



Proposal # _____
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***Instructionally Related Activities Report Form***

SPONSOR	DEPARTMENT
Brad Monsma	English

ACTIVITY TITLE	DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY
UNIV 392 Costa Rica	Spring Break 2013 and Spring 2013 semester

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Attach:

- 1) Student evaluations or assessments
- 2) Please list the number of students participating for each segment of the activity. For overnight activities please include the majors and graduation dates of students on a separate sheet.
- 3) Images demonstrating student participation (up to 6 images)
- 4) A summary of expenses

E-mail to the IRA Coordinator at [lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu](mailto:lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu) within 30 days after the activity. *It is recommended that sponsors also retain copies of reports for your records.*

*Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!!*

**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

**(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY;**

**SPRING BREAK TRIP TO COSTA RICA FOR 20 STUDENTS INCLUDED 5 DAYS OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN COORDINATION WITH THE GREAT BASIN INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY NACIONAL AUTONOMIA AND PARQUE NACIONAL LAS BAULAS: VEGETATION RESEARCH, BIRDING SURVEYS, SEA TURTLE PATROLS. WE ALSO CONTRACTED WITH PLANET CONSERVATION FOR THREE DAYS TO VISIT DIFFERENT ECOSYSTEMS: CONTRIBUTED TO TRAIL WORK IN MONTEVERDE AND VOLUNTEERED AT A MACAW BREEDING CENTER.**

**(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?**

**THIS GRANT SUPPORTED THE COURSE, SO THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE WAS TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION IN THE VERY BEST SENSE.**

**(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?**



**PARTNERSHIP WITH UNA, WHICH ALLOWED OUR STUDENTS TO KNOW AND WORK WITH COSTA RICAN STUDENTS. THE EVALUATIONS INDICATE THIS WAS A HIGHLIGHT AND CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO STUDENT LEARNING.**

**(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY'S WEAKNESSES?**

**BECAUSE THIS WAS THE FIRST RUN, THE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WERE DIFFICULT TO PUT TOGETHER, WHICH IS WHY WE ENDED UP WORKING WITH PLANET CONSERVATION. IN THE FUTURE, WE WOULD TRY TO WORK WITH THE UNIVERSITY AND THEIR STUDENTS FOR THE DURATION OF THE TRIP.**

**(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?**

**WE HAD 9 DIFFERENT MAJORS REPRESENTED AMONG OUR 20 STUDENTS. THIS DIVERSITY SEEMED TO CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHY SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE AMONG THE STUDENTS. DON AND I BOTH COMMENTED THAT THIS WAS THE BEST GROUP OF ALL THE TRIPS WE'VE DONE, AND WE ATTRIBUTE THAT PARTLY TO THE INTERDISCIPLINARY BREADTH.**

**(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?**

**TIME DEVOTED TO PARTNERING WITH INSTITUTIONS IN COSTA RICA REAPED VAST BENEFITS FOR THE STUDENTS. IT'S ALSO WORTH POINTING OUT THAT TWO ORGANIZATIONS (THE GREAT BASIN INSTITUTE AND UNA) CONTRIBUTED TIME, FINANCES, AND STAFF TO OUR TRIP. GBI'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JERRY KEIR, SPENT ONE WEEK ON A PLANNING TRIP AND A WEEK WITH OUR STUDENTS, MANAGING THE BULK OF THE LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS IN COSTA RICA. UNA CONTRIBUTED TRANSPORTATION TO THE RESEARCH SITE (5 HOUR BUS RIDE) AND ALLOWED US USE OF THE UNIVERSITY BUS AND DRIVER FOR 5 DAYS. THEY ALSO ALLOWED THEIR FACULTY TIME AWAY FROM THEIR USUAL DUTIES TO WORK WITH OUR STUDENTS. THIS PARTNERSHIP PROMISES TO BROADEN TO INCLUDE MORE DISCIPLINES AND TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNA STAFF AND STUDENTS TO VISIT CI.**

E-mail to the IRA Coordinator at [lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu](mailto:lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu) within 30 days after the activity.

**INVOICE**

16750 Mt. Rose Hwy  
 Reno, NV 89511  
 (775) 674-5497



Invoice Number
001-03-13

Invoice Date
3/31/2013

Performance Period
March 15 - March 22, 2013

Due Date
Upon receipt

California State University
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***Expenditures for international field study class - Costa Rica***

Description	Total
Housing	\$ 4,295.67
Food	\$ 2,748.38
Travel	\$ 2,980.00
Consulting	\$ 4,545.00
Supplies	\$ 3,498.61
Other	\$ 810.36
Labor	\$ 1,121.98

<b>TOTAL INVOICE</b>	<b>\$ 20,000.00</b>
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Costa Rica

Revenue

IRA	TK910-827-90428	34,608
Student Fee	GD920-827-90428	20,000
	Total	54,608

Expenses

Airfare		18,780.54
Planet Conseratio		14,080
Road Runner		\$ 1,359.50
Great Basin Institute		
D. Rodriguez TEC		37.88
B. Monsma TEC		
	Total	34,257.92
	Balance	20,350.08

## Initial Report

Last Modified: 03/25/2013

### 1. Please rate pre-departure program preparation (selection process, information sessions or orientations...)

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Pre-departure preparation	4.00	5.00	4.78	0.41	14

### 2. Comments about pre-departure preparation?

#### Text Response

Productive class sessions we were able to ask all kinds of questions about any concerns. Everyone shared all info they had researched about the area. We knew what we were getting into.

Many questions about what to expect/pack were left unanswered before departure.

Everything went incredibly smooth

sessions before hand were very helpful and influential as to what we would be doing.

The bi-weekly meetings helped many of us figure out what to take on our trip and learn specific details about our activities.

The professors gave us all the information about what to pack by email and links which was very helpful.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	6

### 3. Please rate the performance of the host institution and/or contracted agency.

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Host institution or contracted agency	4.00	5.00	4.93	0.26	15

### 4. Please rate the in-country transportation arrangements (bus, train, plane...)

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	In-country transportation	3.00	5.00	4.54	0.67	15

### 5. Comments about host institution and/or contracted agency?

#### Text Response

Working with UNA university was an extremely memorable experience. It added a whole other level to the feel of the trip. The students were very eager to share the local knowledge and their views of the country. This truly enhanced my learning of the country. I now have friends in Costa Rica that I plan on reconnecting with later in life on my own personal journey back to the country. I'm hoping we can begin a program to get these students here in the USA.

UNA and Planet Conservation were excellent!

Both UNA and Planet Conservation were incredible institutions. The connections we were able to make with the UNA students are an invaluable experience for all of us.

Great Basin Institute and UNA were both fantastic helping to aid in our education of Costa Rica.

The University students and professors were extremely helpful and made the experience all that much better, especially in understanding not just how certain mechanisms worked but also the culture of Costa Rica.

Everyone was really friendly. Jerry at Hotel Privado was very helpful as well as Beate with Planet Conservation. They went beyond for all of us.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	6

## 6. Please rate the housing arrangements (quality, location, safety, cleanliness...)

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Housing arrangements	3.50	5.00	4.59	0.46	15

## 7. Comments about housing arrangements?

Text Response
Everything was very good except for the last hostel we stayed at. It was very dirty. Last place was not nice
Most all locations were very nice were I had no concerns leaving my passport or extra spending money in the room. These were all very nice places that was great to return to after a hard days work. The last night we stayed in the city of San Jose. This was the one location that I felt may not have been safe. I understand we stayed here do to the close proximity to the airport, but if given the chance I would not stay here again.
Everywhere was above and beyond expectation except for the place we stayed on the last night. It was dirty and it did not feel safe.
The hostel was the only not so great accomodations.
The last night we stayed in a hostel... could have been much cleaner. I have no problems with hostels, but the bathrooms were moldy and gross.
the housing was great i was very surprised at the accommodations, the location was perfect, a good walking distance from our work sites, and i felt very safe there. cleanliness was never an issue the accommodations where definitely up to standard.
Most of the housing arrangements were great except the hostile. The hostile itself was not bad but 10 girls in one bedroom which required sharing 2 restrooms was a nightmare. Good thing we were only there for one night.
In all the hotels we stayed in I felt completely safe and secure. The first hotel in playa grande called rancho privado was my favorite place. We had our own keys and could securely lock our items in our room. Also, I really enjoyed that we got to pick our roommates and didn't have a problem with that.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	9

## 8. Comments about in-country transportation?

### Text Response

The travel was as good as it could have been. However we got such a diverse look at the country that we spent much time in the bus. Some days we traveled over 5 hours in the bus due to the state of the roads. All bus drivers were very skilled and I felt completely safe. During the long bus treks we were given chances to stop for restrooms and stretch our legs. The long times spent in the bus were well worth all we were able to see.

The flight coming home was at a horrible time and would have preferred it to be nonstop like the flight there. It was too late for students who still had to drive home after the bus ride back to campus. I was not comfortable with it.

There was a lot of driving but we were able to see a lot of places.

The ride to Arenal seemed a bit out of our way for how long it was.

Bus seemed to be late picking us up from the airport...

the plane was great nice flight, and the bus was perfect too, we where not crowded much and the fact that we had air conditioner was the icing on top since it was very hot there, if it hadn't been for the fact that the roads where very windy it would have been a perfect 5, but thats not really on the school, but the bus drivers we had did a great job maneuvering through the roads.

The bus ride was a bit uncomfortable at times but its seem as though it was only to travel the country and it gave us an opportunity to see its beauty from the bus.

The transportation was very well organized! The 2 busses we had had AC which keep us cool in the warm weather. Also the bus drivers were very skilled and on their toes when driving through the chaotic busy traffic. The drivers were extremely nice and were willing to make stops if we needed to take a bathroom break. Also, a few times I needed to get some materials or clothing out of my luggage which was kept under bus and the bus drivers ha no problem getting the luggage out for me.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	8



## 9. Please rate the student group (in terms of group dynamics, maturity, cross-cultural sensitivity...)

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Group	3.10	5.00	4.85	0.49	15

## 10. Comments about the group?

### Text Response

Everyone was very mature and responsible. I really enjoyed the opportunity to work with the costa rican students. They were very knowledgeable, humble and just great people to be around.

The entire group seemed to mold very well and did a great job all trip. Even during days when we were doing hard labor in the mangroves for multiple hours everyone continued to work well together. It was great to have students that spoke Spanish. As a non Spanish student I could always rely on them to help communicate with the locals. They were also very go with sharing there knowledge of the language. The non science majors were eager to learn about many scientific methods and science students understandings of the natural world. I can proudly say that I am friends with all students that attended the trip.

We were incredibly fortunate to have a wonderful and enthusiastic group that participated in this trip. The student group from UNA and their instructors were amazing and incredibly kind.

Could not have asked for a better group to travel with!

I felt that the group that was picked was an ideal group. We all worked very well together. There was minimal complaining. Every student put in a lot of work to make everything run very smooth.

Group was a great mix of people from all disciplines. That was very neat.

i felt that our group was really good at working together, when it came down to it, we split up into our groups and got down to business, those who had mastered a skill taught u=it to another so that we would all get a chance to use all the instruments, and having the university students there also to work with helped a lot.

Everyone was really nice and friendly. There was a few complainers but it comes with the territory.

Our group was such a supportive and enjoyable people to be around. I loved the diversity of the group and meeting new people from our campus that I had never met before. I never had an issue with any of them and were all very positive which was needed in every activity we did.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	9

## 11. Please rate how health and safety issues were handled during the trip

#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Health and safety	4.00	5.00	4.84	0.31	15

## 12. Comments about health and safety?

### Text Response

Health and safety was a paramount concern and was handled perfectly.

Everything that could have been done by the staff to mitigate any issues was done properly. The unexpected issues that arose were dealt with efficiently. A large portion of the class did get some form of stomach flu and it was sought to immediately that they were well hydrated and given the opportunity to rest until feeling better. Accommodations were made for those who got sick to ensure they were as comfortable as could be.

Thankfully nothing too serious happened. Though many people ended up with food poisoning about halfway through the trip and they seemed to be pretty much on their own with handling it.

A few people got sick but they were helped as best as they could be.

Fortunately, I did not have any problems.

Probably the only thing that I noticed was students getting diarrhea and it was handled well, everyone was very equipped for that and we had plenty of Pepto-Bismol and Imodium to go around. And safety was never an issue, the only time was when we encountered a bee hive in an area that we were going to work but because some had slight bee allergies the location was simply moved and that way no one would be in any danger, which I thought was a good way of handling it.

Teachers were on top of making sure everyone was feeling safe and if someone was not feeling well they were constantly checking on them.

Everything about the trip was very safe. Before we did any activity we had the instructions explained to us very carefully. The health of everyone was okay and manageable.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	8

### 13. 1. Please describe key positives and reflect on reasons for the success.

#### Text Response

Brad and Don did an exceptional job at preparing us for this trip. We all read very informative books and papers before heading out on our trip. Once we were there, we had daily meetings and occasional class presentations discussing what procedures we would be doing in the mangrove, turtle watching or bird counting.

Very educational Rewarding Hard work

We were able to see a vast portion of the country while sharing in unique experiences. This was made possible by the groups patience and willingness to adapt to any changes in the schedule.

Interacting with other students from a foreign country was a priceless experience. We were able to gain important knowledge and understanding of the culture through these interactions. Every activity was tied to environmental concerns and struggles that Costa Rica has encountered and paralleled to the issues we face in the states. Jerry from the Great Basin Institute was incredibly knowledgeable and offered even more insight into these issues.

The group of students who went were great and I believe a major part of why this trip was so successful was because everyone got along so well.

The key positive of the trip for me was our interactions with the UNA student. They were all science majors so were we able to compare different example of various issues. There was a lot of open dialogue between all students. I feel even non-science majors were able to walk away with a good lesson learned from them.

The best part of the trip was working with the tico's from UNA. In addition, I really enjoyed the other natives like Randall who helped us out. Overall the trip was stayed organized and ran smoothly throughout.

Working with the local Costa Rican students was one of the best experiences. Everyone was enthusiastic and eager to learn from one another. The Costa Rican students had excellent insight into the natural and cultural resources all around us that we would have never experienced without them.

The whole trip was absolutely amazing. We learned what it takes to work in the field in conditions that may or may not be what would be considered as favorable. Even through the humidity and the heat, we had to get the work done and I think it helped to make us realize what true work ethic is. Having the university students from Costa Rica spend some days with us was also a great advantage because we got to learn about their experiences and what life is really like as a student in Costa Rica. They were extremely humble and so willing to help us in whatever way they could. The part of the trip where we teamed up with Planet Conservation was also important because it helped us to gain an appreciation of the other habitats in Costa Rica and gain a better understanding of Costa Rican national parks.

Loved how much time we got to spend with the UNA students but I would have liked even more time with them.

i really do think that we had success in the work we did in the mangrove thanks to the students of the university in Costa Rica, they where very helpful, and even though not all of us where biology majors, the tasks where not too hard that they where able to explain and help us through them. and just building the relationships that we did, when the students departed from us, it was sad to let them go because they really did help us transition to getting used to the culture of the country. also when ever

we had any questions they were quick to answer and actually teach us a lot.

Great learning opportunities, balanced with fun leisure activities.

Key Positives: volunteering and helping other countries, learning about the a different culture, being exposed to other studies/majors besides my own, meeting new people and creating new friends. I believe the reasons for the success are surrounded with having an open mind and knowing that one will be totally out of one's element. Having a positive attitude at all times creates a good experience.

the entire trip and experience was absolutely amazing! I learned more in a week at Costa Rica in comparison to a month at CSUCI. loved it!

I truly enjoyed this educational trip. Not only did I meet a lot of students from my university but I gained a whole new perspective and respect for the environment. In our case, Costa Rica was full of wildlife and vegetation which I wasn't too familiar with and after this trip I became so engaged with the environment and wildlife.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	15

## 14. 2. What did you learn on this program that you couldn't learn at Channel Islands?

### Text Response

I learned real world applications of transect data and forest density analysis. I learned how hard it is to work in the field under extreme conditions and to communicate with those who don't speak English as a first language. It was really hard rewarding work, but I had the opportunity to connect with people I would have never had the chance to at Channel Islands. I will certainly be returning for more ecology work in Costa Rica because of this connection with our university and the university in Costa Rica and overall see a great improvement in my work as an Environmental Scientist.

### Hands on experience

A more rounded knowledge of other people's perspective. At school we may have students of other majors in some classes, but in spending 10 days hour after hour you are able to see personalities and skills that don't arise in the classroom. Outside of school I tend to hang out with science majors so you share similar ideals. But in spending so much time with a diverse group I was able to gain a more wholesome connection to interactions with other students. As for the monitoring work we did it was eye-opening to see that similar studies between here and Costa Rica have different ways of working. Their National Parks don't provide the funding or resources to complete these monitoring studies we were able to complete. In the USA our Parks have the means to protect or monitor the resource. In an attempt to work on a global level for the future of conservation it is essential that as Americans we know the support strength of other nations.

I really enjoyed the full immersion into a Spanish speaking country and improved my Spanish communication while I was there. The difference in the ecosystems compared to those we find in our own state proved to be a valuable asset, especially to those of us in the group who are ESRM majors. It opened our eyes to a different kind of struggle in the balance between conservation, preservation and development within a country less developed and more environmentally aware than our own.

I learned how big the world really is and that I am fearless and can do anything that I want to do.

I was able to realize that I want to study tropical biology and go to graduate school. I feel without this trip tropical biology would have stayed an abstract thought and graduate school as well.

The interaction with the ticos was very valuable. Hearing their point of views, their knowledge, seeing their strong curiosity to learn, everything was very moving. It was also a great experience just to operate in a different economy.

The beauty and culture of Costa Rica. Interacting with the students from the Costa Rican university gave me an understanding of their lives in this drastically different country. It gave me insight into their university methodologies and means of study. It gave me insight into the studies of university students in such a different culture, their lives and the challenges involved. This trip also showed me a variety of opportunities for internships and volunteering in a foreign country. I would have never been aware of the ease and frequency of foreign volunteer work happening in Costa Rica.

We learned field methods that cannot be taught in the classroom. I feel like I am more ready to become a field biologist and know what is expected of me in the work force. We also shared cultural experiences with students from the university in Costa Rica that also cannot be taught in a classroom setting.

I was able to step back into the Spanish language which was amazing, but I was also able to do in the field research on turtles, Mangrove forest as well as tropical rain forest which cannot even be compared

to just learning about it thousands of miles away in a classroom.

for one thing just seeing the value and hard work that goes into collecting the data so that officials can conjure up statements and knowing that all the "small" things we did help a lot for big things such as the ramstar guidelines, and just learning more about the vegetation and marine life. and being in another country learning from other perspectives and teaching styles really opened my eyes to thinking differently now that i am back in regular class session.

Practical applications of field biology work in a real world setting.

I learned about black and leather back turtles species that we dont have here in our coasts. Also, learning about a culture hands on its very different than reading it from a book.

literally hands on experience with the animals! I got to "manipulate" turtle eggs and got to see how diverse the bird population is. I got to interact with the "Ticos" Costa Rican residents in my native language, Spanish.

I learned about culture and gained experience by meeting students not only from a different university but a different country. Interacting with the students from Costa Rica personally helped me grow and view the world differently. Also, this being my first trip out of the country really inspired me to learn about different cultures that I don't think I would have gained that at the university by reading a book or watching a movie on Costa Rica.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	15

### 15. 3. What do you know now that you wish you'd known before you went?

#### Text Response

I wish i knew more Spanish. I studied a bit in highschool but never use it here in the USA because it isn't something that is necessary, however when you leave a English speaking country and find yourself in a Spansih speaking one, you lack in communicating all of your ideas, feeling and emotions with a language barrier. I most definitely will be persuing more education in Spansih and practicing it more frequently from now on. Costa Rica is a special place to learn about biodiviersity, speciation and evolution. To fully understand the locals, Spanish is a must.

More information on field work and what it is

I wish that I had known more Spanish. This would have enhanced my interactions with the UNA university students and the locals.

I feel as though part of the beauty of this trip was discovering new things. I felt well prepared and was fortunate to be fluent in Spanish. I do wish some of the non-Spanish speakers had gone to the trouble of at least learning a few phrases before the trip as I believe it's slightly insulting to go to a foreign country with absolutely no knowledge of the language. However, that is just my opinion and it's certainly no fault of the instructors.

The REAL packing list. There were so many things listed on the packing list given that were unnecessary, which lead to overpacking with many students.

Nothing.

How sweaty and damp my clothes remain!!

That sand fleas come out on the beach at night, and it would be a good idea to wear bug repellent while doing turtle patrol and research.

I felt like we were very prepared before the trip. I just wish I really knew how many bugs there were going to be!!

I wish I would have known about how many opportunities there are in costa rica because I may have stayed.

i wish that i had spent more time looking over the birds of costa rica to make that specific task of bird counting just a slight more easier to identify the species and be able to identify more species than i saw. also knowing more about the turtles especially the leather back turtle because being able to see it in person was just phenomenal, and yes they explained what it was doing and why but having had prior knowledge i think would have been better.

The importance of a good backpack.

I wish I've known some of the methodology that was used so that I would have been able to afford more help.

maybe practiced my spanish speaking abilities. I never appreciated the language until I went to costa rica. I now have a completely different perspective on it.

I didn't have a problem with anything but maybe if the professors would have explained all the hiking involved. Some of the students were surprised and weren't mentally ready but other than that everything was good.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	15

#### 16. 4. What suggestions would you provide the faculty director for revisions that would produce a better international experience for future groups?

##### Text Response

I would suggest continuing to do work in Playa Grande with the mangrove and turtles. I personally really enjoyed Monte Verde and would love to spend the second half of the trip there.

Less travel time

Spend more time with a local university. We spent four days with the UNA students but it would have been nice to have them throughout the trip.

Definitely continue working with UNA. They were an amazing group. It would be great if our University could return the kindness by hosting some of their students for projects here. They had an incredible amount of enthusiasm and many have stayed in touch with us already.

I would suggest that they fully give students an understanding for how the trip is going to be instead of being so vague.

Stay in Monteverde longer. Be more observant of the way food is being handled

Don't spend as much time on a bus; focus solely on Playa Grande and Monte Verde, or maybe Corcovado?

Less time on the bus... more time in Monteverde.

Maybe send a student who has already gone on the trip to help the other students get used to the work and what needs to be done a little more quickly so there is a little less wasted time in the field.

I know it was just the first trip in a new country where in a way we were pretty much the guinea pigs but I do think that the experience went very well. Maybe just having a more direct plan to do what we would do day by day but other than that I thought things went well.

More team building exercises.

If a group is going to be doing any type of methodology out in the field. A practice run will be very beneficial.

The only uncomfortable experience I had was when I was paired with three other heterosexual males in one room with only two beds. They made it a big deal on who was going to sleep on the same bed as me, since I am a homosexual. Other than that every other experience I had was absolutely amazing and couldn't have gone better. It was almost magical.

Explaining all the activities that will take place so that the students mentally know what they are getting themselves into.



Statistic	Value
Total Responses	14

**17. 5. Please comment on your faculty director/s (organization, leadership, preparedness, knowledge of the country, helpfulness...)**

Text Response

Brad and Don were perfect leaders and organizers in this trip. They had everything planned far well in advance. Networking with the University in Costa Rica provided an experience that I would have never gotten anywhere else. I thank them a lot.

Great, very well informed

Both professors were knowledgeable about the country having traveled there before. All questions were answered to the best of their abilities even on the 5 am mornings before the coffee was finished brewing.

The faculty directors did an excellent job.

All the professors and staff involved throughout the trip were outstanding.

Both of our professors did an amazing job.

The poster assignment was a bit confusing. At the beginning I was under the impression that everyone would be able to come up with their own ideas for posters, and work alone or in small groups. If the pre-determined posters had been at least discussed ahead of time, it would have been easy to pay extra attention to relevant information, collect photos and so on. Having an idea of what poster I'm going to do (or at least the posters I have to choose from) while working my way through the trip would have allowed me to focus efforts in discussions and activities to gain deeper understanding.

Dr. Monsma and Dr. Rodriguez were both extremely helpful during the entire trip and made us feel safe and comfortable to come to them with any problems we would encounter. I felt like no questions went unanswered and we had a clear understanding of what the trip would entail before we departed. They were both extremely knowledgeable about the country and the field methods we were using to do our work.

Because it was the first time for this trip it was a bit disorganized but we were able to accomplish so much and I feel that because the days in Playa grande were not so rushed I was able to grow more as a person in the Costa Rican Culture.

our advisors were very prepared and organized to their ability being in a new country and all, but after they would team up to plan out our days they seemed to have everything under control.

The instructors did a great job.

Both professors were very knowledgeable they brought together a very good circle of students and teachers from all over other fields.

they were great! I was glad to have them join us on the trip

The faculty directors did a very good job in organizing the whole trip schedule. I never felt unsafe or confused in our schedule. It also helped that one of the professors went to Costa Rica before to have everything organized. The organization that we joined, planet conservation, was also very organized and allowed us to enjoy our trip.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	14

## 18. 6. Please comment on the academic quality of the program (content, learning objectives, assignments, feedback, evaluation...)

### Text Response

I would have never learned about mangroves in the USA because they are an ecosystem that is practically gone. There is a lot to learn from them and their importance in Global Warming and national disasters. Perhaps with more research mangroves can be reestablished in areas where they were once cut down to help prevent as much disaster as there has been in recent years with Katrina and the Tsunami in Thailand.

Very educational, learning objectives were very clear

We were given about 4 standard lectures during the trip where we sat in a room and watched powerpoint slides. These lectures were helpful in our various activities from mangrove monitoring to bird counts. My favorite was the non traditional learning that came from our hikes and days spent in the field. Learning how caves were formed, species interact in the cloud forest, or watershed management while rafting. All were very informative and exciting, making it fun to learn.

The quality was above and beyond my expectations in every aspect.

I learned so many things on this trip, more personal things than academic. We were told that this trip would definitely be academic and educational, but not to the extent that I think the faculty wanted it to. Especially for a student who is not an ESRM major, much of the academic learning was difficult to comprehend and needed much more explanation.

I wish we would have had more time in Monteverde to learn more about the wet tropical forest.

I actually learned a lot more than I had anticipated. The work at Playa Grande was useful all around in terms of working in the fields, learning about the biodiversity, knowledge of the turtles and birds, and the interactions among every involved. The rest of the trip I was blown away by the knowledge of all of our tour guides.

Everything was easy and smooth outside of the above comment.

I learned more in this week than I have learned in an entire semester. However, I feel like my previous classes (i.e. plant biology, marine biology, etc.) really helped in truly understanding the concepts that were presented. Without these classes, I don't think I would have appreciated the trip and all of the activities as much as I did. Pre-trip assignments were good and I liked that we discussed our papers after we wrote them.

I feel that through this trip I acquired skills and knowledge which are not available to most people especially here in California. They were also skills which I have been seeking for a long time of which I may turn into a viable career.

I honestly think I learned a lot, it was definitely a lot to take in all at once, and was very appreciative that we all took journals to be able to jot down what we did each day and notes on facts that we were given.

The trip was both ambitious and inspiring. A once in a lifetime experience. I am very thankful for the opportunity.

I wish we have been able to get a copy of the power points that were used in some of the presentations by other teachers during our trip.

academic quality was perfect. we conducted different experiments that measured the plant density of

the specific location. We learned about the birds in costa rica and all the information there is to know about them. We learned how turtles are tracked down and filled out documents that required specific information pertaining to the process of the leatherback turtle laying her eggs.

I learned and gained a whole new perspective on the environment side of Costa Rica. Not only that but everything we learned we get the opportunity to make a poster for an audience to explain a specific topic and share our experience with other students.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	15

## 19. 7. Other comments:

### Text Response

Anyone from any major has to take this class. Costa Rica is a country without equal. The educational experience I have gained by going has change me and above all has improved not that, but the lives of Costa Ricans and valuable data in preserving their fragile ecosystems.

It is vital that this trip occurs again. The work that we began in the mangroves is critical to monitoring that is being done all over the world. Before we did our work the last time this area had been monitored was 1993. There is a lack of funding by the Costa Rican government to establish long term monitoring. Mangrove act as a indicator of the ecosystems health and without knowing its health we may loose a very special place. By providing students this eyeopening experience we become more aware of the necessity of international collaboration, especially as world issues become more globalized.

Would reccommend this trip to anyone, I had a life-changing experience. Thank you CI!

overall i loved the experiance, and even though the work was very strenuous and rigorous at times, i loved it and would sign up again in a heartbeat.

Please continue these trips.

This trip was amazing! it was a life changing experience. I hope other students get this oppportunity.

This trip was amazing and I definitely recommend it for future students.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	7