Study Abroad Ecuador: Service Learning a Focus on Food Security – May 20-June 4

University of San Francisco, Quito

Quito: Lecture at the University of San Francisco, Quito and visit Historic Center in Quito

About the course

Course description: The core of this unique two-week experience in Ecuador is to expose students to food security issues across regions within mainland Ecuador and Galapagos Islands. Students will be exposed to issues of food security, and sustainability in communities where high dependency on food export (Galapagos Islands) exists. The course will highlight the effect of environment and agricultural practices on ecosystem integrity and services. Several service-learning projects will engaged students with the community. Discussion and reflections throughout the program will focus on key questions around food security and sustainability.

Course Objectives

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This high-impact practice is designed to meet the following learning objectives:

1. Learn how Ecuador addresses the challenges of meeting the nutrition, food security, and health needs of its population.
2. Examine the effects of climate variability, agricultural practices and tourism on food security.
3. Learn to what extent culture describe food and different agricultural practices.
4. Connect knowledge acquired in classroom with hands-on experience through the service learning projects.
5. Evaluate the common threads connecting food, culture, and global agriculture.
6. Accomplishment of VT's motto: Ut prosim, That I May Serve

Mainland Ecuador

At each region (Costal, Andes and Amazon) will:

1. Explore the type of crops commonly grown and consumed, the culture of food production and consumption.
2. Visit small holder and large scale farms and examine how:
   4. Urbanization, changing agricultural practices, and climate variability factor into food security challenges and opportunities.
3. Document the cultural practices surrounding food production, preparation, and consumption.
3-4 days in Galapagos Islands

Galapagos Islands

1. Int Center + Frigate Bird
2. Jatun Sacha
3. Punta Pucuna
4. El Junco/Galapaguera/Puerto Chino

1. Interpretation Center
   - The exhibition hall tells the story of the formation of the Galapagos Islands
   - Wildlife on the Islands
   - The arrival and impact of man and the importance of conservation.

Galapagos Islands: Int Center + Frigatebird

- Large seabird in the frigatebird family
- Blue footed boobies

Galapagos Islands: Jatun Sacha

- Jatun Sacha Foundation
- Research and teaching for the conservation of Ecuador's Biodiversity
- Medicinal plants
- Lecture about the Island
- Invasive species
- Service learning activities
- Cacao tour
- Nature walks to a local waterfall.

San Cristobal was the first island visited by Charles Darwin during his historic visit to the Galapagos Islands.
Galapagos Islands: Punta Pucuna

- Formed by a small bay that consists of three beaches
- Lava cones
- Learn about the local fishermen
- Sport fishing
- Visit lava formations.
- Truism and sustainability
- Natural history of the highlands Island – the volcanic origins of the archipelago.
- Diving & Snorkeling

Galapagos Islands: El Junco/Puerto Chino

- Visit the highlands of the island (smallholder farms)
- Learn about different ecosystems
- Learn about sustainable energy sources
- Visit the tortoise breeding center
- Spend some time at the beach

Mainland Ecuador

- Getting to know the community through agriculture and food

YASUNÍ NATIONAL PARK - AMAZON

- Añangu Community – Eco-tourism site run by the community YASUNÍ NATIONAL PARK

Mashpi – Emphasis on Cacao and Chocolate

Kichwa Añangu community
Otavalo - City that hosts one of the most important indigenous markets in the Andes

Peguche Community (Otavalo) – Andes
Introduction to the local food

Peguche Community Andes Food shopping with the locals

The family…

Otavalo
**Program Fee**

- **Virginia Tech Student Price:** $3,800.00 (Based on 8-12 students)*
- *Price will be much lower if we have 15+ students.
- Plus airfare - < $600 (from Charlotte to Quito)

**Program Includes:**

- **Private Transportation** for tours and excursions:
- 5 days excursion to Galapagos Islands
- 3 Day excursion to Coastal Region of Ecuador, including visits to Santo Domingo, Quevedo, and surrounding areas
- 3 Day excursion to Andean Region of Ecuador, including a visit to the Salasaca community and surrounding areas
- 3 Day excursion to Amazon Region of Ecuador, including a visit to Yachana Lodge and surrounding areas
- Hotel Accommodations in Cumbayá, with breakfast
- Orientation at USFQ Cumbayá Campus, with Welcome Lunch and lecture from USFQ Faculty
- 1 day Private Guided Excursion to Otavalo, with lunch
- Farewell Dinner

**RESOURCES AND FINANCIAL AID**

- Scholarship and Financial Aid Office ([www.finaid.vt.edu](http://www.finaid.vt.edu))
- College of Agriculture and Life sciences (CALS)
- Global Education Office (GEO) ([www.educationabroad.vt.edu](http://www.educationabroad.vt.edu))

**How to Apply**

1. First Register for the Course
   - CSES 3954 – Study Abroad Ecuador
   - CRN 19086
2. Visit the GEO website for application materials. ([https://www.globaleducation.vt.edu/](https://www.globaleducation.vt.edu/))
3. Submit completed application online and bring $500 deposit (check made out to Treasurer of Virginia Tech) to the CSES office – 337 Smyth Hall. Upon acceptance, the Bursar’s Office will bill students for the remaining program fees.