

TROPICAL BIOLOGY INTERNATIONAL STUDY PROGRAM

December 2007/January 2008 International Study Field Trip

The Tropical Biology course being offered Fall 2007 term includes a travel-abroad component to Belize in Central America. We will be exploring both marine and terrestrial habitats, as well as Belizean and Mayan culture, during the trip. We will be staying four to a room at the Belize Tropical Research and Education Center in San Pedro, which has electricity and indoor plumbing, but no air conditioning.

This is a fantastic opportunity to explore the second largest barrier reef in the world, which includes the best diversity of fish and coral to be found anywhere in the Caribbean. Our on-site instructor and guide will be Dr. Ken Mattes, whose specialty is ichthyology, and who dives these reefs almost every day of the year.

The tentative dates for the trip are December 28, 2007 – January 5, 2008. You must be able to make the trip in order to get credit for this course. Other requirements are listed below. Students wishing to take the course must meet these requirements and submit the following completed application to the Office of International Programs.

Space on this trip is limited; the initial student screening will occur in early March of 2007, so get your application in as soon as possible).

Minimum requirements:

- The academic pre-requisite for the course is a basic course in ecology, environmental science or general biology (e.g., RU BIOL 112 , 201, or 202).
- You must be in reasonably good health due to the strenuous nature of the snorkeling and hiking activities (no serious uncontrolled chronic diseases, uncontrolled high blood pressure, heart disease, etc.). If you have asthma or other conditions, consult your physician.
- You must have basic swimming skills (treading water, floating, basic strokes), and be able to snorkel (you can take a basic snorkel lesson before going).
- You must have or obtain the basic equipment for the trip, including snorkel gear, clothing, etc.
- You must be up-to-date on your routine vaccinations and obtain those recommended by the CDC and your physician before traveling to Belize.
- The cost of the trip will be roughly \$2200 in addition to the course tuition (exact cost will be available in March when we purchase the airline tickets).
- The class will meet on four weekend days in the fall prior to the trip. These class meetings are mandatory. We will also meet one day in January after returning.