Costa Rica Spring Break Program – Spring 2010
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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262-6975
nienhuis@wisc.edu
Cell Phone: +506 88 56 76 16
Landline in Sardinal: +506 26 97 10 59

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

UW-MADISON INFORMATION

International Academic Programs (IAP)
University of Wisconsin-Madison
250 Bascom Hall, 500 Lincoln Drive
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: 608-265-6329, Fax: 608-262-6998
Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

For Program Advising & Grades:
Kate Hamoonga
IAP Study Abroad Advisor
(608) 265 6296
hamoonga@bascom.wisc.edu

For Financial Matters:
Judy Humphrey
IAP Financial Specialist
(608) 262 6785
jhumphrey@bascom.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
Program Dates

2010 SPRING BREAK
March 27 - April 4 (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 submit a $100 deposit, a signed IAP deposit ticket, and the IAP acceptance form to confirm your participation on the program. These must be submitted in person to IAP by Tuesday February 16.

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 is sent to the billing address in My UW in February with a March 15 due date.
HANDLING MONEY ABROAD

The official currency of Costa Rica is the Colon (CRC). As of 1/11/10, the exchange rate was $1 USD to 584 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, t-shirts 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 Chicago
Participants on this program will be traveling on a bus from Madison to Chicago with other program participants. This bus will depart from the Memorial Union at 12:45am on Saturday March 27. If, for some reason, you do not want to travel on this bus, please talk with your study abroad advisor.

Flight
From Chicago, students are required to take a group flight with other program participants. There is not an option to take a different flight. These seats are currently reserved on American Airlines. After you have been accepted and have confirmed your space on the program, you will receive an email with more information about purchasing this ticket. Your ticket must be purchased by February 25.

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

<p>| Monday Mar 29 | Organic vegetable production in highlands near Zarcero and organic coffee production near Heredia. |
| Tuesday Mar 30 | Depart ITCR after breakfast and and drive to Guanacaste (4 ½ hrs). This is traveling from lowland wet to lowland dry ecosystem. Stay with local familias in village of Sardinal de Carrillo, Guanacaste. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Melon and chili pepper production in Nadayure and Hojancha region. Warner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Venegas, Hojancha. Melones del Sol, Nadayure Visit Chili pepper producer in</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Blas. Later in afternoon, watermelon production at Finca Irineo, Santa</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cruz.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td><strong>Jueves Santo</strong> Morning, snorkeling at Playas del Coco. In afternoon, travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>to Volcán Miravalles to see onion production. Dinner at Yoko spa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td><strong>Viernes Santo</strong> Canopo tour in Nuevo Colon, later relax at Mata Palo beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 2</td>
<td>(Viernes Santo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Tour of Parque Nacional Palo Verde – Río Tempisque.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>(Pascuas) Morning free for shopping or traveling, or if you choose, attend</td>
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<td></td>
<td>religious services for Easter. Depart from Liberia airport in early afternoon.</td>
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**REGISTRATION AND CREDIT**

Students will receive 1 credit of LACIS 440 for the study abroad component of the course. Students will have option to take the classroom component for 1 or 2 credits.

**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. 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

If you have physical or mental health conditions or prescriptions, it is recommended that you meet with your doctor prior to departure for Costa Rica. 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.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions may be obtained from the Centers for Disease

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 covers travel 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. A copy of the insurance policy is available on IAP’s Web site:
http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu/insurance/index.html#CISI.

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 brochures 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: GLM N04835256
ASSIST ID#: GLM N04835256

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]