Dominican Republic Study Abroad Program
Environmental Sustainability and Natural Resource Management in the Caribbean

This document includes a draft syllabus for both the pre-departure course and in-country course.

Pre-departure course

Summary

This course serves as the pre-departure course for the Dominican Republic Study Abroad program (ENR5797.07). The course focuses on the drivers of environmental sustainability in the Dominican Republic. Students will learn about efforts underway in the Dominican Republic to develop more sustainable approaches to food security, environmental protection, and natural resources management. As a developing island nation, the Dominican Republic is highly vulnerable to the changes in climate and international markets that challenge developing nations around the world. As such, the Dominican Republic provides an ideal context for students interested in environmental sustainability in a developing world context to learn about the forces that promote and undermine sustainable environmental and natural resources management.

The pre-departure course will provide students with background information on geography, politics, environmental issues, culture, economic drivers, and international aid. Students will be assigned topics to research and they will be expected to present a summary of their findings to the class.

Instructor/Resident Director:
Dr. Joe Bonnell, Program Director
School of Environment and Natural Resources
292-9383
bonnell.8@osu.edu

Credit hours:
A total of 1 credit hour will be awarded

Program schedule:

Students participating in the study abroad program will be required to participate in this 1 credit hour pre-departure course. Class will meet from 3-5 pm on Fridays during second-session, fall semester, 2016.
Objectives:

The primary objective of this course is to prepare students for the in-country experience by increasing their knowledge of the driving forces that both promote and undermine efforts to develop more sustainable environmental and natural resource management practices in the Caribbean and the Dominican Republic. Students will be assigned readings and research topics focusing on the complex interrelatedness of geography, national and international policy, culture, agriculture, and environment. Students will be challenged to evaluate tradeoffs between short-term and long-term goals and reconciling the quest for economic growth with the growing call for more sustainable use of natural resources and protection of ecosystem services. Some portion of the course will also be specifically focused on preparing students for the service learning project(s) they will be involved in during the in-country portion of the program.

Students completing this course should be able to:

- a) Provide a definition of “sustainability” in the context of agricultural production, environmental and natural resource management.
- b) Describe a number of factors promoting and undermining environmental sustainability at both the national and international level.
- c) Provide arguments for and against national and international policies based on the likely impacts on Dominicans and their environment.
- d) Explain the relationship between historical trends in environmental and agricultural management and contemporary issues in the Dominican Republic.

Organization of the Program

Instructor lectures will be combined with group discussions and student presentations on assigned topics.

Topics and assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>Overview of course and DR study abroad program. History and culture of Dominican Republic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 28</td>
<td>Geography of Dominican Republic with an emphasis on environmental and natural resource issues. Work on group presentations.</td>
<td>Readings for Nov.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 4</td>
<td>Sustainability policies, targets, &amp;</td>
<td>Readings for Nov.11.</td>
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The first two class periods will consist mostly of lectures by the instructor, Dr. Joe Bonnell. Students will present and lead discussion during weeks 3-7. During the first class period, students will self-select into four groups. The topics listed above will be further divided into sub-topics with one group responsible for each sub-topic. Each group will be responsible for two presentations and guided discussions. The group will be responsible for identifying readings on each topic in advance of the class period and submitting a summary paper. During the class period when their topic is covered, they will make a brief presentation and lead class discussion. (See the assignment descriptions in the Appendix)

**References**

Students will be identifying readings (online and through library reserve) for most sessions, but some readings will be assigned by the instructor. The following references will be the primary sources for those readings:

- Global Foundation for Democracy and Development. 2014. Hacia el desarrollo sostenible y la economia verde en la Republica Dominicana
[Towards sustainable development and green economy in the Dominican Republic].


**Grading**

The course grade will be based on student presentations, summary papers, and participation in class discussions. Papers and presentations will be assessed using a rubric (see attached).

**Grade percentages:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in class discussions</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary papers (2)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Grading scale for final course grade:**

- 100 – 93% A
- 90 – 92 A-
- 89 – 87 B+
- 86 – 83 B
- 82 – 80 B-
- 79 – 77 C+
- 76 – 73 C
- 72 – 70 C-
- 69 – 67 D+
- 66 – 60 D
- 59 or below E

**Academic Misconduct**

Students are expected to do independent work. The instructor will follow faculty rule 3335-54 which requires that all instances of copying, plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic misconduct be reported to the committee on academic misconduct.

**In-Country (ENR 5797.07)**

**Summary**

This program focuses on the drivers of environmental sustainability in the Dominican Republic and efforts underway in that country to develop more sustainable approaches to environmental and natural resources management. As a developing island nation, the Dominican Republic is highly vulnerable to the changes in climate and international markets that challenge developing nations
around the world. As such, the Dominican Republic provides an ideal context for students interested in sustainability in a developing world context to learn about the forces that promote and undermine sustainable environmental and natural resources management.

Instruction will be in English taught by the resident director and Dominican faculty, experts and invited lecturers. The course includes lectures, service-learning projects and field trips.

**Resident Director:**
Dr. Joe Bonnell, Program Director  
School of Environment and Natural Resources  
292-9383  
bonnell.8@osu.edu

**Credit hours:**
A total of 2 credit hours will be awarded (2 in-country)

**Program length and dates:**
The in-country program will take place during December break (Dec.16-22), lasting 8 days (See draft itinerary, below)

**Objectives:**
The primary objective of this course is to increase students’ understanding of the driving forces that both promote and undermine efforts to develop more sustainable environmental practices in the developing world. Students will have the opportunity to observe first-hand the complex interrelatedness of geography, national and international policy, culture, agriculture, and environment. Students will be challenged to evaluate tradeoffs between short-term and long-term goals and reconciling the quest for economic growth with the growing call for more sustainable use of our natural resources and protection of ecosystem services.

Students completing this program should be able to:

a) Provide a definition of “sustainability” in the context of agricultural production and environmental management.
b) Describe a number of factors promoting and undermining environmental sustainability at both the national and international level and provide examples.
c) Provide arguments for and against national and international policies based on the likely impacts on the environment using examples from projects and programs observed in country.
d) Explain the relationship between historic trends in environmental, agricultural, and natural resource management and contemporary issues in the Dominican Republic.

**Organization of the Program**

This course is intensive and typically requires students to participate in group activities eight hours per day for the duration of the program. Evening meetings and weekend field trips are required. Classroom instruction is combined with service learning projects and field trips. Participation in all three aspects of the course is required.

**Grading and assignments**

Participation is critical for this program. Students are expected to participate in all group activities, including asking questions of presenters and tour guides, arriving on time and prepared for activities, being courteous and actively listening during group meetings, and contributing to service learning project activities. Students are expected to maintain a reflective journal. The instructor will review students’ journals throughout the in-country experience, meeting with students in small groups (2-3) to give students the opportunity to share excerpts of journal entries. All students’ journals will be reviewed at the end of the in-country experience (See the assignment description in the Appendix). The final report consists of a reflective writing on students’ experiences in the Dominican Republic (See the assignment description in the Appendix). The final report will be due on January 9.

**Grades percentages:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journal</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final report</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
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**Dress and conduct**

Appropriate dress and behavior during the study abroad program are very important. Your Resident Director will provide guidance but it is up to the student to assume responsibility for their own behavior. The student Code of Conduct applies at all times during the study abroad program.

**Academic Misconduct**

Students are expected to do independent work. The instructor will follow faculty rule 3335-54 which requires that all instances of copying, plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic misconduct be reported to the committee on academic misconduct.
Draft Itinerary: In-country

Day 1 - Friday, December 16, 2016
Morning: Arrive in Santo Domingo, meet CISabroad onsite program coordinator and transfer to accommodations in the Colonial Zone (Hotel Europe or similar)
Afternoon: CISabroad health and safety orientation
Evening: Welcome dinner
Meals: Dinner
Transportation: Airport to accommodations (one group transfer via private coach); accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 2: Saturday- December 17, 2016 [2 hr formal lecture; 6 hrs structured educational experiences (SEE)]
7:00 AM: Breakfast at the hotel
8:00 AM – General orientation to the country, culture, economy, politics, people of the Dominican Republic
9:00 AM – Guided City Walking Tour of Santo Domingo (XVI Century Architecture, Colonial Zone)
1:00 PM – Lunch buffet of traditional Dominican food in Santo Domingo
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM: Guest lecture with Francisco Michel, an engineer at Instituto de Desarrollo Comunitario Ambiental y Enérgico, Inc. (IDECAE) in Santo Domingo
6:30 PM: Dinner at the hotel
7:30 – 8:30 PM: Guided reflection & debriefing (Dr. Joe Bonnell)
Overnight at Hotel Europa (or similar)
Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Transportation: Accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 3: Sunday- December 18, 2016 [8 hrs SEEs]
7:00 AM: Breakfast at the hotel
8:00 AM: Visit to eco-tourism locations in the Santo Domingo area (e.g., Cuevas Tres Ojos and coastal aquarium)
12:00 PM - Lunch
1:00 PM - Afternoon excursion to Saona Island. Presentation by tourism business owners and local officials on the benefits and environmental risks associated with tourism.
5:00 PM- Return to hotel in Santo Domingo
6:30 PM – Dinner at hotel
7:30 – 8:30 PM: Guided reflection & debriefing (Dr. Joe Bonnell)
Overnight at Hotel Europa (or similar)
Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Transportation: Accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 4: Monday-December 19, 2016 [4 hrs formal lecture; 4 hrs SEE]
7:00 AM: Breakfast at the hotel
8:00 to 12:00 PM – Lectures by local faculty on the following topics:
- Drinking water quality, infrastructure, and human health impacts.
- Solid waste management in the Dominican Republic.
- Haitian immigration, politics, and associated natural resource management issues.

12:00 PM - Lunch on site
1:00 PM – Depart for Escuela del Medio Ambiente (School for the Environment) in Jarabacoa
2:00 to 6 PM - Tour of Escuela del Medio Ambiente, reforestation nursery and forest ranger training center and ecotourism projects.
6:00 PM - Return to the hotel
7:00 PM: Dinner at hotel
8:00-9:00 PM: Guided reflection & debriefing (Dr. Joe Bonnell)
Overnight at Hotel Europa (or similar)
Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Transportation: Accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 5: Tuesday-December 20, 2016 [8.5 hrs SEE]
7:00 AM: Breakfast at the hotel
8:00 AM: Check out of hotel and depart for la Piedra
8:30 AM to 12:00 PM: Presentation about El Centro Guanin community development center and tour of neighborhood and projects.
12:00 PM – Lunch at the Guanin Community Center
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM- Community Outreach Service project (Possible project: Second stage water purification project for 150 families.)
6:30 PM: Dinner at Guanin Community Center
7:30 – 8:30 PM: Guided reflection & debriefing (Dr. Joe Bonnell)
Overnight the Guanin Center, la Piedra
Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Transportation: Accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 6: Wednesday-December 21, 2016 [9 hrs. SEEs]
7:00 AM: Breakfast at the Guanin Center
8:00 AM: Community Outreach Service project (Possible project: Second stage water purification project for 150 families).
12:00 PM – Lunch at the Guanin Community Center
1:00 PM- 4:00 PM- Community Outreach Service project (Possible project: Second stage water purification project for 150 families.)
4:00 PM- Dance (salsa, meringue, bachata) lesson with youth in the community
6:30 PM: BBQ Farewell Dinner at the community center
7:30 – 8:30 PM: Guided reflection & debriefing (Dr. Joe Bonnell)
Overnight at the Guanin Center, la Piedra
Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Transportation: Accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 7: Thursday- December 22, 2016 [8 hrs SEE]
7:00 AM: Breakfast at the Guanin Center
8:00 AM: Depart for Centro para el Desarrollo Agropecuario y Forestal (CEDAF).
8:30-12:00 PM: Presentations by CEDAF, USAID staff and Peace Corps staff or volunteers on the following topics:
  - USAID and Peace Corps sustainable development programs in the Dominican Republic.
  - CEDAF rural development projects focusing on sustainable agro-forestry.
  - Challenges associated with sustainable development and international aid.
12:00 PM – Lunch in Santo Domingo
1:00 PM: Depart for drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities
1:30-4:00 PM: Tour drinking water treatment and wastewater treatment facilities.
4:00 – 5:00 PM: Presentation on drinking/wastewater treatment challenges.
7:30 – 8:30 PM: Guided reflection & debriefing (Dr. Joe Bonnell)
Overnight at Hotel Europa (or similar)
Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner
Transportation: Accommodations to visits (private transportation and walking)

Day 8: Friday- December 23, 2016
Day: Transfer to Santo Domingo airport for flights back to the U.S.

**Contact hours**
Total Contact Hours for In-Country Program: 6 hrs formal lecture = 0.48 credits; 43.5 structure educational experiences (SEEs) = 1.74 credits.
1.74 + 0.48 = 2.22 credits

Total contact hours for pre-departure course: 2hrs/week X 7 weeks = 14 contact hours. 12.5 contact hours/credit. 14/12.5 = 1.12

Total credit hours for pre-departure and in-country program: 1.12 + 2.22 > 3 credit hours.
Appendix: Assignment Descriptions

Pre-departure course

**Assignment:** Group presentations

**Description:** Each group will be responsible for researching and presenting on two of the topics identified in the syllabus. The group must provide a list of readings for the class one week prior to your presentation. Presentations should last 15-20 minutes with questions. After the presentation, the presenting group will be responsible for leading discussion. You should prepare 5-10 questions to help advance the discussion.

**Link to learning objectives:** As students research their topics, they will be asked to provide content that addresses at least 3 of the course learning objectives provided in the syllabus.

**Assessment:** Presentations will be assessed using a rubric. Evaluation elements include the following:
- Content was focused on the assigned topic
- Content addressed at least 3 of the 4 course learning objectives
- Presenters were well prepared
- Presentation was engaging and visuals were used effectively
- Presenters answered questions thoughtfully

**Assignment:** Topic summary paper

**Description:** On the day of your group presentation, you will be responsible for submitting a summary paper with an overview of the topic. The summary paper should be between two and three pages (single spaced). The list of citations will not count as part of the 2-3 pages.

**Link to learning objectives:** As with the presentations, the content of the summary paper should address three of the four course objectives.

**Assessment:** Presentations will be assessed using a rubric. Evaluation elements include the following:
- Content was focused on the assigned topic
- Content addressed at least 3 of the 4 course learning objectives
- Appropriate use of citations
- Length of paper (2-3 pages)
- Content was well organized

In-country course

**Assignment:** Reflective journal

**Description:** Students will keep a journal for their in-country experience. The journal can be electronic or handwritten. There should be an entry for each day in-country with an entry being defined as at least 300 words. The purpose of the journal is to foster reflection on the student's experiences and how those
experiences relate to the topic of sustainable environmental and natural resource management. There are not specific requirements in terms of content, but some possible questions for reflection include:

a) How does your experience compare to your expectations/assumptions about environmental and natural resource management in the DR?

b) What has impressed you about the standard of living of Dominicans and how do your experiences compare to your expectations?

c) What have you learned/observed in-country that challenges or reinforces what you learned during the pre-departure course? Specifically, how have your experiences influenced your understanding of sustainability?

**Link to learning objectives:** The reflective journal is an essential component of the education abroad and service-learning experiences. Reflection offers the student an opportunity to integrate what they have observed during presentations, trips, and service activities into the academic content presented prior to departure. In this sense, students' reflections can relate to all of the course learning objectives. In addition, students may reflect on how their experiences change or reinforce pre-existing understandings and assumptions about Dominican culture and geography. Students may also reflect on how they will talk about their study abroad experience with friends, family, and potential employers.

**Assessment:** Students will not be assessed on the content of their journal entries per se, though the instructor will review excerpts of some entries that students choose to share and students will be expected to present their journals to the instructor to verify that they are complying with the basic requirements of the assignment. Students will also meet with the instructor in small groups during the in-country program to discuss observations and insights from their entries. This assignment will be marked as complete or incomplete by the last full day in-country.

**Assignment:** Final report

**Description:** Students will be required to write a final report (5-7 pages single-spaced) reflecting on their education abroad experience in the Dominican Republic. Students may choose to include excerpts from their reflective journals, but the final report will be more focused on how their experience influenced their understanding of sustainable environmental and natural resource management in the Dominican Republic. They may organize the report around the four educational objectives or chronologically, but they must address all four course learning objectives throughout the report.

**Link to learning objectives:** The purpose of this report is to enable students to reflect on how their education abroad experience relates to the four course learning objectives. That is, how did their experiences and observations enhance or change what they have learned about environmental and natural resource management issues, efforts to develop more sustainable practices, the role of international policies and programs, and what sustainability means in general and for Dominicans in particular.

**Assessment:** The final report will be assessed using a rubric. Evaluation elements include the following:
• Content addressed all four course learning objectives
• Student included frequent references to in-country experiences/observations
• Appropriate citations
• Length of paper (5-7 pages)
• Content was well organized