learns that program participants are using drugs or breaking other local laws, participants will be confronted and may be asked to leave the program.

**SAFETY**
IAP is dedicated to maintaining the personal safety and security for each of our study abroad participants. Our office takes necessary precautions, remains in close contact with program staff and works with them in case of an emergency. You are encouraged to contact your IAP Study Abroad Advisor if you are concerned about your safety or welfare.

U.S. citizens are encouraged to exercise the same level of caution they would in major cities or tourist areas throughout the world. Local law enforcement agencies have limited capabilities and do not act according to U.S. standards. Travelers should minimize driving at night, especially outside urban areas. Americans should walk or exercise with a companion, bearing in mind that crowded tourist attractions and resort areas popular with foreign tourists are common venues for criminal activities. Travelers should ignore any verbal harassment, and avoid carrying passports, large amounts of cash, jewelry or expensive photographic equipment. A common scam involves one person dropping change in a crowded area, such as on a bus. When the victim tries to assist, a wallet or other item is taken.

**CISI INSURANCE**
Health insurance is included in your program fees and is provided by Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). CISI insurance will cover you while traveling to other countries and provides medical evacuation and repatriation benefits. Still, it is important to arrange for continuation of your regular health insurance coverage while you are studying abroad.

CISI insurance coverage generally will start a day or two before the official program start date and terminate within a week of the program's conclusion. You will be able to access your CISI card through a web-based portal that will be linked through your My Study Abroad account. IAP will email you instructions on how to download the cards when they are available. You may then print the personalized ID card, which you should take with you and keep on your person during the duration of your program. You will also have access to brochure explaining the policy coverage. You can store the PDF to your computer files for safe keeping/e-mailing to your parent or whomever you wish. Note that the card comes as a PDF. Mac users have been unable to download the card using the Safari browser. Firefox has worked on Macs to get the cards.
Coverage of pre-existing health conditions has special provisions. Please refer to your CISI brochure for details on the provisions for coverage eligibility. You should also check with your current health insurance provider to see if you are covered internationally.

Doctors and hospitals outside of the United States often expect immediate cash payment for health services. You may need to pay up front for medical expenses and send a CISI insurance claim form along with the original receipt to CISI for reimbursement. CISI insurance claim forms can be found in the online brochure found in the Pre-Departure Info tab of My Study Abroad or on IAP’s Web site: (http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu/insurance/index.html#CISI).

For questions regarding the CISI insurance policy, claims, status of reimbursements for claims, or to extend your CISI coverage contact:

Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)
River Plaza · 9 West Broad Street · Stamford, CT 06902-3788
Tel: 203-399-5183 · Fax 203-399-5596
www.culturalinsurance.com

For medical referrals and information abroad, emergency medical assistance, or questions regarding medical evacuations or repatriation, contact:

CISI TEAM ASSIST (24-hour emergency assistance)
From the U.S. call: 877-577-9504
From outside the U.S. call collect: 1-240-330-1520
Email: OPS@europassistance-usa.com
CISI Policy Number: GLB 9133969

COMMUNICATION

Telephone: When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences www.timeanddate.com/worldclock. To make an international call to the United States from Costa Rica, dial “001” followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial “011”, the country code (506) and the phone number. The number 2 proceeds each land line phone number and the number 8 proceeds each cell phone number. Other country and city codes can be found online www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html. Some of above steps can vary if you are using a calling card.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

International Academic Programs (IAP) at UW-Madison:
www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

General Orientation Information:
www.worldwide.edu/travel_planner/index.html (includes topics such as culture shock, international travel, etc.)

U.S. State Department:
travel.state.gov

U.S. State Department Students Abroad site:
http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/

Center for Disease Control:  
www.cdc.gov/travel/

Current Exchange Rates:  
www.x-rates.com

Costa Rica Tourist Website :  
http://www.tourism.co.cr/