

Important Information ICISP/COD Costa Rica 2014

Purpose

College of DuPage Field and Interdisciplinary Studies/Study Abroad, in association with the Illinois Consortium for International Studies and Programs (ICISP), offers a one month program of study in Language and Culture in Costa Rica. The purpose of the program is to provide an integrated approach that combines intensive language study and cultural immersion through home stay and cultural excursions. This combination offers students an opportunity to study the Spanish language and acquire first-hand knowledge of the people and culture of Costa Rica.

Costa Rica and San José

Costa Rica has an area of only 19,575 square miles (roughly the size of West Virginia or Vermont and New Hampshire combined), but since it ranges in altitude from sea level to nearly 13,000 feet, it is a continent in miniature. There are rain forests, cloud forests, mangroves, jungles, deserts, volcanoes and beaches, more than 8,000 species of plants and more than 800 species of birds, more than in all of the U.S. and Canada combined.

In a part of the world where rebellion, repression and extreme poverty seem to be endemic, Costa Rica stands out because of the absence of these social changes. It has traditionally been one of the most stable and democratic republics in Latin America. Having celebrated more than 100 years of free and democratic elections and more than 50 years of having abolished its army, Costa Rica can be described as an orderly and friendly country with the highest standard of living in Central America, a good health care system and a literacy rate of more than 96 percent.

San José, the capital, is the cultural center of the country, with many museums and theaters. Since it is situated at 3,800 feet above sea level, its 1-million inhabitants enjoy year-round daytime temperatures in the 70s.

Admission Requirements

The program is open to serious students, teachers, and others who have a strong interest in immersing themselves in another culture. Applicants are required to obtain a physician's approval as part of the application process. There will be a personal interview to determine the applicant's maturity, ability to adapt to a different environment, and function successfully as a member of the group. The successful

completion of the application process is required for admission to the program. College students must also present evidence of a 2.75 GPA. If an applicant has special needs, the program will attempt to make whatever reasonable accommodations are possible, but as in many developing countries, it may be difficult to travel in Costa Rica.

Orientation

A mandatory pre-departure orientation will be held at College of DuPage. This typically occurs over two days in May.

Language Classes

All students are required to enroll in a Spanish Language class. Classes will accommodate students at any level: Beginning I and II, Mid-level I and II and Advanced I and II. However, students who have already studied Spanish one year in college or two years in high school will benefit more from the program. In the language classes, conversation, together with grammar, is stressed in the small class setting. Prior to the beginning of classes, all students will be tested and placed at the appropriate level. Changes can be made if a student progresses at a faster rate or shows different learning needs.

Culture and Civilization of Costa Rica

All students are required to enroll in this class. The course of study covers the geography, history, political and social institutions and the art and architecture of Costa Rica. This class first meets at the mandatory orientation session.

In Costa Rica, the course will continue with guided cultural excursions to theaters, museums and other places of interest that are integral components of this class, and therefore, attendance is required. A short written report on each visit is also required.

Faculty and Staff

All language classes will be taught by faculty members from Costa Rica. The Culture and Civilization of Costa Rica class will be team-taught in Spanish and English by College of DuPage faculty and the directors of the program. The directors are available daily, in Costa Rica, to counsel, supervise and assist students.

Discussion Sessions in Costa Rica

Time will be set aside for the purpose of discussing interests, impressions and reactions to Costa Rican culture.

Credits

Upon successful completion of classes, students will receive credit for Beginning, Mid-level or Advanced Spanish (up to 4 semester credit hours) depending on placement, and Humanities: Culture and Civilization of Costa Rica (3 semester credit hours.)

Students are advised to verify course enrollment/credit with their home school before enrolling in the program.

Grades

Costa Rican Instructors will assign the grade for the language class. The directors will assign the Culture and Civilization class grade.

Housing and Meals

Students will be housed in carefully selected Costa Rican homes in double occupancy rooms. They will be provided with breakfast, dinner and laundry service during the homestay period. This arrangement provides the opportunity for the student to continue practicing Spanish and to share the everyday life of the "ticos". Families are chosen for their friendliness and helpfulness. Except in remote areas, the water in Costa Rica is drinkable. The homes are near public transportation. A few may be within walking distance to class. Lunch is not provided but there are many excellent places to eat.

Activities, Field Trips and Excursions

Activities specified in the program schedule are included in the price of the program.

Optional Excursions

Information will be provided on a variety of optional excursions that are not included in the price of the program. These may include Rain Forest Aerial Tram, Island Cruise, 2-day Monteverde Cloud Forest and 2-day Tortuguero National Park.

Program Cost

The total fee will be \$3,099 plus tuition. Many types of financial aid can be applied to study abroad. Check with your financial aid office for more information.

The program fee includes:

- Round-trip airfare from Chicago
- Hotel accommodations on included excursions
- Double occupancy home stay
- Breakfast and dinner during home stay
- Full-time administrative staff
- Transfers to and from the airport in San José

- Admissions and excursions listed as included in the cost of the program
- Textbooks for the language classes

Not included in the program fee:

- Tuition and fees up to seven semester hours (check with your home institution)
- Passport fees
- Visa fees (only if not a U.S. citizen)
- Optional excursions
- Personal expenses
- Telephone calls
- Lunches and other meals while not in home stay
- Costa Rican departure tax
- Checked baggage

Steps to Study Abroad:

APPLY

Fill out the **Application Packet** and submit the information to your campus ICISP representative. The application packet includes:

- Application form
- \$600 deposit
- Essay
- Two recommendation forms
- Housing preferences form
- Official transcript

DEPOSIT

A \$600 deposit is due with the application submission. This payment will not be processed until the application, interview and registration are complete. Checks should be made payable to College of DuPage. Credit card payments are an option by contacting College of DuPage's Field Studies/Study Abroad office.

SUBMIT FINAL PAPERWORK

Upon acceptance into the program, students will receive and be required to submit the following:

- Emergency contact information sheet
- Statement regarding the use of Spanish
- Student conduct agreement
- General agreement

- Sexual harassment form
- Release agreement
- Physician's statement
- Copy of valid medical insurance card
- Medical insurance info sheet

REMAINING PAYMENTS

Once registered for this program, the remaining payments can be made online, at the COD cashier's office or at the Field Studies/Study Abroad office. Questions regarding payments should be directed to the Field Studies/Study Abroad office at (630) 942-2356.

First payment/deposit:	\$ 600
April1 Installment :	\$1,250
May1 Installment :	\$1,249

Students need to check with their home institution to determine tuition cost for 6-7 credit hours.

ALL PAYMENTS ARE DUE PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.

Late Payments

Participants who fall behind in their payments by more than one week will be assessed \$15 for each late payment.

Late Applicants

We welcome students beyond the application deadline if space is available. However, additional charges may apply. Students enrolling late must pay the application fee and the total amount due up to that point when they apply.

Changes in Prices

The program fees are based on air and land rates in effect at the time of writing and are subject to change without notice, due to possible increases in the cost of air transportation or land arrangements, devaluation of currencies or other reasons not under the control of College of DuPage.

Withdrawals and Refund Policy

Notification of withdrawal must be in writing. Claims for refunds must be in writing. (Actual refund amount will be determined by program directors.) The \$600 application fee is non-refundable unless the applicant is not accepted into the program. No refunds within 30 days of departure. Due to special contracts and conditions, no refunds will be given under any circumstances for unused meals, accommodations, land transportation or other activities once the trip has started. Substitutions are not allowed. We suggest the purchase of trip cancellation insurance.

Transportation

Air transportation is provided by regularly scheduled and approved airlines. No changes or deviations in itinerary/schedule are allowed. All participants must travel as a group to and from Costa Rica, departing from and returning to Chicago. Trip extensions are not allowed. Directors will have participants' tickets.

Passport

Each participant must have a valid passport that does not expire for at least 6 months after the anticipated return date to the U.S. Participants are responsible for obtaining their own passports. As passports can take substantial time to obtain, apply for it as soon as possible. Information can be obtained at <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>

Visa

U.S. citizens do not need a visa to travel to Costa Rica. Non- U.S. citizens may need a Visa.

Immunizations

No special immunizations are required for travel to Costa Rica. However, it is wise to have an up-to-date tetanus inoculation. Each participant should check with his/her physician for information regarding personal health needs.

Insurance

All participants are required to have medical insurance, which is valid outside the United States and to show proof of such insurance.

Insurance can also be purchased to provide protection against cancellations and lost or damaged baggage. We suggest trip or cancellation insurance to cover the cost of the program if you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to illness or other reasons.

Clothing

Clothing guidelines will be provided at orientation. You do not need as much clothing as you might think. It is not wise to purchase a new wardrobe because clothing gets harsh treatment when traveling. Be sure you have comfortable walking shoes. Do pack an umbrella. The month of June can be quite rainy. Temperatures in San José will be in the 70s by day. At the coast the temperature can be in the 90s. Linens and towels are provided by the family.

Money Matters

We recommend at least \$200-\$250 per week for spending money (lunches, incidentals, museum visits, theaters, concerts, etc.) plus more for when we are on excursions outside the homestay and if you plan to participate in optional trips. Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted in Costa Rica. Each participant should have a credit card (Visa or MasterCard) with his/her name on it in order to cover medical emergencies, which must be paid for in advance even with medical insurance. However, do not take extra credit cards, such as cards for local stores or gas cards, as you will have no need for them. There are automatic teller machines in Costa Rica, which accept most ATM cards.

Mail, Fax and E-mail

It takes a week or more for mail from the U.S. to reach Costa Rica. It is very important to remember this during the last two weeks. You may have mail sent to you at the school.

You may receive faxes at the school however, faxes cannot be sent from the school. You can send faxes from the post office in San Pedro and other places in San José. There are computers at the school that you may use for email, and there are many inexpensive Internet cafés in San José.

Rules of Behavior

These rules have not been drawn up to restrict freedom, but to ensure that the program is successful. The participants are subject at all times to the guidance and authority of the Directors, who have the right to enforce appropriate standards of conduct. The Directors reserve the right to dismiss any participant for reasons which appear to them to be valid in their sole judgment. The Directors shall have the right to withdraw a student from the program without refund or credit if his/her conduct causes serious inconvenience for the rest of the group or for any actions or conduct, which the Directors consider to be incompatible with the interest, harmony, comfort and welfare

of others or the reputation of the program. The use of illegal drugs and/or the excessive use of alcoholic beverages are not allowed and are grounds for termination of participation in the program. Each student will be required to indicate his/her compliance with these rules by signing a separate Student Conduct Agreement. The judgment of the Directors will be final in all matters of discipline. Students may not withdraw from classes without consulting with the Directors.

Cancelation/Refund Policy

In the event that the participant wishes to withdraw from the program, certain penalties may apply, since arrangements for your program occur months prior to its actual departure date. Services are planned and commitments are made on behalf of all participants. Suppliers require advanced deposits and payments. Final payments for all services are sent to vendors months in advance of departure. These payments are non-refundable since contractual agreements stipulate penalties to be applied to services requested but not used. Please note that no refunds will be made for any services provided in the itinerary that you do not use. Thus, please be aware that no refunds will be issued within 30 days of departure. Please understand that if you change your plans for ANY reason, your right to a refund is limited.

All cancelations and refund requests must be made in writing and sent to:

College of DuPage
Field and Interdisciplinary Studies/Study Abroad,BIC 3509
425 Fawell Blvd
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-6599