

## Spring 2018 Course- Panama Study Abroad Culture, Environmental Management and Climate Change

### Study Abroad in the Azuero Peninsula, Republic of Panama *Auburn University and CATHALAC collaboration*

Come join us in this unique opportunity in which you will learn and gain hands-on experience in water and environmental management from a Latin American perspective, while learning and immersing yourself in the cultural of Panama, interact with locals and enjoy Panamanian gorgeous landscapes and wildlife.

The program is embedded into the GEOG 5720/6729, for which enrolled students will earn 3 credits. The course is designed to give students a general understanding of the potential impacts of climate change on Panama's water resources. Through a mix of lectures, fieldwork and trips, students will explore direct and indirect effects of a changing climate on water resources and their management.

#### **About the Azuero Peninsula**

*“Cherished as Panama's cultural heart and soul, Península de Azuero is a farming and ranching hub, and the strongest bastion of Spanish colonial influence extant in the country. The area's rolling hills are matched by a long and lovely coastline. Over time the peninsula has seen stark transformations – from verdant rainforest to cattle country, from indigenous land to Spanish stronghold and, finally, from sleepy backwater to surf central and one of Panama's travel hot spots.” (from [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) )*

The Azuero Peninsula hosts the provinces of Herrera, Los Santos and a slice of Veraguas. Its cultural richness, natural beauty and friendly people make it a “must-visit” site when traveling to Panama. It is considered the cradle of Panamanian folklore, home to the most famous representatives of Panamanian music (known as “típico”), and where the most beautiful “polleras” (national dress) are made. Not to mention that it's easy to find the most delicious traditional dishes in every corner.



***The challenge:***

Besides being a national cultural jewel, the Azuero Peninsula is situated in what is called “the Dry Arch of Panama”, a geographical area of 6,293 km<sup>2</sup> that experiences the lowest annual precipitation in the country (an average of 1,000 mm/year), facing large periods of water deficit and droughts, up to seven months a year.

Due to its rapid urban population growth, economic and agricultural importance, and its development potential, local and national efforts are focusing on establishing adequate management of natural resources, more importantly water.



**About Panama**

Panama, officially the Republic of Panama, is the southernmost country of both Central America and, in turn, North America. Situated on the isthmus connecting North and South America, it is bordered by Costa Rica to the northwest, Colombia to the southeast, the Caribbean Sea to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the south. The capital is Panama City.



Panama has always been a crossroads between cultures, earning the nickname “melting pot”. With a population of almost 4 million people, 67% of it is made up of mestizos (Amerindian mixed with white) and mulattos (white mixed with black); 14% black; 10% white; and 6% Amerindian (indigenous or natives) and a 3% is made up of various ethnic backgrounds.



Apart from being home to the Panama Canal, one of the modern world wonders, and the fastest growing economy of the Central American region, Panama is gaining more recognition for its natural treasures: access to both Caribbean and Pacific coastlines, pristine archipelagos and untouched jungles, all contributing to its incredible biodiversity.



### **About CATHALAC**

The Water Center for the Humid Tropics of Latin America and the Caribbean, CATHALAC in Spanish, is an international organization that promotes sustainable development through applied research,

education and technology transfer, on environmental issues such as integrated water resource management, climate change, climate modelling and risk management.

To know more about CATHALAC, please visit: [www.cathalac.int](http://www.cathalac.int)

#### **PROGRAM COMPONENTS:**

- On-site lectures;
- Research and hands-on projects;
- Fieldtrips and excursions;
- Volunteer work;
- Cultural immersion;
- Lifetime experience!

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

- Students with at least sophomore standing
- Minimum GPA of 2.25
- Successful candidates will demonstrate academic success, maturity and desire to experience another culture.
- Basic Spanish proficiency is a plus but not required

#### **IMPORTANT DATES**

##### **SPRING 2018**

- Program Application deadline: TBA
- Start date on location: March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018
- Program end date: March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018

#### **PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS**

If you do not have a PASSPORT: Please check <http://travel.state.gov> for the nearest local passport office and forms. Auburn Abroad recommends that you apply for a passport as soon as possible. If you already have a passport: Please check the expiration date. Passports should be valid for at least 3 months following your scheduled time abroad.

U.S. and Canadian citizens traveling by air to and from Panama must:

- Present a valid passport when entering or re-entering the United States. Panamanian law requires that travelers present a passport valid for at least three (3) months.
- Purchase a tourist card at the airport in Panama before clearing customs or contact the issuing airline to purchase \$5.00 tourist card prior to boarding plane. Tourist cards are for sale at the airport, however, we recommend making this purchase prior to arrival to minimize time at customs. The tourist card should allow a stay for up to 90 days. The tourist card is granted to citizens from Argentina, Canada, Mexico, the United States, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Japan, Taiwan and Australia, among others.
- Present tickets or documents for return or onward travel
- Have sufficient cash (advisable US\$500 or more) and a credit card for emergencies.