

At a Glance...

UVA in the Bahamas

Marine Biology/Coral Reef Ecology
BIOL 3660/EVSC 3660 (4 Credits)

This course is designed to introduce students to the plants and animals found in the marine and terrestrial environments of the Caribbean and to study their adaptations in the context of community ecology. Fishes, invertebrates, reptiles, and marine algae will be the major groups encountered and snorkeling will be used for observation and underwater field work. SCUBA certification is not required.

Dates

This program is held May 12-June 1

Costs**

In-state \$3,245
Out-of-state \$3,629

View the program Budget Sheet online for additional cost estimates such as airfare to Nassau and incidentals.

**These costs include airfare to and from San Salvador from Nassau, Bahamas. Students are responsible for housing in Charlottesville (if applicable).

To Apply:

1. Visit www.studyabroad.virginia.edu
2. View the Education Abroad Workshop
3. Complete the program application

Application Deadline

March 1

Financial aid and scholarships are available for education abroad. Financial information is available at:

www.virginia.edu/studyabroad/planningbudgeting.html



Contact Information

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Explore
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UVA in the Bahamas

Marine Biology/Coral Reef Ecology



Summer 2017

Program Information

Overview

This course emphasizes marine biology/ecology and field work will be a major activity. Attention will be given to survey methodology, identification, sampling techniques, research design and other useful field skills.

Lectures, lab work, discussions and readings will supplement the field work, as will an independent research project during the second week. The coral reefs at San Salvador are very rich, quite accessible and easily studied. A typical day's work may include visits to two or more field locations.



Class at the research center

Location

The program takes place on the island of San Salvador, easternmost island in the Bahamas. Participants are housed at the Gerace Research Center, a science laboratory/field station chartered by the Bahamian Government and operated under an American director. Facilities include vehicles for class field trips, labs with running sea water, air-conditioned lecture rooms, specimen repository, library and canteen. Food and lodging are provided at the station. Clear water and spectacular field sites with abundant, shore-accessible coral reefs for serious study are the major attractions.

Course and Credit

First year and upper-class students are invited to apply. This is a serious upper-level course but it is not restricted to biology majors or those planning careers in biology/ecology. For Biology B.A. candidates, it meets the upper level/lab requirement or it can be used as 4 upper level hours toward a B.S. degree in Biology.

A three or four day orientation session in Charlottesville just prior to departure will be used for lectures, discussions, and to introduce the observation, collection and identification techniques to be employed in the course. Also, a local field trip and possibly an overnight field trip will be scheduled. During the first week of the 15 days spent on San Salvador the course emphasis is on visiting all of the 12 or more different ecological sites on the island. Following each site visit there are discussions about adaptations seen in the field and the significance of these adaptations in the context of morphology, anatomy, physiology, behavior, development and ecology. Another major focus of the course is on the variety of organismal interactions that occur on the reefs and their ecological/evolutionary implications.

Although the major theme of the course is biological, it is also appropriate that attention be paid to the significant social, cultural, and historical attractions found on the island.



Class field work

To this end, interactions with the local culture are encouraged. Also, students encounter individuals conducting current research projects at San Salvador in the fields of

geology, anthropology, archaeology, pathology and conservation. Several of these investigators will present their research to our group.



Students snorkeling

Pre-requisites

Biology 2010-2020 and 2040 or their equivalents or permission of instructor. Also, an interest in organismal biology, hard work and a desire to participate in an educational experience that emphasizes instructor-class interactions and approaches not available in a typical course.

Accommodations

Accommodations at the Gerace Research Center are rustic, but quite adequate.

Faculty

Professors Fred Diehl and David Smith, from UVA, and four to six additional faculty members from UVA and other institutions will be in residence at all times. The normal class size is 20-27 students, providing an excellent faculty to student ratio! All faculty have taught in the program numerous times and represent a wide range of scientific expertise and a variety of research/teaching interests.