

# Costa Rica

## UCEAP Advising Notes

### Objective

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad (BSA) Adviser to review program-specific details that may impact a student's decision to apply for a UCEAP program. The document is not a summary of eligibility requirements, academic, housing, application, and other logistical details freely available to students on the UCEAP and BSA websites. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website or the Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA Adviser for this program.

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# Programs

## Tropical Biology and Conservation (Fall, Spring)

### Course Articulation

Courses on this program have been articulated by the Integrative Biology and Genetic & Plant Biology departments for satisfying certain requirements in the major. Please consult directly with the department on questions around course articulation.

#### [Integrative Biology](#)

- Biol 101, Tropical Diversity, 2.7 units counts towards Group B)
- Biol 102, Tropical Community Ecology, 2.7 units counts towards Group B and Field Lab
- Biol 188, Tropical Research Practicum, 2.7 units counts towards Group B with Field Lab

#### Genetic & Plant Biology:

- Biol 101 Tropical Diversity (2.7 units) and Biol 102 Tropical Community Ecology (2.7 units) count as Genetics and Plant Biology major upper-division elective courses.

### Course Prerequisites

Three Biological Sciences courses are required by the time of participation. It is recommended that at least one biological science prerequisite is an upper-division class. Labs that are a component of the course (e.g. Biology 1AL) are not considered a separate course. The requirement can be fulfilled by completing a combination of three in any of the following:

- AP Biology test score of 4 or greater (students who fulfill the 3 biological sciences courses entirely with courses may be given priority for selection to the program).
- Lower Division Courses
  - Biology 1A: General Biology
  - Biology 1B: General Biology
  - Biology 11: Introduction to the Science of Living Organisms
  - IB 41: Marine Mammals
  - IB 42: Primate Biology
  - INTEGBI C32: Bioinspired Design
  - IB C82: Oceans
  - IB 87: Introduction to Research Methods in Biology
  - ESPM 2: The Biosphere
  - ESPM 6: Environmental Biology
  - ESPM C10: Environmental Issues
  - ESPM 15: Introduction to Environmental Sciences



- ESPM C22AC: Fire: Past, Present and Future Interactions with the People and Ecosystems of California
- ESPM 44: Biological Control
- LDARCH 12: Environmental Science for Sustainable Development
- PLANTBIO 22: Microbial Friends and Foes
- PMB 40: The (Secret) Life of Plants
- Upper Division Courses
  - IB 102LF: California Plants
  - IB 103LF: Invertebrate Zoology
  - IB 104LF: Natural History of Vertebrates
  - IB C107L: Principles of Plant Morphology
  - IB C110L: Biology of Fungi
  - IB 113L: Paleobiology: Ecology & Evolution
  - IB 117 L&LF: Medical Ethnobotany
  - IB 135: Mechanics of Organisms
  - IB 144: Animal Behavior
  - IB 146LF: Behavioral Ecology
  - IB C149/L Molecular Ecology
  - IB 150: Evolutionary Environmental Physiology
  - IB 151/L: Plant Physiological Ecology
  - IB 152: Environmental Toxicology
  - IB 153LF: Ecology
  - IB 154/L: Plant Ecology
  - IB C155, also ANTHRO C129D: Holocene Paleoecology
  - IB C156, Principles of Conservation Biology
  - IB 157LF: Ecosystems of California
  - IB 158 LF: Biology and Geomorphology of Tropical Islands (IB Moorea program)
  - IB 162: Ecological Genetics
  - IB 166: Evolution Biogeography
  - IB 168L: Systematics of Vascular Plants
  - IB 173LF: Mammalogy
  - IB 174LF: Ornithology
  - IB 175LF: Herpetology
  - ESPM C103: Conservation Biology
  - ESPM 102A: Terrestrial Resource Ecology
  - ESPM 110: Primate Ecology
  - ESPM 111: Ecosystem Ecology
  - ESPM 114: Wildlife Ecology
  - ESPM 116B: Grassland and Woodland Ecology
  - ESPM 116C: Tropical Forest Ecology
  - ESPM 132: Spider Biology
  - ESPM 140: General Entomology
  - ESPM 142: Insect Behavior
  - ESPM 144: Insect Physiology



- ESPM C115A: Freshwater Ecology
- ESPM C149: Molecular Ecology
- ESPM 152: Global Change Biology
- PLANTBI 135: Physiology and Biochemistry of Plants
- PMB C101L: Experimental Plant Biology Laboratory
- PMB C102: Diversity of Plants & Fungi
- PMB 107&107L: Principles of Plant Morphology w/ Laboratory
- PMB C110L Biology of Fungi with Laboratory
- PMB 113: California Mushrooms
- PMB C114 Introduction to Comparative Virology
- PMB 120/L: Biology of Algae
- PMB 180 Environmental Plant Biology

If you have taken another course you believe will satisfy the requirement, please email the BSA Adviser for the UCEAP Costa Rica program and request that the course be reviewed for use as the prerequisite.

## Curriculum

Because this program was designed as a quarter-long program for UC students, Berkeley students supplement their studies prior to departure with an independent study-directed reading course (BIOL 189: Integrative Biology Supplemental Seminar). This course is completed before the start of the on-site portion of the program and concludes with a research paper. Students do not have to be on-site in Costa Rica for the Biol 189 independent study-directed reading course since all work is completed remotely.

All students take the same courses. The program culminates with an independent research project and research symposium. Students can also opt to take a 1 semester unit course on Nature Filmmaking.

## Special Demands of the Program

Many days of the Monteverde program are spent on field trips, which include long, often strenuous, hikes. In addition to the homestay, students also live and work side-by-side with a group of other UC students in the Monteverde Biological Station. Students should be prepared for the physical challenges as well as the residential limitations of the program.



## How to Decide Between Fall or Spring in Costa Rica

	Fall	Spring
<b>Weather</b>	Generally a rainier start to the program, gets drier as the program continues	Generally a drier start to the program, gets rainier as the program continues
	Air temperatures can get cold in Monteverde (55°F in December)	Air temperatures can get hot in Santa Rosa (95°F in April)
	Can experience hurricanes	Can experience intense thunder and lightning storms
<b>Field Trip</b>	16 nights (5 in tents, 10 in a bed and indoors)	12 nights (all in tents)
	All within Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG) and Northwest Costa Rica.	Half in Osa Conservation Area (ACOSA), half in Guanacaste Conservation Area (ACG)
	5 nights camping in tents are on Isla San Jose in protected marine area	6 of the nights in tents are on Isla Violin (wet forest near Osa Peninsula)
	5 of the nights in a bed and indoors are in a homestay in a fishing village	6 of the nights in tents are in the Santa Rosa Sector (dry forest, ACG)
	More time in marine habitats	Observe fire control by fire crew in restoration areas and discuss logistics and biology of fire control
<b>Biological Highlights</b>	Sea turtles nesting	Many species of birds breeding (including resplendent quetzals)



	Major bird migrations for North America	Much insect activity with onset of rains
		Many amphibians breeding
<b>Academics Overall</b>	Same	Same
<b>Independent Project Options</b>	Similar	Similar, but can research bird breeding and amphibian breeding

## Students with Disabilities

In Costa Rica, accessibility and accommodation are limited. Costa Rica has legislation that mandates access to transportation, communication, and public buildings for persons with disabilities, but the government does not effectively enforce these laws. Many buildings, including hotels, restaurants, and bars, remain inaccessible. Costa Rica is not wheelchair friendly. The Monteverde Cloud Forest is not accessible. There are no roads going into the park and the most accessible hiking trail has one-inch boards protruding from the ground every five meters to prevent erosion.

Review how to request disability-related accommodations on the [I am a Student with a Disability Page](#).

## LGBTQIA+ Students

Threat to safety in the LGBTIQ community is low. Societal tolerance ranges from mixed tolerance to tolerant.

Review tips and resources for [LGBTQIA+ Identifying Students](#)

## Working Abroad

Students are not permitted to work in Costa Rica during the program

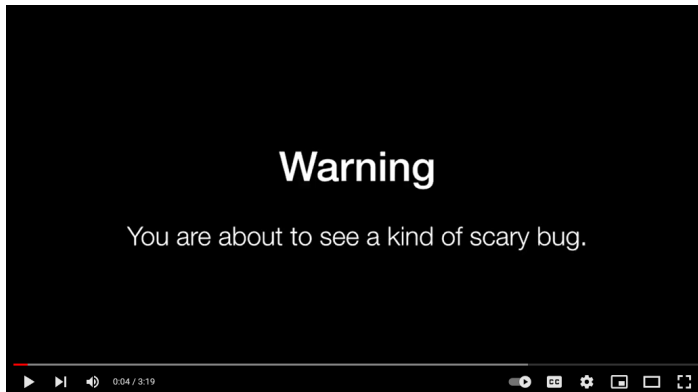


# Resources

## Costa Rica Vlogs | Raina B. (Fall 2021)



[Costa Rica Vlog | Pitilla](#)



[Costa Rica Vlog | Santa Rosa](#)



[Costa Rica Vlog | Monteverde](#)



## Center for Latin American Studies

The more informed you are about the history and current affairs of Costa Rica and Latin America, the more fulfilling your study abroad experience will likely be. In addition to keeping up with Spanish language study prior to departure, you are also highly encouraged to attend lectures and events put on by the [Center for Latin American Studies](#) at UC Berkeley. You can join [CLAS email](#) list for event reminders.