



Costa Rica Rainforest Outward Bound School

website: www.crrobs.org

toll free phone: 1 800 676 2018

phone: 011 506 278 6058

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To whom it may concern:

Costa Rica Rainforest Outward Bound School, CRROBS, is an approved, registered academic institution in Costa Rica with over ten years of experience educating students around the world.

Through our program, students are offered credit in: Spanish Language, Cultural Anthropology, Natural History, and Recreational Leadership. In addition, students have earned credit in: Art, Biology, Economics, Environmental Studies, Folklore, Geography, History, Literature, Philosophy, Medicine, Nutrition, Physical Education, Political Science and Recreational Management and Leadership via independent study through their respective universities.

In order to obtain these credits, students read various texts in anthropology, natural history, sustainable development, and Spanish Language. Moreover, they are exposed to native Costa Rican cultures through village homestays and service projects. Ultimately, this experiential learning process teaches students through direct exposure—an exposure that can not be experienced in a traditional classroom. As a result CRROBS credit has been endorsed through a number of academic Universities throughout the United States, Canada, and Costa Rica.

Below is a listing of colleges and universities that have granted credit to CRROBS semester students:

- Stanford University
- Georgetown University
- Evergreen State College
- Delta College
- Michigan State University
- University of Colorado
- Greenfield Community College
- Wayne State University
- University of Toronto
- George Washington University
- College of Charleston
- Humboldt State University
- University of Victoria
- Williams College
- Sonoma University
- Prescott College
- University of Georgia
- Rutgers
- Colorado Mountain College
- Southwest Texas State University
- University of Maine
- Arizona State University
- San Jose State University
- California State University
- Oberlin College
- Stetson University
- Western State College
- University of British Columbia
- Earth University, Costa Rica
- University of Costa Rica
- Coastal Carolina University
- Seattle Central Community College
- University of Delaware

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss any aspect of the curriculum at our school.

Sincerely,

Jim Rowe, PhD
Executive Director

Laurence Shaw
Communications Director

Gregory Albritton
Admissions



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LEADERSHIP SEMESTER COURSE

The "CRROBS Leadership Semester" is specifically designed for students who wish to become outdoor adventure instructors. You will learn to set up belay systems, guide rafts down world-class rivers, lead a group through the Costa Rican rainforest and SCUBA dive in Bocas del Toro. You will engage with the locals and learn first-hand how to survive in the Costa Rican jungle. Certifications, work experience, and leadership training are integrated into the program and are specifically tailored to make you a desirable instructor here and with various other adventure organizations. This course provides the fundamentals to be an instructor/guide for various organizations throughout the world. It does not entitle the student to employment at an Outward Bound School or any other Adventure School, but it will make the applicant a more desirable candidate.

Semester participants are able to earn the following certifications:

- Swift Water Rescue Technician Global (Rescue 3 International)
- White Water River Guide License Class III (International Rafting Federation, IRF)
- Scuba Certification (NAUI – National Association of Underwater Instructors)
- Technical Rope Rescue Operations Level (TRR) (Rescue 3 International)
- Instructor Judgment Training (CRROBS)
- Land Instructor Training (CRROBS)
- Beach Safety and Lifeguarding (Costa Rica Lifeguarding Association)
- Wilderness First Responder (American Red Cross and CRROBS)
- CPR for the Professional Rescuer (American Red Cross)



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COURSE OVERVIEW

The 60-day course is divided into six distinct phases: Costa Rica Multi-Element Leadership training, Wilderness First Responder medical course, whitewater river guide training, open water lifeguarding, and SCUBA instruction in Panama.

Please note: The following itinerary may change in sequence and content, and the duration of all activities depend on group dynamics, current weather conditions, and other factors.

MULTI-ELEMENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING (10 days)

*Goal is to prepare participants with hard and soft skills to successfully lead multi element expeditions including backpacking, camp craft, climbing, rappelling etc.

During their hike, students have the unique opportunity to experience three types of rainforest first hand as they hike through low, medium, and high elevation rain and cloud forests. Students learn how to identify first, second, and third generation growth rainforests, as well as the stark realities of deforestation.

As they hike, students will spend four days in the CRROBS homestay region with families in the rural community of Piedras Blancas. The community is very remote, without telephone communication and can only be reached on foot or on horseback. Students are encouraged to participate in the families' daily activities, such as milking cows, making cheese, harvesting corn, rice, beans, sugarcane or pineapples, or helping with whatever activity is taking place at the time.

In addition to the many cultural experiences, students engage in exciting adventure activities. These activities require newly acquired technical skills, attention to safety and team work. They will climb a strangler fig tree and rappel down a 60ft waterfall at the local Shaman's house, students also will learn how to safely set up each belay system. These activities are not only thrilling challenges, but they are designed to teach students the value of teamwork and trust.

The rainforest is an incredible resource for learning about the natural environment. Our local guides explain about the various medicinal and edible plants that the rainforest has to offer. On all of our courses, we try to give more than we take from the rainforest and the communities that we stay with. The semester course contains several days of environmental and community service projects as a way to contribute to the local communities.

Training during this portion of the Leadership course covers:

- 3 day Rescue 3 International Technical Rope Rescue Operations course
- Backpack guiding with camp craft leadership
- Expedition planning and execution
- Instructor judgment training
- Working with adolescents training
- Working with participants using psychotropic medication training
- Safety systems for expeditioning, rappelling, canyoning, climbing and rescue
- Village homestays and facilitating intercultural exchange
- Costa Rican natural & cultural history for guides
- Soft skills training/group dynamics



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WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER with TECHNICAL ROPE RESCUE COURSE (10-15 days):

*Goal is to prepare participants to recognize and deal with medical and traumatic injuries in a wilderness setting. Focus is on Costa Rica wilderness, but protocols are generally universal.

Students take an 8-10 day intensive Wilderness First Responder course at the CRROBS base located in the rainforest, geographically Southeast of San Jose. The Technical Rope Rescue course is also taken on CRROBS base and lasts about 5 days.

- American Red Cross/DOT standard curriculum for First Responders
- Additional curriculum focusing on wilderness settings with varied scenarios
- ARC CPR for the professional rescuer with oxygen administration

WHITEWATER RIVER GUIDE TRAINING (20 – 25 days)

*Goal is to prepare participants to be able to guide a 14-16 foot raft with paddling clients on class III white water rivers in Costa Rica or abroad.

River reading, paddle navigation, safety training, hours on the river, and quality instruction from veteran river guides equip students to captain a six person raft through class I, II, & III rapids.

- 3-4 day Swift Water Rescue Tech or WW Rescue Tech cert (Rescue 3 International.)
- 16 day river guide training with chance to certify with the International Rafting Federation
- Focus on mountain style tropical rivers

OPEN WATER LIFEGUARDING (10-12 days)

*Goal is to prepare participants to safely assess swimming areas and oversee swimming and other aquatic activities for groups in all open bodies of water, with a focus on oceans.

Students learn basic lifeguarding skills first in the pool near our San Jose base and then they have a chance to participate in ocean lifeguard training on the beaches of Manuel Antonio, on Costa Rica's central Pacific coast. Training is conducted by the Costa Rican Lifeguarding Association.

- Rescues using surf equipment in open ocean setting (no surf instruction is included in this course).
- Full certification course with Costa Rican Lifeguarding Association (CRLA)

NAUI SCUBA OPEN WATER DIVE TRAINING

Students travel overland from Sixaola to Almirante and then by ferry to Bocas del Toro, Panama. Perched on the tip of Isla Colón, Bocas has a population of 3,500 and claims to be the only "wooden town" in Panama, constructed almost exclusively of lumber, with a distinctive colonial architectural style.

Students spend six to eight days participating in SCUBA briefings and dives. Upon successful completion of the course, students will receive an internationally recognized NAUI SCUBA diving certification. Learning technical theory and oceanography, as well as the meditative and holistic approaches to the underwater world, students explore a reality known to man only in the past few decades.

- NAUI SCUBA certification course



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Leadership Semester Course Credit

Guiding Educational Philosophies

CRROBS courses are based on the educational pedagogy of 50 years of Outward Bound experience and use many principles of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, developed at Harvard University. All students participate in group discussions, readings, and activities. Outward Bound courses create an environment for students to learn through personal experience. The pedagogical foundation is one that demands personal reflection, group communication, cultural sensitivity, mental expansion and physical commitment.

Rationale for Academic Credit

This Outward Bound semester course gives the student a safe, supportive environment in which to study the lands and cultures of Central America. Students participating in the course have unique access to the people and places which global debates have focused on for the last four hundred years.

As students spend time in Costa Rica and Panama, their experiences in the wilderness and in local villages push them toward developing not only cognitive skills but also psychomotor and affective skills. For example, as students see direct consequences for their choices while rafting, they strengthen their decision-making process. They learn the importance of addressing local community needs through service projects, the value of effective communication while assisting fellow students rappel down a cliff, and develop an understanding of ecology through hiking through the rainforest. Furthermore, students see first-hand the ramifications international economics have on small village communities and the effects of deforestation.

More specifically, students enrolled in the course will focus on the following intellectual, physical, and emotional activities:

Cognitive Foci

- Reading of required texts on anthropology, natural history, and sustainable development
- Discussion of tropical ecology, zoology, botany, agriculture, and environmental issues from both scientific and metaphysical perspectives
- Understanding of native Costa Rican cultures through homestays and interviews
- Communication in Spanish

Psychomotor Foci

- Rainforest navigation, travel, and survival
- Whitewater and flat water kayaking, scouting, and rescue
- Whitewater raft captaining
- Minimal impact camping
- SCUBA diving
- Rainforest canopy climbing
- Farming in tropical landscapes
- Rappelling and backpacking

Affective Development (Personal Growth)

- Completing seemingly insurmountable tasks
- Contributing personal skills to group efforts
- Developing leadership skills
- Communicating effectively



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CRROBS Course Descriptions

**Note: Credit is given on a Pass/Fail basis*

Recreational Leadership and Facilitating Experiential Education Course Description

Suggested Credit: 6 credits or the equivalent of two full courses

This course teaches students principles of leadership not only applicable to outdoor settings, but to any group environment. From the course start, students assume various leadership roles, such as the leader of the day, the motivator, the safety guru, etc. which are rotated daily. Students reflect and discuss their own performance in these roles as well as the performance of their peers. Pertinent leadership topics are discussed in seminars in the evenings, such as group dynamics, decision-making, gender roles, and risk management. Students learn the spectrum of directive to non-directive leadership styles and when to implement various styles. Additionally, students study facilitation techniques, tone-setting, debriefing, and transference. Individuals leave the course with a solid understanding of the consensus decision-making process, as well as how to handle emergency situations and confrontational situations.

Throughout the land, ocean, and whitewater phases, students take turns being the Cacique (the leader). As each student assumes this leadership position they are responsible for the group's well-being. Instructors often explain to the leader what they need to accomplish that day and the leader relays the message to the group. They need to be a positive force for the group, motivating them each step of the way. Commanding fellow group members to paddle through challenging whitewater is valuable in developing leadership and professional outdoor leadership skills.

Topics that are often discussed at nightly meetings include: trail conservation and creation, low-impact camping, wave formations, coastal ecology, beach conservation, ocean rescue, as well as discussions about equipment requirements, navigation techniques, and expedition planning.

Wilderness First Responder

Suggested Credit: 3 credits or the equivalent of one full course

Training in American Red Cross Adult, Child, and Infant CPR for the professional rescuer with oxygen administration and Wilderness First Responder first aid and medical training is provided by an American Red Cross certified instructor. Students have the opportunity to gain certification in these disciplines, successful certification is required for credit.



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Course Readings

Water Phases

- "Shorelines and Estuaries: Turning the Tide," *Save the Earth*, Robert Earll
- "The Global Citizen," *Voices for the Earth*, Donella Meadows
- "Searching for El Nino," *Newsweek*, Sharon Begley
- "God Bless the Child," Ben Marcus
- "Power Dreams"
- "Oceans and Seas: Failing Fisheries," *Save the Earth*, John Beddington
- "River Morphology: The Dynamics of Running Water,"
- "Some Do's and Don'ts of Modern Advanced Kayaking"
- "Swimming Self Rescue"
- "Self Rescue: Rolling"
- "Rivers and Lakes: Damming the Flow," *Save the Earth*, Philip Williams
- "River Camping and Cookery"
- "Conservation: Preserving the River Resource"
- "The River of Life," *The Living Book of Nature*

Land Phases

- The Approach to Medical Problems* (in entirety)
- A Neotropical Companion* (Chapters 1-4), John Kricher
- "Farming on Rain Forest Soils," *Breakfast of Biodiversity*
- "The Rain Forest is Neither Fragile Nor Stable," *Breakfast of Biodiversity*
- "Taking Population Seriously," *Lessons of the Rainforest*, Lappe and Schurman
- "Tropical Forests and Life on Earth," *Lessons of the Rainforest*
- "Rainforested Regions of Latin America," *Lessons of the Rainforest*, Ghilleen Prance
- "Indigenous Peoples," *Lessons of the Rainforest*, Jason Clay
- "A New Leaf," *Lessons of the Rainforest*, Morris Berman
- "Beyond Anthropocentrism," *Thinking Like a Mountain*, John Seed
- "Chief Seattle's Message," *Thinking Like a Mountain*
- "Living Within Limits: Ecology, Economics, and Population Taboos," *Voices for the Earth*, Garrett Hardin
- "The Cattle Raiser," *The Impact of Modern Man*,
- "Women and Work in Rural Areas," *Women and Development in the Third World*, Janet Henshall Momsen
- "The Search for Sustainability in Amazonian Pastures," Serrao and Toledo
- "Surmounting Barriers to Forest Regeneration," Nepstad, Uhl, and Serrao
- "Applied Ecology and Agroecology," *Race to Save the Tropics*, Stephen Gliessman



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Independent Study Credit: a viable alternative

What is an independent study project?

An independent study project is a project you conduct to learn more about topics that are intriguing to you and that are relevant to your Outward Bound course. We encourage students to be creative and original in choosing a topic, research methods, and a final presentation. *Please note you are responsible for arranging the approval of credit at your university or other educational institution.*

Academic Credit for Your Project: From Idea to Credit

(1) Consider subjects you will enjoy discovering more about while on the course.

(2) Present specific topics you would like to pursue to professors from your home university, particularly professors who can give you feedback about those topics and who can help you get university credit for the course.

For university credit, you often need a sponsor (usually a professor or advisor). Discuss with the sponsor the basic principles of Outward Bound, the semester course, and the independent project that you want to pursue. It is best to have your ideas and plans well developed but flexible enough to accommodate suggestions and/or requirements from your sponsor.

3) Before starting the course, establish a contract containing the type and number of credits that will be awarded. The contract should include your sponsor's and institution's expectations regarding project presentation and evaluation.

Sample Ideas for Independent Study Topics

Below are some ideas for independent study topics. The deciding factor in topic choice should be a topic in which your passion and imagination will motivate you towards completion. This topic may or may not be on this list of suggestions.

Anthropology:

Personally observe and interview people from Costa Rican rainforest cultures, rural Nicaraguan cultures, and Panamanian Afro-Caribbean culture.

Art:

Study local arts and find the correlation between artistic expression and cultural beliefs.

Biology:

Document ways that local people use traditional plants in the rainforest. Keep a journal of different species seen in course areas. Identify them in field or upon return.

Communication:

Analyze communication styles within the group and their results. Explore how communication styles vary according to environment, stress, sense of urgency, time of day, or other factors and the impacts of the different communication styles. Track the four stages of group development.



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Economics:

Compare the advantages and disadvantages of a diverse local economy, such as Nicaragua's, versus a more export-based economy like that of Costa Rica.

Environmental Studies:

Research local environmental conservation efforts.

Folklore:

Record and compare the local folklore of Costa Rica, Panama, and Nicaragua.

Geography:

Learn about El Nino and its climatological, societal and economic consequences. Discover the physical geography's effects on ecology or human geography.

History:

Interview modern day indigenous persons and experts in the field of indigenous history.

Literature:

Read and analyze literature by local writers from the three countries. Read the works of adventurers that came to these areas before you.

Medicine:

Compare the concept of health and healing in indigenous cultures with Western medicine. Study medicinal values of the forest. Research Travel/Mountaineering Medicine, First-Aid, or local tropical diseases.

Nutrition:

Keep a journal of your daily food intake and how your body reacts to it. Compare the diets of the different cultures we visit.

Physical Education/Exercise Science:

Keep a log of your training before the course and a log of activities and responses your body has to activities during the course.

Philosophy:

Experience how the course's and modern Outward Bound philosophies correspond to principles in Plato's Republic. Discuss nature as an educator in its own right.

Political Science:

Compare and contrast Costa Rican, Panamanian & Nicaraguan political systems. Consider government and community action regarding environmental laws or economic development.



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Recreation Management and Safety:

Discuss forms of risk management used in this course and benefits surrounding activities with perceived high risk and low actual risk such as rock climbing and rafting.

Possible methods for obtaining and recording data for your project

- Reading: Find out about relevant print resources before and during the course.
- Interviewing: Daily contact with local cultures will allow interviews in both English and Spanish. For non-Spanish speakers, an interpreter will generally be available. Bringing a small tape recorder may be helpful.
- Photography: Pictures are an excellent way to capture and present people, places and events. If you choose to use photographs, please use consideration and sensitivity toward individuals you are taking pictures of, as taking photographs may sometimes be inappropriate. Also be aware that many of the areas we travel through are rainforests, so you will need a water-proof camera case. Insurance is also recommended for your valuables.
- Journal writing: Record your thoughts, ideas, experiences, and perceptions in your journal. This documents what you're learning and gives you the opportunity to expand upon those ideas.
- Artwork: Art is a powerful means of expression. Study local art or produce your own. Carry watercolors or other transportable art supplies with you to express your experiences.

Sample Semester Presentations from previous semesters

1. Rainforest Biology (plants, mammals, birds, rainforest layers)
2. Indigenous peoples of the Rainforest (How do they live, what do they eat, unique threats to their communities, sustainable products in the rainforest)
3. History of Costa Rica (economy, ethnicity and identity, environmental and ecotourism)
4. Meteorology (climates in Costa Rica, high and low pressure fronts, cloud identification, forecasting, storms, lightning and danger in the jungle)
5. History of Outward Bound (founder Kurt Hahn, Kurt Hahn's teaching philosophy, birth of Outward Bound, purpose of Outward Bound, CRROBS history)
6. Health and well-being (importance of good health in the field, sickness that occur in the jungle and how to prevent it, nutrition, stress, reality therapy)
7. Navigation (map reading, compass parts and reading the compass, orienteering lesson, shooting and reading bearings, magnetic variation and measuring distances, living without a watch)
8. Rainforest Conservation and the Environment: What is conservation, what part does CRROBS play to protect the rainforest, rainforest destruction-natural, and human impact, how plantations affect the environment, endangered animals such as the titi monkey and leatherback turtle?
9. Communication and Conflict Resolution/Management: Passive aggressivity and assertive behaviors, conflict definition and why it happens, how to deal with conflict within a group, four stages of group development



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Sample Academic Transcript

Date:

Student:

Course: Leadership Semester

Course Description:

The Costa Rica Rainforest Outward Bound® School Leadership Semester course develops outdoor education instructors that are able to guide students through adventure activities that focus on personal growth. Graduates will be skilled at applying experiential education techniques to teach about rainforest ecology and Costa Rican culture. They will also be able to foment the development of personal characteristics such as self-confidence, compassion, leadership, responsibility, cooperation, and dedication to community service.

The Costa Rica Rainforest Outward Bound® School Leadership Semester course has four primary objectives:

- Learn and master the technical skills required for planning and leading outdoor expeditions;
- Develop cross-cultural sensitivity and communication skills (Spanish language);
- Develop soft skills required to foster individual students' character development and create a supportive, cooperative, and cohesive group;
- Receive live-saving certifications:
 - Wilderness First Responder (American Red Cross and CRROBS)
 - CPR for the Professional Rescuer (American Red Cross)
 - Swift Water Rescue Technician Global (SRTG or WRT) (Rescue 3 International)
 - Technical Rope Rescue Operations Level (TRR) (Rescue 3 International)
 - White Water River Guide License Class III (International Rafting Federation)
 - Scuba Certification (NAUI)
 - Instructor Judgment Training (CRROBS)
 - Land Instructor Training (CRROBS)
 - Beach Safety and Lifeguarding (CRLA)

In this 60-day college level course, students will be immersed in certification courses while familiarizing themselves with the lands and the people of Costa Rica and Panama. As they experience village and rainforest life, students will discuss aspects of sustainable development and rainforest ecology that affect the lives of local people. Students learn how to guide and have a leadership role in white-water rafting, trekking, camping, and ocean-based activities. They also learn how to handle emergency medical situations and implement emergency prevention techniques. Our belief of personal development through experiential education is core to Costa Rica Rainforest Outward Bound® School, and Leadership Semester students will both personally experience this process as well as learn how to impart it.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>	<i>Grade: Pass/Not-Pass</i>
Extended Recreational Leadership	3	Pass
Facilitating Experiential Education	3	Pass
Tropical Environmental Studies	3	Pass
Wilderness First Responder	3	Pass

Approved by:

Gregory Albritton, Admissions