THE PROGRAM

Coral reefs are among the most diverse and productive marine communities, yet reefs worldwide are threatened by global climate change. One of the major themes of this program is to understand how insight from studies of past episodes of natural environmental change recorded in the fossil record can allow scientists to predict future responses of reef systems to anthropogenic changes in modern ecosystems. San Salvador, Bahamas provides a unique opportunity for students to be able to observe and analyze both ancient and modern marine communities. Modern reefs can be accessed by snorkeling from shore, and several well developed ancient reef sites can also be found on the island. Students will learn to identify corals, fish, and other organisms in the field, map diversity and abundance of biota using transects, compare the structure and composition of ancient and modern reef assemblages, identify threats to reefs and assess their current health, and evaluate the effectiveness of various conservation strategies. Students completing the course will gain practical skills in sampling and data analysis, as well as a much deeper understanding of how data from ancient and modern sources can allow scientists to predict how current patterns of biodiversity may shift in the future.

ELIGIBILITY

This program is open to all students in good academic standing with Georgia State University. Preference will be given to 1) students enrolled in the accompanying HON 1000 seminar entitled Human Impacts and the Future of Conservation: Perspectives from Modern Habitats and the Fossil Record, 2) students in the Honors College, and 3) undergraduate and graduate students with a 3.0 or higher GPA studying in the fields of biology, geosciences, or environmental sciences. Program size is limited and participation is contingent upon acceptance by the Program Directors.

Day 1: Morning: Depart Atlanta
Afternoon: Travel to Bahamas (Nassau stop or San Salvador depending on flights)
Evening: Set up and orientation meeting at Gerace Research Centre

Day 2: Morning: Swim skills check/ Lab on reef biota
Afternoon: Techniques in sampling and fieldwork
Evening: Journal article discussions

Day 3: Morning: Snorkeling/ Reef assessment and data collection
Afternoon: Underwater reef identification quiz
Evening: Story mapping workshop

Day 4: Morning: Snorkeling/ Reef assessment and data collection
Afternoon: Exploration of fossil reef sites and stromatolites
Evening: Techniques in research and data analysis

Day 5: Morning: Snorkeling/ Reef assessment and data collection
Afternoon: Shelf edge swim/ Cockburn Town and Columbus monument visits
Evening: Night snorkeling

Day 6: Morning: Snorkeling in mangrove and seagrass habitats
Afternoon: Iguana and bird preserve island visits
Evening: Project preparation

Day 7: Morning: Group presentations
Afternoon: Depart San Salvador
Evening: Return to Atlanta

APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 16, 2015

CONTACT INFORMATION

Program Director:
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Program Director:
Dr. Amy Reber
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ACCOMMODATIONS
Students and faculty will be housed on site in male and female dormitories at The College of the Bahamas Gerace Research Centre. Dorm rooms house up to a maximum of 5 students in single beds, and share a common bathroom.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION
Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations during their study abroad experience should discuss these needs with the Program Directors and the Office of Disability Services at the time of application.

CREDITS AND COURSES
Participants who successfully complete this study abroad program will receive 3 semester hours of course credit at Georgia State University. Undergraduate students upon program acceptance should register for either BIOL 4930 or GEOL 4097. Students from other institutions should follow their institution’s regulations concerning transfer credits.

APPLICATION INFORMATION
Students interested in applying should find this program’s listing at mystudyabroad.gsu.edu and begin an online application. Students are additionally encouraged to speak directly with the program directors if interested in this opportunity to study abroad. Transient Students: please see the Transients Student section under the Explore & Apply tab.

International students at Georgia State who hold F-1 visas must contact the Office of International Students and Scholar Services at (404) 413-2070 to discuss possible implications of study abroad for their immigration status.

COST
Program cost may vary at any time according to currency fluctuations and changing travel arrangements. The program cost is tentatively set at $1850, PLUS regular Georgia State University tuition and fees. Non-resident/out-of-state students will pay in-state tuition plus a $250 fee in addition to the program cost.

FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIPS
Georgia State University students are eligible to apply for the IEF Study Abroad Scholarship/Georgia State University Foundation Scholarship and may be eligible to apply for the Global Experience Scholarship. Visit mystudyabroad.gsu.edu and select the Scholarships & Financial Aid tab or call the Study Abroad Programs office at (404) 413-2529 for more information.

Because program size is limited, early application is strongly advised. Individual interviews will be scheduled with students upon receipt of application.

Program Cost
Round-trip airfare
Ground transportation in Sal Salvador
Boat excursions
All meals at the Gerace Research Centre
All lodging
Health/Evacuation/Repatriation insurance

Program Cost Does Not Include
Georgia State tuition and fees
Public transportation in Nassau (if needed)
Internet access in dorm at Gerace Research Centre
Passport
Luggage fees
Snorkel gear
Immunizations
Personal expenses

PAYMENT SCHEDULE
November 16, 2015: $500 Deposit with application
December 2, 2015: $500 First Payment
January 12, 2016: $850 Remaining balance
All payments are non-refundable upon receipt

Program Deposit Payments: Participants will pay program deposits by logging into PAWS. Please contact your Program Director to confirm that a Program Deposit Account has been established for this purpose before you attempt to make a payment in PAWS.

Program Payments and Remaining Program Balance: Other than the initial program deposit, all program payments—along with the remaining program balance—will be billed directly to your student account. Please refer to the Academic/Registration calendar for the tuition and fees deadline.