

BIOL 3906 Section 01: Global Studies in Conservation and Sustainability

Winter 2024, 2 semester hours

Course modality: Faculty-lead travel abroad course

Instructors:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

A 2.5-week long international immersion course on conservation and sustainability efforts outside the U.S. Course grade is based on quizzes, a reflective travel journal, and active and meaningful participation. Involves international travel with multiple modes of transportation, intensive cultural immersion, physical activities outdoors in various weather and terrain, and dormitory-style group accommodation with limited amenities. Students must cover program cost in addition to regular tuition. Satisfies EITHER the Applied Biology OR Advanced Biology Selections requirement for BS Biology. A-E Only. Offered every other Winter. LA; SUSF
Prerequisites: sophomore standing AND 7 credits total in BIOL/ENSS/ESCI/GEOG/GEOL AND instructor permission

COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES

This course addresses the following Biology Program Learning Outcomes:

PLO 4: Scientific Inquiry. Generate questions, formulate predictions, and evaluate outcomes.

PLO 5: Social and Ethical Implementations of Science. Recognize contentious issues and compare competing viewpoints

PLO 6: Data Analysis. Utilize basic math skills including algebra and statistical methods to recognize and evaluate sources of variation in data as well as interpret graphs and tables.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. understand origin, structure and function of the target ecosystem
2. explain currently observed anthropogenic effects on the target ecosystem and possible consequences of inappropriate planning and management
3. characterize current efforts to protect, restore and sustainably manage the affected habitats from both biological and social/cultural perspectives. This objective will be achieved through the following activities: field experience including seminars by local researchers and practitioners, service learning, and guided tours, hikes and cruise.
4. develop own idea on how one can meaningfully contribute to conservation and sustainability efforts around the world

TEXTBOOK(S) & OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS & TECHNOLOGY

Required supplies:

1. A bound journal (no loose leaf or peel-off memo pads) to be used every day during the trip with 3 sentences minimum per day; will be routinely checked by the co-instructors for grades during the trip.
2. A few small souvenirs for new friends made during the trip. Suggested items include candies, snacks, and other everyday items (e.g., pens, memo pads, bandana/scarf, cap) that are somehow unique to the U.S. and/or New York. Note that food items containing meat and meat derived ingredients (e.g., beef jerky and dehydrated chicken soup) cannot be brought into Japan. Liquid and gel-like food (maple syrup, jam, honey, etc.) must be within 3 fluid ounces or 100 mL to be carried in your hand luggage (they must be in your 3-1-1 bag and will take away space for shampoo, toothpaste, etc.) OR wrapped carefully and placed in checked luggage.

Personal acquisition of a travel guide and/or a basic Japanese travel phrase book is recommended. A cell phone app to save the same purpose is a good alternative if it works offline.

TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

To participate in this faculty-lead study abroad course, students must go through the standard application and admission process for study abroad through the Office of Global Education (OGE). Students are responsible for arranging and paying for their own passports and visas (if required). SUNY Oneonta's Student Conduct Code applies throughout the travel component on the course, and violations will be reported and sanctioned in the same manner as an on-campus incident. We will travel as a group from JFK International Airport and back. Students are responsible for their own transport to/from a NYC area Airport and meals that are not organized as a group meal.

This is a course that immerses students in field experience in different cultures, and students are expected to be flexible and resilient. Please be mindful that you are a guest in another country and try to make the most out of the experience. If you feel uncomfortable about something, please share it with your class – you probably are not the only one who feels that way. Analyzing and understanding why we feel that way is an important part of studying abroad.

Students must use a good travel backpack. Suitcases and rolling duffels are not allowed unless you can comfortably carry them off the ground for 20 minutes while walking at a regular pace.

Detailed packing list is provided in Fall 2023 during one of the orientation sessions (date and time to be announced).

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students are encouraged to make the most of their travel experience by staying offline as much as possible. WiFi at the lodge in Ogasawara has limited bandwidth and is shared with other guests. Please download large files (e.g., movies) before departure. Mobile phone coverage in Ogasawara is limited due to its terrain, and you may not have coverage at the lodge, which is located far outside of downtown Chichijima.

COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE

Travel component itinerary (subject to changes, times are in the 24 hour system)

Dec. 26 Arrive at JFK International Airport by 8:40. Individually check in at a JAL economy class counter with your e-ticket number and passport. Proceed to security check and meet

- the group at the boarding gate for JL 5 (departure at 12:40, 14.5-hr nonstop flight)
 Dec. 27 Arrive at Haneda Airport Narita Airport (HND) at 17:10.
 Exchange money to Japanese Yen at the airport
 Take a train to metro Tokyo, overnight at Tokyo Central Youth Hostel (TCYH) (bunk rooms; absolute curfew at 23:00); individual supper if desired (restaurants and convenience stores are in the vicinity)
- Dec. 28 Rest and adjust to new time zone and prepare for the ferry journey (grocery shopping, etc.), overnight at TCYH
- Dec. 29 Leave Tokyo via Ogasawara Maru ferry (10 am, 24 hr journey, sleep on board)
- Dec. 30 Arrive Chichijima (around 1 pm), village bus to Shanti Bungalow (SB) (bunk rooms), overnight at SB
- Dec. 31-Jan. 7 Various learning activities as listed below. (Stay at SB, 1 night Hahajima homestay)
- Jan. 9 Leave Ogasawara via Ogasawara Maru ferry (15:30, 25 hr journey, sleep on board)
- Jan. 10 Arrive Tokyo (late afternoon), take a train and overnight at TCYH
- Jan. 11 Visit TMU and cultural sites in Tokyo via train and subway, overnight at TCYH
- Jan. 12 Take trains to HND, fly back to JFK (JL 6, depart at 11:05) afternoon, 13-hr direct flight)
- Jan. 12 Arrive JFK at 10:00

Ogasawara Island tentative itinerary (subject to changes, times are in the 24 hour system)

12/30 (水)	父島到着 arrive at Chichijima 11:00
12/31 (木)	海洋センター ウミガメ教室 Marine Center sea turtle lecture 09:00-12:00、大村年越しイベント New Year countdown at Omura Park
1/1 (金)	大村新年イベント New Year celebration at Omura Park; ウミガメ放流イベント Release of sea turtle hatchlings at Omura Beach
1/2-3 (土~日)	海洋生物観察 Field observation of marine organisms; 海洋ゴミ調査および海岸清掃ハーフアンドハーフ Marine debris/trash survey and beach cleanup
1/4 (月)	以降 On or after 1/4 森本農園体験学習 Experiential learning at Morimoto Organic Community Farm; coral surveys, marine plastic debris collection and analysis
1/5 (火)	小笠原ホエールウォッチング協会レクチャー Ogasawara Whale-watching Association (OWA) lecture 10:00-12:00
1/6 (水)	ホエール・ドルフィンウォッチングボートツアー whale/dolphin watching boat tour (ピンクドルフィンさん Pink Dolphin – Captain Minami) ALL DAY, departs Ao-todai @ 8:50 am
1/7-8 (木~金)	母島一泊ホームステイ Homestay on Hahajima (父島発 leave Chichijima 1/7 12:00, 父島着 arrive at Chichijima 1/8 16:00)
1/9 (土)	父島出発 leave Chichijima 15:30

Planned field activities and biological topics addressed:

- Lecture and service learning at the Ogasawara Marine Center (sea turtle conservation, challenges of protecting migratory animals) <https://bonin-ocean.net/>
- Lecture by a researcher from the Ogasawara Whale Watching Association (behavior of cetaceans, human-wildlife conflict, sustainable ecotourism) <http://www.owa1989.com/english>
- A day of whale/dolphin watching cruise on a glass bottom boat (cetacean behavior and marine biodiversity)
- A long hike (2.5 hr each way) through the forests to the pristine John Beach (study of terrestrial and coastal habitats and biodiversity) (#10 on <http://www.travel-around-japan.com/k38-11-chichijima.html>)
- Guided night hike and/or sea kayaking (study of terrestrial and coastal habitats)
- Snorkeling survey of coral reefs
- Tour of historical sites (history and culture, which are strongly influenced by the biota)
- Traditional craft using local plant materials (ethnobotany)
- Lecture and service learning at Morimoto Organic Farm (sustainable community-supported farming, nutrient cycling, closed-loop food production system, minimizing ecological footprint, value-added agriculture)
- Beach/park clean-up, etc. (long-range transport of anthropogenic pollutants)

TEST DATES & COVERAGE

In-country quizzes will be given with an advance notice and covers contents of learning activities that took place earlier during the course, such as major points of a presentation by a local researcher/practitioner or characteristics of local organisms or conservation efforts that we observed in the field.

Travel journal entries (3 full sentences minimum per day, excluding the day of the check) will be checked every few days with a few hours of advance notice. Missing entries pointed out in an earlier journal check must be written before the next journal check; otherwise you will repeatedly lose points for the same missing entries.

LATE ASSIGNMENT & MAKE-UP TEST POLICY

(provide here)

Late assignments will incur penalties as below. Weekends and collage holidays are included in calculation of late penalties.

- After the "last call" but before the end of the class period: - 10 %
- After the end of the class period but before 4:00 pm on the same day: additional -10 % (- 20 % total)
- Each day afterwards (daily cutoff = 4:00 pm): additional -20 %

Example: An assignment has a raw score of 40. It was due on Wednesday at the start of class.

- 1) received at 3:00 pm on Thursday of the same week -> -40%
Final score = $40 * (1-0.4) = 40 * 0.6 = 24$
- 2) received at 4:30 pm on Thursday of the same week -> -60%
Final score = $40 * (1-0.6) = 40 * 0.4 = 16$
- 3) received at 9:00 am on Monday of the following week -> -120%
Final score = 0

METHOD OF EVALUATION & BASIS OF FINAL COURSE GRADE DETERMINATION

Your learning in the course will be evaluated through the following activities:

○ In-country quizzes I and II	100 points each, 200 points total
○ Travel journal	
▪ checked every few days; final version due when you board the plane to NY)	150 points
○ Participation and respectable conduct	100 points
Course total	450 points

There will be no "curving" – your achievement will be evaluated on an absolute scale. No extra credit assignments will be given in this course.

The guaranteed thresholds for the course grades are (in points):

A ≥ 419, A- ≥ 405, B+ ≥ 392, B ≥ 374, B- ≥ 360, C+ ≥ 347, C ≥ 329, C- ≥ 315, D+ ≥ 302, D ≥ 284, D- ≥ 270, E < 270

Rounding will take place at the level of 1/10th of a point.

E.g., 404.8 points → 405 points = A-; 379.3 points → 379 points = B

The thresholds may be lowered if deemed necessary, while they will not be raised in any event. No letter grades are assigned to individual exams or quizzes.

Reports and papers containing any form of plagiarism, whether intentional or not, will not be graded and are subject to additional sanctions (refer to the section on Academic Integrity within "COURSE REQUIREMENTS" above).

All answers are graded according to their quality. Excessively long papers and answers will receive a low grade for lack of conciseness. Careful proofreading maximizes the quality of your work while poor spelling, grammar, and formatting distract readers and can dramatically reduce the perceived value of your work.

Any questions related to grading (other than simple mistakes in adding up points and data entry error) must be raised in writing within one week after an assignment or exam is returned.

GRADING POINTS/WEIGHTS

Learning Activities	Percent of Grade
Journal	33%
Quizzes	44%
Participation & conduct	23%
TOTAL	100%

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to fully participate in every class activity to receive credit for this course, unless an alternate arrangement has been made between the student and the instructors in advance. Class activities are not limited to traditional learning experiences but also include communal tasks such as carrying groceries from town to the lodge, group meal prep, washing and drying dishes after group meals, composting and sorting recyclables, keeping track and rinsing/drying of shared gear (e.g., snorkeling vests), and taking turns watching luggage for the group while we wait in boarding areas, etc.

This course includes field work, which will take place rain or shine. Students are expected to pay attention to pre-trip instructions, be dressed accordingly and bring appropriate gear.

Students with a diagnosed disability that may interfere with full participation in field work and/or lectures must work with us before the start of the winter session to arrange for suitable accommodations.

Participation means undivided attention to class activities and not disrupting others from paying undivided attention. Power off or silence and stow away items that are not essential for the class activities, such as mobile phones, headphones and earbuds. If a student fails to follow this rule despite a warning from a co-instructor, they will be excluded from the activity and be reported according to the Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.oneonta.edu/development/judicial/code.pdf>).

COURSE POLICIES

Throughout the duration of the trip (start and end at JFK Airport), students must abide by the local laws as well as the campus Code of Student Conduct. The co-instructors reserve the right to institute additional curfew and light-out rules if student behavior during unstructured time in the evening interferes with proper rest for everyone at the lodge.

[SUNY Oneonta Course Policies and Procedures](https://suny.oneonta.edu/office-provost/course-policies-and-procedures) (<https://suny.oneonta.edu/office-provost/course-policies-and-procedures>)

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Academic Department Information

- Department Phone Number: 607-436-3703 (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.10](#))
- Department Email Address: biologydepartment@oneonta.edu (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.10](#))

Other Resources

- [Academic Advisement](#) (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.5](#))
- [Accessibility Resource Center](#) (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.5](#))
- [Student Learning Center](#) (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.6](#))
- [Milne Library](#) (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.6](#))
- [Counseling Center](#) (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.6](#))
- [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) (Aligns with OSCQR standard [1.6](#))