

Costa Rica Field Research in Tropical Ecosystems

Summer 2022

Visit <http://meredith.edu/oip> for Study Abroad 101, Study Abroad Advising, and Funding Workshops.

Application Deadline

Program applications accepted until **February 15, 2022**. Click "[Apply to Study Abroad](#)" to begin your online application.

Dates

June 12 – June 26, 2022

Location

Participate in hands-on workshops on wildlife monitoring and field techniques at Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Preserve, Pacuare Nature Reserve, and Veragua Rainforest.

Student Voices

"Studying abroad in Costa Rica was an amazing experience! In just three weeks, I created new friendships, immersed myself into a new culture, and participated in a research project. Studying abroad was definitely a life-changing experience, and I am so grateful that I was able to do it with strong Meredith women." – Katelyn Steadman, Summer 2017

Journey Highlights

Costa Rica boasts one of the richest diversities of flora and fauna in the world! This course involves two weeks of study in cloud, coastal, and wet forests, and experiencing "pura vida," the pure life that makes up the culture of Costa Rica. This program partners with the Tropical Science Center, a local organization focused on conservation, research, and education in Costa Rica, to provide students with a "Mountains-to-Sea" experience that explores the cloud forest, lowland rainforest, and Caribbean sea through the lens of local biodiversity experts. Throughout the program, students will engage in academic activities that range from hiking rugged trails to listening to lectures on biodiversity and conservation, and participate in hands-on workshops on wildlife monitoring and field techniques led by local scientists.

This Costa Rican adventure begins in the mountains at the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. The group will spend several days experiencing biodiversity of the region through nature walks with local experts in the cloud forest and surrounding areas, as well as connecting with community efforts to farm sustainably and restore habitats. The group will then travel down into the lowland rainforest of Veragua. Here we will get hands-on experience with field techniques that involve the monitoring of reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and insects for conservation research. Following Veragua, the group will travel to Pacuare Reserve along the Caribbean coast, and spend the next few nights working with field researchers on a sea turtle census project.

Note: While this brochure describes what we plan to offer in summer 2022, Meredith College Office of International Programs reserves the right to make changes to the program itinerary, schedule, cost, academic program, etc., as necessary.

Faculty

Dr. Caro Perez-Heydrich, Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences and Director of Undergraduate Research, cperezheydrich@meredith.edu

Dr. Maria Pickering-Villa, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, mpickering@meredith.edu

Courses – 6 credits

BIO 215: Tropical Ecosystems (4 credits, required)

Fulfills Global Perspectives, Natural Science Elective, Science in Society *or* Cultural Elective

An interdisciplinary field biology course with focus on tropical ecosystems, natural history, and conservation. The ecological complexity of the tropics, the patterns of species diversity and the types of species interactions that characterize these systems are discussed, as well as how these ecological processes are affected by human activities. The approach is experiential, with emphasis on developing scientific skills of observation, analysis, and critical thinking, and applying them to field research.

BIO 499: Field Research in Costa Rica (2 credits, required)

Fulfills Information Literacy, Oral Communications, and Experiential Learning

A research and seminar course in which students conduct original laboratory, field, or library-based research. Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of research, analytical, analysis, and communication skills that are used in biological research. Students will be required to present their research orally and in written form.

Cost

\$3,500 includes:

- \$100 non-refundable Commitment Deposit (billed to Meredith student account after acceptance)
- Tuition for 6 credits
- Housing and most meals at field stations
- Academic excursions & program activities

Additional expenses include:

- Round-trip airfare estimate – \$1,000
- Passport (if needed) – \$150
- International health insurance – \$46
- Personal spending money – \$200-\$400

Note: Estimates are based on previous student reports. Your spending habits may differ.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

Additional study abroad funding is available, including a special scholarship for biology or sustainability majors. Register for a Funding Workshop and access the scholarship application at <https://www.meredith.edu/oip>.

Scholarship deadline: February 15, 2022.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Considerations

The Office of International Programs, in partnership with Meredith's Health Center, will continue monitoring daily the following resources regarding coronavirus and international travel:

- CDC
- U.S. State Department
- Overseas Security Advisory Council
- World Health Organization
- American College Health Association
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators professional listserv and the Forum on Education Abroad (peer institution responses)
- Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) updates
- Email announcements and communications from affiliate study abroad providers
- Multiple news outlets

All study abroad participants are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This includes recommendations by the CDC and host countries at the time of program departure, including but not limited to boosters, vaccine timelines, etc.