

# The *Eco League*

*Five Great Colleges ≈ One Important Mission*

## International Study Opportunities across the Eco League

### College of the Atlantic

College of the Atlantic offers a number of opportunities for interdisciplinary international study including immersion programs for developing language fluency. Courses are scheduled to meet the needs of current students and the overall curriculum. Upcoming courses are listed below first. International courses that have been taught by COA faculty in the past and may be offered in the future are listed at the end of this document. The international studies curriculum at COA is quite dynamic, responding to student interest and emerging issues. The annual programs in Yucatan and France and the other programs offered in two to four year rotations elsewhere are different each time they are offered. It is important to note that students are often recruited and selected for programs 6 to 9 months in advance and, in the case of immersion programs in Yucatan and France, an orientation process and a course on campus in the previous term are required parts of the program. Also note that programs typically involve extra costs including airfare and lab fees to help cover costs of the field experience.

For a list of courses that are scheduled in upcoming terms see: <http://www.coa.edu/registration.htm>

For more information on particular courses, and for course permissions, contact: Gray Cox at [gray@coa.edu](mailto:gray@coa.edu).

**YUCATAN PENINSULA, MEXICO Immersion Practica in Spanish and in Yucatecan Culture. [HS576](#).  
Next trip is Winter Term, 2011, 14 weeks**

The Yucatan Program immerses students in intercultural learning in Mexico for a full academic term. This course provides students with an immersion experience in the language and culture of Spanish speakers in the Yucatan Peninsula. The objectives are to increase their abilities to navigate the linguistic and cultural terrain of another society in sensitive, ethical, and effective ways. Class sessions, visiting lecturers, field trips, and readings will provide background on the history and anthropology of Yucatecan culture. Immersion experiences, living with a family, will provide one important source of experiential learning. A second will be provided by an independent project or activity developed for each student based



on the student's interests. This independent project will include a practicum experience in some institutional setting that might be a class room (e. g. an art class at the local university), a bakery, an internet cafe, a church group, or some other place for social service or other work relevant to a student's interests. This practicum experience will involve weekly activities during the term and more intensive work during the last three weeks. Students live with families in Merida and speak only Spanish as they take classes, conduct fieldwork and complete an independent research project. Recent student projects include a study of the impact of maquiladoras based on interviews with workers, managers, and state officials responsible for attracting industry. Other projects range from an examination of the Caste War and social conflict in the 19th century to a study of the role of community-based organizations in the conservation of tropical rainforests. Faculty member in Mexico: Karla Pena. Class limit: 10. **Lab fee:** \$TBA **Contact:** Gray Cox at [gray@coa.edu](mailto:gray@coa.edu)



**FRANCE: Immersion Program in French Language, Art and Culture (CAVILAM): Annual offering, Spring Term. HS775.** This double credit course is offered through collaboration with CAVILAM university as part of the COA program in Vichy, France. For eight weeks, students take 20 hours a week of language classes and workshops taught by immersion methods and advanced audio-visual techniques. Students also live with host families in homestays and take part in a variety of cultural activities. They are carefully tested and placed at levels appropriate to their ability and are expected to advance in all four language skills - reading, writing, speaking and listening - as gauged by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages scale of learning levels. Level: Beginning to advanced (depending on prior language level). Requirements: co-enrollment in HS776 "Doing Human Ecology in Cross-cultural Contexts: France" and permission of instructor. Class limit: 12 **Contact:** Gray Cox at [gray@coa.edu](mailto:gray@coa.edu)

**FRANCE: Doing Human Ecology in Cross-cultural Contexts: Annual offering, Spring Term HS776 .**This course is part of a program in French Language and Culture in Vichy, France. It will provide credit for the winter orientation process preparatory for the program, learning from homestay in Vichy, the other cultural experiences that are a part of the program and for the final two week project. This final project will be in the local community working with a bakery, a farm, an NGO,



a government agency, a business or some other organization that fits with their interests and provides them with an opportunity for practical learning of French language and culture in an immersion context. The course is designed to employ group exercises and individual reflections on experiences to develop the student's insight into French culture specifically and, just as importantly, into the process of learning a second language and entering into cross-cultural exchange and collaboration. Skills and insights from anthropology, history and conflict resolution will be cultivated. Evaluation will be based on the student's ability to demonstrate skills and insights into cross-cultural collaboration and learning through short papers based on journal writing, the final project report, and the successful completion of homestay, community collaboration and other immersion activities. **Prerequisite:** at least one course in French language. **Requirements:** Co-enrollment in HS775 "Immersion Program in French Language and Culture" and permission of instructor. Class limit: 12; **Program fee:** \$3,390. Contact: Gray Cox at [gray@coa.edu](mailto:gray@coa.edu)

**ST. THOMAS and the U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS: Ecology and Literature of the Sea, on a 3 year rotation, next offered, Fall 2011. 1 COA credit (4 Credits at other Eco League schools)**

Ecology and Literature of the Sea introduces students to a rich body of writing about the sea and gives them the opportunity to relate these ideas to reality. Students gain an intellectual framework through reading classic fiction and nonfiction works regarding the history, culture, and science of the sea. The course culminates in a two-week voyage in the Caribbean aboard a sail-training schooner. The Caribbean voyage enables students to more deeply integrate the ideas they've explored in works ranging from John Steinbeck's *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* to Peter Mattheisson's *Far Tortuga*. Aboard the schooner, students continue the discussion, learn how to crew the vessel, and examine important ecological issues as they sail among the U.S. and British Virgin Islands. The class also compares conservation challenges and strategies for each island to synthesize broader solutions that can be applied to islands in other parts of the world. The course is co-taught by John Anderson and Sean Todd. Class meets for an extra two weeks (outside the regular COA schedule) after Thanksgiving. **Needs permission of instructor: John Anderson,** [jga@coa.edu](mailto:jga@coa.edu)





**NEWFOUNDLAND and LABRADOR: This Marvelous, Terrible Place: The Natural History and Culture of Newfoundland and Labrador HS593. Offered Spring 2011**

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador has become a crucible for complex ecological, cultural and environmental issues. This setting provides case studies that offer students the opportunity to develop critical thinking and analytical skills as they examine how reliance on natural resources affects culture, economy and sense of place in a rapidly-changing region with a long history of

human settlement. Students will explore the human ecology of Newfoundland and Labrador through readings, discussion, and a two-week trip to the province at the end of the class to examine the issues firsthand. Key topics include the collapse of the cod fishery, the cultural and economic disparity between residents of urban areas and remote coastal villages, the decision to join Canada, the promises and pitfalls of ecotourism, and pressures from mining and oil exploration. Some of challenges of this region reveal lessons that can be applied to other parts of the world. This course is co-taught by Sean Todd, Davis Taylor, and Natalie Springuel. **Contact:** Gray Cox at [gray@coa.edu](mailto:gray@coa.edu)

**The following international courses that have been taught by COA faculty in the past and may be offered in the future.** Check the College of the Atlantic website for current course projections. <http://www.coa.edu/registration.htm>

**GUATEMALA: Guatemala Program**

Working for international change requires the ability to navigate the social and political complexities of the Global South. The new Guatemala Program introduces students to this environment and gives them the opportunity to conduct advanced research in an international setting with a strong architecture of support. After completing coursework in language and history and culture, students develop proposals for an eight-week independent research project in Guatemala. During their time in Guatemala, students work closely with COA faculty and local community members, who serve as academic advisors. Students in the 2005-2006 program investigated the tension between traditional Mayan healing practices and Western medicine, conducted oral history interviews with survivors of the 1944 massacre, and examined the status of Guatemala's bilingual education programs. Students presented their findings to their host communities and at an academic conference in Guatemala. Two students went on to use their Guatemala research as the basis for their senior projects. The Guatemala Program, which immerses students in Spanish and Mayan languages, is designed to give students skills and insights they can apply in other





international settings, says Todd Little-Siebold, professor of history and Latin America studies. "We designed this course based on the professional training we wished we'd had in order to provide students with a roadmap to do community-based research," he says. "Whatever world these students chose, they'll be savvy and able to operate effectively in many different contexts."

**Contact:** Todd Little-Siebold at [tlittle@coa.edu](mailto:tlittle@coa.edu)

### **TOBAGO: Tropical Marine Ecology**

Tropical Marine Ecology teaches students how to conduct biological research and policy work in the real world. It is either taught as a single class, or combined with courses in conservation and policy to create a set of courses addressing common themes. The course begins with classroom examination of key topics including the natural history and ecology of tropical marine life, fisheries, and other marine ecology issues. Either during the course or at mid-term, the class travels to Tobago or another tropical coastal region for several weeks of fieldwork. In Tobago, students' findings are contributing to solutions for a region on the brink of development. In collaboration with Tobago's Buccoo Marine Trust, the class has developed a monitoring protocol for tropical fish on coral reefs. Students also have made recommendations for sustainably managing local fisheries, conducted fish surveys of Marine Protected Areas, studied nesting seabird colonies, and assisted Save Our Sea Turtles, a local nonprofit, with data analysis and web pages. "We work in places that have people on the ground who need our help," says Chris Petersen, who co-teaches the class with Helen Hess.

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