

Horticulture 378: Tropical Horticultural Systems

Course Syllabus Costa Rica Winter break January 2017 (2 credits)

Description:

This winter intersession field study will meet for the first two weeks of January in Costa Rica. We will reflect on the role of plants in our daily lives, and the effects that of our daily choices have on the environment, human health, conflicts, poverty, and development. This course will provide an opportunity to develop a holistic appreciation of horticulture by highlighting the interactions between plants and society. We will survey some of the social, scientific and environmental challenges that conventional, sustainable and organic horticulture faces in the production, marketing and use of tropical crops.

The field study will provide an opportunity to contextualize the learning acquired during the fall semester, in the “Tropical Horticultural Systems” course (Hort 376) and will allow discussion spaces to connect with the reality of different horticultural practices in Costa Rica. We will visit diverse kinds of agricultural systems such as small farmers, large-scale operations, market growers, industrial export business. In addition we will visit agronomic centers, botanical gardens, herbaria, germplasm banks, and nature preserves.

Course Learning Objectives:

- 1) Recognize social, economic, environmental issues related to tropical horticulture and find suitable methods to address them.
- 2) Contrast horticultural practices of small farmers and large-scale breeding operations and their effect on nutrition, food security, health, local community development and global markets.
- 3) Cultivate interdisciplinary skills, intercultural knowledge, and global competencies through the understanding of the ecological and socio-economic impact of tropical crops on local and global human communities.
- 4) Evaluate opportunities for professional careers in the international horticulture business.
- 5) Develop cultural awareness of the social and economic differences between the United States and Costa Rica.

Instructor:

Claudia Irene Calderón (cicalderon@wisc.edu) Phone: 416-9335

Contact hours:

49 hours of instruction (includes classes or seminars given by guest speakers in Costa Rica, and tours related to Tropical Horticulture)

6 hours of end-of-the day group discussions and reflections

At least 6 hours of out-of-class student work (includes individual reflections, journaling, work on individual and group assignments).

Course prerequisite: Must be a degree seeking UW-Madison undergraduate student who has previously taken Tropical Horticultural Systems (Hort 376).

Language of instruction: English. No Spanish proficiency is required for this course.

Expectation: This field study is a rigorous academic experience during which students are expected to be fully engaged throughout the duration of the program and to maintain an open communication channel with their instructors. Students are expected to actively participate in all programmed activities as they learn about the many facets of tropical horticulture and gain cultural awareness. Students are also expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect for their peers, instructors, and the people we meet during the two weeks abroad.

Course assignments

The following course work will be completed by the students:

- a) **Student-led group discussions:** students will take turns in Costa Rica to lead the discussions on the following topics: conventional/organic agriculture; small scale/large scale agriculture; sustainability; fair trade; nutrition; local/global markets; community driven projects; agriculture and health. Each discussion will be moderated by the program leaders and will follow our field visits as time allows.
- b) **Field trip video:** After our return from Costa Rica, students will work in groups of three to create a short 4-5 minute documentary video describing their study abroad experience. Videos will be uploaded into Learn@UW. The audience for this video will be your fellow Tropical Horticulture participants, other UW students who may be interested in the social, scientific and environmental problems associated with tropical horticulture; as well as faculty, administrators and donors interested in international education (Due Jan. 27, 2017 at 10 AM – via Learn@UW). Self and peer-evaluations will be completed to assess active participation of all the members in the group.
- c) **Final reflection paper:** Each student will write a short (2-3 pages, single-spaced) essay describing their experience in the Tropical Horticulture field study in Costa Rica. This assignment must be submitted to Learn@UW on Jan. 21, 2017 at 10 AM. Papers should include reflections about environmental, social, and economic topics pertaining to tropical horticulture that impacted or changed your thinking. Include a description of the activity that you enjoyed the most and the one you enjoyed the least.

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to fully participate in all programmed activities for the duration of the study.

Grading:

Each students' grade for this course will be determined by the following criteria:

- a) Active participation during the programmed activities in Costa Rica (25 pts).

- b) Active participation in the student-led group discussions in Costa Rica (25 pts).
- c) Contribution to field trip video. Self and peer-evaluations will be done to assess active participation of all the members in the group (25 pts).
- d) Clear and well organized reflection paper turned in Madison within 7 days of the field study end date (25 pts).

Grading of the group work will be based on the following criteria:

- a) Strength of the arguments
- b) Logic, clarity and originality of the ideas
- c) Participation and ability to work in groups under short term pressure
- d) Individual grades will reflect the group's grade weighted by a peer and self-assessment.

Late assignments will be penalized by 10% for each day it is late. Assignments turned in more than five days late will not be accepted.

Grade scale:

A	100-95%
AB	94-89%
B	88-83%
BC	82-77%
C	76-71%
D	65-70%
F	<65%

References

1. Bautista, O., 1994. Introduction to Tropical Horticulture. SEAMEO, Regional Centre for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture. 597 p.
2. Brown, L. 2012. Full planet, empty plates: The new geopolitics of food scarcity. Earth Policy Inst.
3. Foley, J. A., et al. 2005. Global consequences of land use. Science 309:570-74.
4. Handy, Jim. 1984. Gift of the Devil: A History of Costa Rica. South End Press, Kitchener, Ontario.
5. Hutton, W., 2013. Handy Pocket Guide to Tropical Fruits. Tuttle Publishing. 64 p
6. Midmore, D.J., 2015. Principles of Tropical Horticulture. CABI. 450 p.
7. Phalan, Ben et al 2011. Reconciling food production and biodiversity conservation: land sharing and land sparing compared. Science 333:1289-91.
8. Toledo, V.M. and P. Moguel. 2012. Coffee and Sustainability: The Multiple Values of Traditional Shaded Coffee. Journal of Sustainable Agriculture, 36: 353–377.

Respect policy

This course is based on respect, and any disrespect will not be tolerated. Your ideas will be received with the utmost respect. We want you to feel comfortable sharing your thoughts, comments, and questions. If you ever feel you are not being respected by anyone that is a part of this program, please contact the instructor.

Plagiarism policy

Plagiarism is taken very seriously in this class and won't be tolerated. We recommend familiarizing yourself with what plagiarism is in this link:

http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html.

Disability accommodations

Any student is welcome in this class. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, you should contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center and the instructor at the beginning of the fall semester, preceding the program's departure to provide your visa and ensure we make arrangements ahead of time for instruction, assessments and the field visits.

Grievance policy

In the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs) any student who feels unfairly treated by a member of the College faculty or staff has the right to complain about the treatment and to receive a prompt hearing. Please see the [Student Grievance Procedure webpage](#) for more information:

<http://www.cals.wisc.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/curriculum-information/student-grievance-procedure/>

Resolution of Disputes:

If you wish to file a complaint or have any questions about the complaint procedures please talk to whomever you feel comfortable: your instructor, other faculty, your department chair, student services coordinators, UHS, or the University Title IX coordinator, David Blom (dblom@wisc.edu)

If you believe the course instructor has discriminated against you because of your religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnic background, you also may take your complaint to the Office of Equity and Diversity (room 179-ABascom Hall).

If your complaint has to do with sexual harassment, faculty, staff, and others who work directly with students at UW-Madison are required by law to report first-hand knowledge or disclosures of sexual assault. To contact UW-Madison's reporting and complaint advisors or a Title IX coordinator, email Tonya Schmidt (tonya.schmidt@wisc.edu) for a response during business hours.