



INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

**MANUAL FOR
INTERNS AND EXCHANGE STUDENTS
AT EARTH UNIVERSITY**

ESCUELA DE AGRICULTURA DE LA REGIÓN TROPICAL HÚMEDA

2007



International Academic Programs Programas Académicos Internacionales

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to EARTH University! We are glad that you are thinking of studying at our campus and we hope that you have a very pleasant stay while you are here. In order to make life a bit easier, we have compiled this guide, which has information on everything from what to bring to emergency contacts.

In October 1986, the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica approved the creation of EARTH University. The cornerstone of the first campus building was laid on April 2, 1989, initiating construction of the current university campus. On March 26, 1990, government officials, private business owners, farmers, residents of nearby communities, university directors and 60 young men and women became part of the "pioneer" class at EARTH, inaugurating the campus and the first academic year.

EARTH CAMPUS

EARTH University is located in the heart of the humid tropics in Guácimo de Limón, Costa Rica. It is located on 3300 hectares where there are educational facilities, a library specializing in agricultural and environmental topics, laboratories, a reserve with primary and secondary forests, and a farm dedicated to agricultural production, cattle production and forestry production.

Since 2005, EARTH has had an additional university campus located along the Pacific coast in Costa Rica called EARTH University- La Flor. This campus will promote the generation of innovative ideas that promote development through social justice, socially responsible entrepreneurial spirit, innovative technology and generate alternatives to protect the environment.

THE EARTH UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC PROGRAM

EARTH University offers a unique cross cultural environment. Presently EARTH has over 400 students from 24 countries from North America, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia enrolled in the full time academic program. The vast majority are from Latin America and the Caribbean. Approximately 36% of the students are women; 60% of the students come from rural environments; 50% receive full scholarships and 30% partial scholarships. The EARTH faculty is a multinational group of 42 professors from 20 countries. All faculty have post graduate degrees; 55% are Ph.D. The student to faculty ratio is 10:1, with an average class size of 25 students. Many languages are spoken at EARTH, but classes are imparted in Spanish.

A student completing the EARTH University Academic Program is conferred a *Licenciatura degree (roughly equivalent to a Bachelor of Science degree in the US)* in agriculture and is referred to as a *Ingeniero Agrónomo*. Unlike most large, American universities with multiple majors in multiple colleges/schools, the program at EARTH University represents one major and students take the same classes together for four consecutive years.

There are three academic periods per year, each 15 weeks long. The school year begins on the third week of January and finishes in the third week of December. There is a one week vacation between the first and second trimesters and two weeks vacation between the second and third trimesters.

Academic activities are programmed 6 days per week. Monday through Friday activities are programmed between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Saturdays activities are programmed between 6:00 AM and 11:30 AM. Approximately 50% of the academic program is in the field and may involve strenuous physical labor as part of the learning process. Attendance is mandatory and punctual for all programmed activities. Not showing up for class, laboratory or field activities or being late results in a reduction in the class grade.



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Grading is based on a 10 point system. Seven (7) and above is considered passing and anything below six (6) is failing. A grade between six (6) and six nine (6.9) entitles a student to a comprehensive test when the next term resumes and if they pass, they can continue attendance at EARTH University with their classmates.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

EARTH University is mainly an ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE that we expect you will experience by participating fully and responding to the same high academic standards we ask our regular students must fulfill. When you come to EARTH you will be encouraged to get involved in academic activities and collaborate with students and faculty in the learning process.

At the same time, your coming to EARTH will certainly enrich your cross cultural training and help you to improve your Spanish and hopefully contribute to make of you a more global professional. EARTH University emphasizes academic endeavor, but also wants to give you the opportunity to understand and cherish multiculturalism.

If you **are willing** and ready to apply yourself, if you **are ready** to apply skills you have gained to date on an agricultural project or would like to improve your Spanish by immersing yourself into the program, then EARTH University may be what you are seeking.

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC PROGRAM

When you arrive, the officers of International Academic Programs will give you an orientation to EARTH University. You will meet your supervisor, take a tour of the campus and fill out any necessary paperwork. One necessary document is the signature of a contract describing the terms and conditions for Visiting Students at EARTH University (see Appendix 1 and 2).

Later, during your stay, you will regularly meet with your supervisor to ensure that everything goes smoothly. As a visiting student you must present a final reflection paper describing events of the exchange and give suggestions for improving the program.

ACADEMIC OPTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

1. Study Abroad Internship

As a Study Abroad student, like any other school term, you are taking a class to learn, fulfill the requirements of your major, do the work required, and receive a grade accordingly. Be ready to work as hard as the other students. EARTH is a small school and absences are noticed by the professors and the students. Do not skip classes.

Classes: You will be required to take a minimum of 12 credit hours of classes which you can choose from the list of courses that are offered every trimester. Please note that if you are a study abroad student, you are **required** to take the University's Work Experience course, which meets on Wednesday and Saturday mornings.

You can start working on the selection of your course work by consulting the list of courses indexed in our web site with your college academic advisor. Later you can contact the Office of International Academic Programs at EARTH University to learn more about your choices and assess if they fulfill your expectations. You will need the approval of the EARTH's office representative before you register at the beginning of classes.



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Another option may be to take fewer classes and work with a professor on a project. It is a great learning opportunity. It may be possible to receive credit for your work if this is arranged before your arrival.

During the week before classes begin, you will register the classes you wish to take. Remember, before you register your choices should have the approval of the Office of International Academic Programs.

You can add or drop classes during the first two weeks of the trimester. To drop a class, obtain the permission of the advisor/coordinator assigned to you and then go to the office of *Admisión y Registro* on the first floor of the *Rectoría* building.

Many of the professors will send you class material via e-mail or Blackboard so be sure to check frequently. Material is passed via the mailboxes as well.

2. Interns

As an intern you are expected to work on an experiment or a farm project and submit a report at the end of the term. The Internship position at EARTH University is for self-starters. The main focus of the professors is their regular academic program. Though a professor agrees to have an Intern work with them on a project, you will not be walked through the project step by step or have your hand held.

As an intern you are expected to take the initiative, understand what is needed, seek the information you may need, ask the questions, do the work, communicate regularly with your project advisor, and make the appointments to have your work reviewed and get advice. In other words, you are almost your own boss and as such, the responsibility and foresight to plan and accomplish a goal(s) is part of the learning experience.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

EARTH University has an Office of International Academic Programs dedicated to provide advise and guidance to exchange students and visitors. You can contact them at any time through our regular email service or by phone when necessary.

The contact persons at the office are:

- * Pedro Bidegaray, PhD, Director: pbidegar@earth.ac.cr
- * Mayela Bonilla Agüero, Executive Assistant: mbonilla@earth.ac.cr
- * Melissa Arce, Executive Assistant: marce@earth.ac.cr

Our office phone number: 011 506 713-0000, ext. 3222, 3223



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GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What to bring?

Most toiletries can be bought locally and just about any name brand can be found in San Jose. Therefore, you may want to bring enough for a few weeks until you can go shopping there. Also, on campus, *La Jama* (the student store) carries some of the basics (i.e. bath soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, shaving cream, etc.) should you run out or forget something. Females should note that it is difficult to find tampons in Latin America and therefore should bring their own supply if they prefer not to use sanitary napkins. If you use only a specific brand of any toiletry, you may want bring enough for your entire stay at EARTH University.

In Appendix III you will find checklists for the things you will need to bring with you to EARTH University. The first is a complete checklist including toiletries, linens, clothes, shoes, and accessories. The second checklist includes the travel essentials, medications and medical records, school essentials, documents, and photocopies you will need.

2. First Day

- Meet Program Director
- Give Program assistant a copy of health insurance card or coverage
- Complete and submit e-mail account / computer password paperwork
- Open an account at the bank and exchange some for local currency, colons
- Apply for a student ID at the Registrar's office.
- Learn class schedule
- Receive campus map; take a tour of the main campus and learn where everything is located
- Meet your Intern project advisor / Study Abroad supervisor
- Get room assignment and pick up your key from *Asuntos Estudiantiles*
- Meet your roommate and move in
- Get a mailbox (casillero)

3. Student Dormitories (Residencias Estudiantiles)

Roommates are arranged so people from the same country do not share a room. You will receive your room key upon arrival. If you lose your key you can get another for a minor charge. If you have locked it inside or temporarily have misplaced it, call security to open the door for you or go to the security office next to the bank and borrow a key but it must be returned within two hours.

There is a **mandatory** cleaning schedule in the dorms. You and your roommate are responsible for cleaning the bathrooms several times throughout the semester. The bathrooms and trash are cleaned daily. Individuals are responsible for cleaning their own room (see Appendix 4).

Food in the rooms is highly discouraged and cooking is not allowed to avoid problems with insects which are inevitable even without food.

This is a dry campus so no alcohol or drugs are allowed. Quiet time in the dorms begins at 10:00 p.m.

Males and females are not allowed to visit each other in their respective dorm rooms



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Because of the high humidity some people have had trouble with mold/mildew in their clothing or backpacks/suitcases. Using hangers and the ceiling fans for maximum air circulation can help combat this.

4. Food

The Internship/Study Abroad student living in the student dormitories will have access to three meals per day in the university's cafeteria. Let the cashier in the cafeteria know who you are on the first day and that is it. Other snacks can be bought at "La Jama" located next to the *Asuntos Estudiantiles* building. Other food, mostly dairy products, can be bought at *La Oropéndola*. Just about any type of food can be found in San Jose.

If you are a vegetarian or have other dietary needs, please see the nutritionist who is available in the cafeteria. She can put you on a list that will allow you to have special meals.

The cafeteria schedule is:

	Monday - Saturday	Sundays and Holidays
Breakfast	5:00 a.m. - 7:30 a.m.	7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Lunch	11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Dinner	5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

5. Medical

There is a medical facility with doctors or paramedics available 24 hours per day. One day a week a dentist is available on campus. When you arrive on campus you will be required to meet with the doctor. The purpose of this appointment is to open a file for you and inform Medical Services (*Servicios Médicos*) of any current or potential health problems you may experience while in residence at EARTH. Also, you need to be up to date with all vaccinations and bring a current vaccination card.

There is a hospital and various medical clinics in the town of Guápiles, 30 kilometers from campus.

The university requires proof of medical insurance for your stay at EARTH. You need to present your medical insurance card at the Office of the International Academic Exchange Program and *Servicios Médicos*.

6. Money

The best thing to do is bring cash or Traveler Checks, open a dollar debit account at the bank on campus (BAC San José) and withdraw money in US\$ or colons (local currency) as you need it from the ATM machine or from the cashier. Bank hours on campus are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. and Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. and the ATM machine is available 24-7. There is a small charge to cash travelers' checks but the charge is less if you do it at school than if you do it at another bank.

The bank will cash only **American Express Traveler's Cheques**. There is a minimum charge of US \$2.50 or 1% of the total amount you want to cash, whichever is more. All other types of Traveler's Cheques, in US\$ must be deposited into a bank account and the money will not be accessible for 12 working days. Canadian students should use Traveler's Cheques in US\$ as those in Canadian funds are not accepted. Another option is to get cash advances



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on a credit card. High interest charges and payment headaches can be avoided if you leave a sum of money on your credit card before you leave home. Some students have had limited success in using their US bank card at ATM machines.

Costa Rican banks and merchants do not accept U.S. dollars which are ripped, torn, have holes (i.e. staple holes), have been taped or glued. The bills must be in perfect condition. Don't carry all your cash in one place as you travel. Another option is to use a credit card. Using a credit card to pay for merchandise and travel expenses can involve a surcharge of up to 8%.

7. Time

There is a more relaxed attitude in regards to time. However, as far as school is concerned, you are expected to be on time. If you need to get something accomplished with an agency or an office of some sort it is best to arrive early and follow up regularly.

8. Transportation

Most everything on campus can be reached within 15 minutes by walking. For getting around campus, a bicycle is helpful and a must if you have a project out in the fields or expect to take classes with a lot of labs in the field. Also, many former students have expressed that it is very cool mountain hiking through the forest reserve which is located on campus about 7 km from the main buildings. One option is to bring a reliable, inexpensive bike and sell it before you leave. Some airlines will allow bikes on the plane in a bike box. However, if the bike box is a third piece of luggage, it will cost money depending on the weight, size, and airline.

Bikes can be bought in Pocora or Guapiles, villages located nearby campus, at a reasonable cost, most for under \$200. These bikes can also be sold before you leave. The bike repair shop in Pocora, a small town nearby, sells parts at reasonable prices and the people are friendly. In addition, the owner comes on campus most Wednesday afternoons to help the students repair their bikes.

The best mode of transportation in Costa Rica is the bus. They are cheap, reliable, in good condition, and punctual. Use them! A ticket to San Jose or Limon is about 2\$, one way, which you can pay when you get on the bus. Taxis are not cheap because of the distances they have to cover to get to EARTH. From San Jose to EARTH you could pay \$75-\$100.

The school has various small buses and vans which leave campus to bring and take the working staff. You can catch one of these buses four or five times a day, to the nearest towns, where you can take a bus to San Jose or Limon leaving every hour. The entrance to EARTH University, *El Portón*, is about 7 km from the main buildings, making it somewhat impractical (tedious and time consuming) to walk there from your dormitory. However, most people are willing to give you a ride to the entrance and you can try your luck at stopping buses which regularly pass by on the highway. When traveling by bus, avoid putting your backpack or suitcase under the bus, especially if the bus stops frequently. Generally it is safe but theft has taken place. If you can't avoid it, keep an eye on what gets taken out at each stop.

For trips or weekends you may want to rent a car and there are plenty of places to do this in San José and even in Guápiles. *Asuntos Estudiantiles* can help you make these arrangements. There are many amazing things to see in Costa Rica so be adventurous, get out there. In San Jose it is common to travel by taxi. Meters are called "*marías*" and are less expensive than taxis without meters. If there is no meter, negotiate the cost of the trip beforehand or wait for a taxi with a meter.



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9. Visas / Passports / Important Documents

From the United States and Canada, a passport will get you into Costa Rica for a maximum of 90 days. After that you need to get an extension with the office of Immigration located in San Jose. To get this extension and a student visa you need to bring into the country: a certified copy of your birth certificate and a statement from the police station indicating that you have no criminal records. The school, through the office of *Asuntos Estudiantiles*, will help you process your student visa. Since the rules tend to change, once you give them your passport to get the extension, follow up regularly to make sure it is done on a timely basis and to give yourself time to handle any "requirements" which may arise. When you leave the country by plane you will have to pay airport tax of US\$26.

Take care of your passport. The latest word is passports are worth a lot of money on the black market. A photocopy of the page with your passport photo and your signature and the page with the stamp of the date you entered the country is sufficient for most places you will travel. If an official requests *Asu cedula* they are asking for your passport or identification. However, at most banks they will not exchange US dollars or change traveler's cheques without the passport as identification.

Have photocopies of all important documents (passport, photo identification, birth certificate, medical insurance card) in a safe place. Also if you are bringing any type of equipment of value such as a camera, record the make, model, and serial number. This will come in handy if it is stolen and you fill out a *denuncia* (police report). It may not be recovered, but if it is something covered by a homeowner's insurance policy (such as your parents), it may be replaced under the policy and the paperwork will serve as proof of the theft.

Some places only give student discounts to students studying in Costa Rica. Therefore it is handy always to carry your EARTH University identification and ask about student discounts in national parks, tourist areas, and hotels.

ASPECTS OF LIFE AT EARTH UNIVERSITY

1. Living on the University Campus

As a student participating in the International Academic Program you will be required to live on the University Campus located in Las Mercedes de Guácimo in the province of Limón or in our University Campus of La Flor, Guanacaste. You will live in the student dormitories.

For dormitory living, students share double bedroom accommodations. Roommates for exchange students are chosen by the Student Affairs Office based on diversity of culture and language, and depending on availability of rooms. There is no hot water in the showers of the dormitories. You will not be able to have a car on campus. You will be required to follow the same norms and regulations as all EARTH students.

2. Up with the Sun

Several days a week your classes will begin as early as 6:00 a.m. so your day may start at 5:00 a.m. if you want to have breakfast. Most classes end by 11:00 a.m. for the midday lunch/siesta period. Classes begin again at 2:00 p.m. and will end by 6:00 p.m., around dinner time. Some other days you might not begin classes until 8:00 am and/or may finish at 3:00 pm.



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3. Extracurricular Activities

Horseback riding is available. You can go through *La Reserva* or other places around campus. The horses are working horses and they love to run, so be prepared. There are particular stretches in *La Reserva* where the horses automatically start to jog, canter, and gallop.

Many students go to the village of Pocora to have a good time and relax. On Thursday nights in Pocora, there is a live band for dancing. The village is not necessarily safe and it is best to exercise caution. Always travel in a group and take *la buseta* back to campus.

Long *giras* (field trips) are part of the curriculum at EARTH University. If you wish to be included, you must find out who is in charge and put your name on the list. Usually the students will be able to tell you who to contact.

On campus, *Asuntos Estudiantiles* shows a movie on Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. at the Emory L. Cocke Auditorium. There will be advertisements by email, in the cafeteria and at *Asuntos Estudiantiles* regarding movie choices and additional show times.

Costa Rica is filled with activities to do and places to see. Consult your travel guide book. If you are a scuba diver, remember to bring your certification card and if convenient, your personal equipment (mask, snorkel, fins, booties).

4. Sports

Some sports activities will be brought to your attention via e-mail and the university's local web site, Intranet. Others will be word of mouth or posted on a bulletin board.

The weight room includes free weights and machines. Remember to bring and use your own towel on the equipment.

There is also a swimming pool available to exercise and do some recreational swimming. It is open throughout the week from 7:30 am till 10:00 pm. Rinsing off before and after using the pool is required. Goggles are recommended. You are not allowed to swim in shorts over a swimsuit or put on sunscreen before entering the pool

Dance classes and martial arts are offered as much as possible. Generally aerobic classes are offered all the time.

There are regular informal games of soccer, basketball, volleyball, and occasionally ultimate Frisbee. There are some organized internal competitions. Also there is a baseball team, a girl's basketball team, and a soccer team. They play against teams from other towns or in the case of soccer, compete in intramurals.

You can run just about anywhere on campus, but running off the main roads can be treacherous since they are very rocky and twisting an ankle is easy. Running at night is not recommended since there are no lights and snakes may be found lying on the asphalt for warmth at that time.

The cobbled trails and roads are a challenge for your mountain bike tires. There are not many hills on campus. Never hike or travel in the *La Reserva* alone.



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5. Holidays

September 15 is Independence Day in Costa Rica and the source of a week long fair in Guapiles (one of the closer towns). Other mandatory national holidays include *Semana Santa* (Holy Week) from Wednesday afternoon until Sunday; April 11, *Día de Juan Santa María*; May 1, *Día del Trabajador*; July 25, *Anexión de Guanacaste*; August 2, *Virgen de los Ángeles*; and August 15, *Día de la Madre*, as well as Christmas and New Year's Day. Be advised that during Holy Week and the week between Christmas and New Year's many businesses shut down and most services are not available. For example, liquor is not sold, and gas stations are not open, on Thursday or Friday of Holy Week.

6. Graduation at EARTH University

Graduation takes place in December at the end of the 14th week of the third trimester. Unlike American ceremonies, it is a very serious event. One day is scheduled for the graduates to sign the alumni book. The graduation is held in the gym on Friday and there is the graduation dance at night. Tickets for the dance need to be purchased in advance. Generally, everyone dresses up for the dance. If you plan to attend and don't want to purchase clothing in Costa Rica, bring dressy, evening attire.

7. Finishing the Program

When you finish your Internship or Study Abroad at EARTH, the Office of the International Academic Program would like to know how you felt about the experience.

FACILITIES ON EARTH UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

The following pages name and describe a few of the services that are available on campus and we think might make your life at EARTH more enjoyable. For a location of each of these areas and building please check the institutional map in Appendix V.

1. The Student Affair Office (Oficina de Bienestar Estudiantil):

The *Oficina de Bienestar Estudiantil* is located beside the student store *La Jama*. This office is responsible for all dorm-related issues, student identification cards, passports, departure taxes and stamps, event transportation, cultural events, concerts on campus, booking flights, rental cars or trips. They are very pro-student. It is a good place to go to discuss any concerns, complaints, or to make any positive remarks about the university or the programs they offer. Here you can make arrangements for family or friends to stay on campus when visiting.

2. Student Center (*Centro Estudiantil*)

This is the game room (billiards, ping-pong, foosball) and TV room. *La Jama*, the hair salon, the mail room, and the office of FAT (*Feria América Tropical*) are located in the same building. The games usually shut down at 10:00 p.m., the soda at 10:00 p.m., and the center is locked at 12:00 midnight.



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3. Bank:

A branch of the BAC San José Bank is located on campus. The bank on campus is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. on Saturdays. Don't expect fast service. Many things are still done by hand. There is an ATM next to the bank.

4. Library W.K. Kellogg:

Contains material in both Spanish and English, photocopying services (limited hours), and group study rooms. It is the tallest building on campus (three stories).

The hours for the library are:

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Sunday: 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

5. Bus Service

Buses leave campus from the *parqueo de Comedor* (cafeteria parking lot) or you can pick it up from the main campus road. Bus tickets are purchased in *La Oropéndola*. These tickets are only good for buses leaving campus. Without a ticket you can ride the bus as far as *el portón* (tell the bus driver this) and catch a bus on the main highway. Sometimes it is easier to take the bus to either Pocora or Guápiles, then take the appropriate bus to your destination (it depends on your destination and time schedule).

Transportation can advise on the schedule of buses leaving campus while *Asuntos Estudiantiles* can advise on these and other bus companies. Also the school will arrange bus service to local events such as *la feria* (fair) in Guapiles/Pococi. If there is another event many students are interested in attending (i.e. *la feria* at CATIE), contact *Asuntos Estudiantiles* and they may arrange the transportation, usually for a small fee.

6. Cafeteria

Located right close to the student dorms, the Cafeteria offers a large variety and nutritionally well balanced meals. It also offers you some traditional dishes such as *Gallo pinto*, a common dish served for breakfast in Costa Rica, consists of rice and beans cooked with cilantro, onions, and other spices.

Every meal generally includes some type of fruit available for breakfast and some type of bread. Some form of rice and beans is served at every meal as well as some type of vegetable, such as zucchini, chayote (a squash), potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, *palmito* (heart of palm), name, yuca (like potatoes), and carrots. *Picadillo* is the name given to any chopped/diced side dish (vegetables). Salad is available at lunch and dinner and generally includes a small salad bar with a choice of two types of dressing. Sometimes limes are available. Some type of meat is included in lunch and dinner, including fish and you are allowed the choice of one of the entrees. Lunch and dinner include some type of small dessert (i.e. fruit, custard, Jello, ice cream). Vegetarian meals are also available on request.

Sometimes you can obtain some food outside of regular hours if you've missed a meal and food for a party or cooking a special meal can be arranged in the cafeteria office. When we worked in the community or in the field and were not going to be back for lunch, the cafeteria would fix a lunch for us to take if given three days notice.



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7. Central Telefónica

There are no coin operated phones on campus. There are campus phones located in the dorms and various other places (i.e. *El Centro Estudiantil*, *El Comedor*, and near *La Oropéndola*). If you have a major long-distance telephone company card, you can call the operator and ask her to connect you to that service (i.e. Sprint, AT&T). Public phones require a phone card which you can purchase in *La Oropéndola*.

The best place to make your telephone calls is from the *Central Telefónica* located next to the offices of the Extension Education Building right in the middle of campus. For national calls the operator will place the call for you, keep track of the time, and charge you accordingly.

To receive a telephone call at EARTH from the United States the caller must dial: 011-506-713-0000 and then speak to the receptionist with your extension.

However, if you have access to Skype you can also contact your loved ones by relying on your computer or any of the computers that are located in the three computer labs that are located on the campus. The wide band optic fiber insures a reliable and immediate access to the global network.

8. Computer Labs

Everyone refers to the labs or the computer office as USI (oo-see). Fill out the paperwork necessary to receive a password and an e-mail account. E-mail is an inexpensive way to keep in touch with people back home or in the school. The internal e-mail system, Microsoft Exchange, is more reliable than connecting to an internet service such as Hotmail. Lab #01 is next to the Soil and Water lab, Lab#02 is between *Académico 3* and the library and Lab #03 (USI-ASHA) is between USI and *La Jama*. They are open 24 hours. The computers can be slow and are not consistent in connecting to the Internet. Handwritten papers are not accepted so all class work must be done on the computer.

All documents must be submitted to professors through the Blackboard platform or the e-mail. Printing is not available. A USB thumb drive is very helpful for saving information from the computer labs. If you would like to bring a laptop, the campus is equipped with wireless internet. You are advised to bring your own wireless card, however you may purchase them from the USI for about \$80 if they are available. You should also bring a surge protector due to frequent power surges.

9. Recreational Center (*Complejo deportivo*)

This is the area containing the gym for aerobics, martial arts, dancing, basketball, and volleyball; the swimming pool; the tennis court; the weight room; and the sports fields, including the soccer field / ultimate Frisbee field, basketball (outdoor on tennis court), volleyball (outdoor on grass area), and the baseball field diamond. Camping and sporting equipment can be checked out in the recreation office located near the gym.

10. Hair Salon

It is located in *El Centro Estudiantil* building. A haircut costs around 1000 colons (about \$2.50). Appointments are preferred but if you don't have one and it is busy, a present of chocolate can get you squeezed into the appointment book. Manicures, pedicures and hair coloring are also available. Check for hours.



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11. La Jama (Student Convenient Store):

Also known as "*Soda Estudiantil*" it is run by fourth-year students and helps to pay for graduation events. It sells snacks, some canned goods, basic toiletry items as well as computer disks, envelopes, notebooks, pens, and cigarettes. It is located in *El Centro Estudiantil*.

The hours of *La Jama* during the day are 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. with a permanent employee. During the evenings and weekends, the students run the store and so the hours vary depending on the availability of students and other on-going activities.

12. Laundromats:

There are two laundry service buildings, each servicing a specific group of dorms. The laundry is open Monday through Saturday morning. You can acquire a laundry bag there or if not available, use a pillowcase. Purchase laundry tickets at *La Jama* and turn in to the attendants. Your laundry should be done either the next day or the same day if taken there in the morning. You may want to pre-scrub any stains.

A self-service laundry service is also available. Inquire about this. Also, there are sinks outside the laundry buildings and behind some of the dorms if you wish to wash by hand. Covered clotheslines are located behind some of the dorms. You need to provide your own soap and bucket. It is suggested you hand wash any items you would consider delicate, shrinkable or wish to remain in good color and shape. If you prefer to do your own laundry, wait until the evenings. There is no charge for using the washing machine or dryer.

13. Mail Room:

It is located in *El Centro Estudiantil*. This is where you can request a mailbox and handle all your mailing needs as well as fax service.

Do not request packages from home. This means not only by surface mail but by courier service as well. Importation taxes can be expensive (often more than the value of the items you are receiving) and you need to go to San Jose during the week to pick it up. It can be an all day process. There is no problem sending things from Costa Rica to the USA or Canada.,

To receive mail, make sure to have the sender label the envelope AIR MAIL. The address is:

c/o EARTH University
Apartado 4442-1000
San José
Costa Rica

To send mail, you may purchase stamps from the Mail Room

From the mail room, you may also send faxes. The prices vary and depend on the cost of making the phone call.



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14. Gift Shop “La Oropéndola”

Located below the library, the store sells EARTH University merchandise including banana and coffee paper, EARTH food products, film, bus tickets, event tickets, phone cards, greeting cards and postcards.

AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND GARDENS

1. Commercial Farm:

This farm is dedicated to produce environmentally friendly bananas for exportation to different markets around the world.

2. Academic Farm:

This farm provides students the chance to learn by doing about agriculture in the tropics. Although this managed and supported with farm laborers exclusively dedicated to this job, students help with some of the agricultural chores while learn about the cultivation of crops such as cassava, papaya, bananas, corn, beans and fruit trees such as oranges or guavas.

3. Organic Farm:

Right close to the entrance of the university, the organic farm combines the efforts of faculty, staff and students to experiment on animal husbandry and tropical crop production without relying on agricultural chemical inputs.

4. Integrated Animal Farm (*Finca Pecuaria Integrada*):

This is a farm where the university combines production with efficient management of natural resources seeking to reduce waste and contamination. Waste from stables and barns are used to feed several biodigesters which at the same time produce gas that is later transformed in electrical energy.

Dairy cattle and pigs are managed according to the guidelines of minimal stress and compassion.

5. Nursery (*Vivero*)

There are two nurseries on campus. The first which contains palms and ornamental plants is located between the resident Apartments B y C and the main road. The second which contains forest plantings is located off the main road and if heading towards *el portón*, on the left-hand side past the banana crossing (*Finca didáctica* or Teaching farm).

6. Medicinal plant garden

This area is dedicated to cultivate and teach about the use plants and their medicinal qualities.



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7. Botanical garden:

This was the project of a former student. The shade house contains a variety of orchids. Plants native to Costa Rica line the path leading around the garden and along the river. It is located on the road leading to La Reserva.

8. La Reserva

This is a forest reserve of secondary growth. It has been approximately 15 years since the last tree was harvested here. The tall trees remaining were left because they are of extremely hard wood, too difficult to harvest. This natural growth is now home to the animals typical to this environment. "This is a very cool place to see and hear howler monkeys, poisonous dart frogs, and many beautiful birds. Take insect repellent!!"



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APPENDIX I

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC EXCHANGE STUDENTS AT
EARTH UNIVERSITY: STUDY ABROAD**

There are two optional programs for exchange students at EARTH University: Interns and Study Abroad. Interns are enrolled primarily to do field work on special projects and study abroad students enroll primarily to do academic work. A combination of both programs is also possible and status will be determined according to what option prevails.

Each credit hour equates to 1 hour of classroom work or 3 hours of project or laboratory work. Therefore, projects are assigned a course number and all rules and regulations apply.

*This document states the conditions that **Study Abroad Students** must follow during their stay at EARTH.*

I hereby accept the following conditions as part of my exchange program at EARTH University:

1. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations that have been established for the student life and academic programs at EARTH University.
2. I agree and accept that punctual attendance to all classes and practical experiences in which I am enrolled at EARTH University is compulsory.
3. I agree to enroll in a minimum of 12 credit hours per trimester. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the suspension of my exchange status, which implies my immediate withdrawal from EARTH University.
4. Dropping courses is allowed only within the first week of classes and with permission of the Director of International Academic Programs and the final approval of the Dean of Academic Affairs. The procedure for dropping a course requires a formal letter to the Registrar's office and the course professor or the project supervisor explaining the reasons for dropping the course.
5. Consumption of alcohol is not allowed within the EARTH campus. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the application of the pertinent section of the student handbook.
6. The possession, trafficking, or use of any illegal drugs is considered grounds for immediate suspension of exchange status, expulsion from the University and return to country of origin. Violators may be prosecuted under the laws of the Republic of Costa Rica.
7. EARTH University is an institution built on mutual respect. Respect towards faculty members, fellow students and support staff should be observed at all times. Should any problems arise in this area, they will be dealt with by the Dean of Academic affairs.
8. A passing grade at EARTH University is 7.0 on a scale of 1 to 10. Regular EARTH University students with a grade below 7 but above 6 are allowed to recuperate by taking a make-up exam or project depending on the course syllabus. Failure to pass a course for EARTH University students means expulsion. Evaluations and grades for exchange students are reported to home institutions. It is up to the home institution to act accordingly.



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9. I agree to inform the Office of International Academic Programs if I find myself experiencing difficulties that jeopardize the successful conclusion of my exchange experience.

10. I have read and understand the rights, obligations, terms and regulations contained in the student manual, and I hereby fully accept them and the consequences of their violation.

Exchange Student

Director of International Academic Programs

Dean, Academic Affairs



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APPENDIX II.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC EXCHANGE STUDENTS AT
EARTH UNIVERSITY: INTERNS**

There are two optional programs for exchange students at EARTH University: Interns and Study Abroad. Interns are enrolled primarily to do field work on special projects and study abroad students enroll primarily to do academic work. A combination of both programs is also possible and status will be determined according to what option prevails.

*This document states the conditions that **INTERNS** must follow during their stay at EARTH.*

I hereby accept the following conditions as part of my exchange program at EARTH University:

1. I agree to abide by the rules and regulations that have been established for the student life and academic programs at EARTH University.
2. I agree and accept that punctual attendance to all practical experiences in which I am enrolled at EARTH University is compulsory.
3. I agree to develop a work plan that will clearly specify activities, expected outcomes and the use of my time.
4. I agree to fulfill my obligations responsibly and on time as stated in the work plan. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the suspension of my exchange status, which implies my immediate withdrawal from EARTH University.
5. Changes to the work plan are allowed only within the first two week of classes and with permission of the Director of International Academic Programs. The procedure requires a formal letter to the project supervisor explaining the reasons for dropping the course.
6. Consumption of alcohol is not allowed within the EARTH campus. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the application of the pertinent section of the student handbook.
7. The possession, trafficking, or use of any illegal drugs is considered grounds for immediate suspension of exchange status, expulsion from the University and return to country of origin. Violators may be prosecuted under the laws of the Republic of Costa Rica.
8. EARTH University is an institution built on mutual respect. Respect towards faculty members, fellow students and support staff should be observed at all times. Should any problems arise in this area, they will be dealt with by the Dean of Academic affairs.
9. I agree to inform the Office of International Academic Programs if I find myself experiencing difficulties that jeopardize the successful conclusion of my exchange experience.
10. I have read and understand the rights, obligations, terms and regulations contained in the student manual, and I hereby fully accept them and the consequences of their violation.



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Exchange Student

Faculty Supervisor

Director of International Academic Programs

APPENDIX III.

CHECKLISTS

The following tables contain checklists of what you should bring with you to live on campus at EARTH University. These lists come from a collaboration of lists and ideas from many students who have participated in international academic exchanges in previous years.

The first lists contain personal items including toiletries, linens, clothes, footwear, and accessories. Important notes about specialty items follow the table.

The second table of checklists contains such important items as travel essentials, medications, school essentials, documents, and photocopies. Again, important notes about specialty items follow the table.



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CHECKLIST OF WHAT TO BRING			
<u>Toiletries</u> ¹¹		<u>Accessories</u>	<u>Footwear</u>
bath soap		bandanas	High top work boots
Shampoo/conditioner		belt	sandals
razor		hat	walking shoes
lotion		work gloves (optional)	sport shoes
sunscreen or sun block		umbrella	rubber boots ⁴
insect repellent			
Others at your convenience		<u>Clothes</u>	<u>Travel Essentials</u>
		jeans	cash
<u>Linens</u>		khakis	travelers check
2 sets sheets, single bed		t-shirts	Camera
pillow (provided)		Tank tops	binoculars
light blanket		Long-sleeve shirts	alarm clock ⁵
bath towels (2)		socks	Spanish dictionary
hand towels (optional)		Light jacket	penlight or flashlight
pool/beach towel		lightweight rain suit	watch
workout/gym towel		shorts	travel sewing kit
laundry bag		bed clothes	travel first aid kit
hangers		sports clothes	small lock ⁶
		swimsuit	contact lenses & extras
		short dresses	eye glasses & extras
		formal clothes ²	sun glasses
		warm clothes ³	ziplock bags

Notes:

1. Most of these products can be purchased at the student convenience store (La Jama)
2. For night activities, especially the graduation dance.
3. If you plan to camp in the mountains as some areas have temps down to 5°C
4. Can be purchased locally, inexpensively, except if you have a shoe size greater than 10, in which case you'll need to either purchase them elsewhere or bring them with you.
5. With batteries as power outages are common.
6. For suitcase and dormitory closet



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CHECKLIST OF WHAT TO BRING				
<u>Medications</u>		<u>Documents</u>		<u>Photocopies³</u>
		passport		Birth certificate
Prescriptions ¹		photo identification		passport
over the counter drugs		airline ticket		photo identification
vaccinations up to date ²				
medical insurance ⁶				
<u>School Essentials</u>				
Calculator				
pens, pencils, erasers				
lab/project notebooks				

Notes:

1. List of prescription name(s), number(s), dosage, doctor, and doctor's phone number (in case your prescription(s) are lost or stolen)
2. Record of vaccinations and inoculations: tetanus, hepatitis, typhoid fever, malaria
3. Bring copy of policy and carry insurance I.D. at all times



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APPENDIX IV.

PRIMARY RULES FOR LIVING IN EARTH UNIVERSITY DORMITORIES

Dear Students,

We would like to remind you of the main rules for living in our University Housing. These rules can also be found in the "Student Manual." Through these rules, we attempt to promote a safe environment, which is both conducive and essential to studying and resting. Therefore, it is expected of all students to respect and follow these rules in order to avoid disciplinary measures.

At the students' residencies (dorms and common areas) it is prohibited to:

1. To store, have, consume, or drink alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs of any type. It is also prohibited to participate in any activity which promotes the use of these substances.
2. To cause disturbances to order or noise that disturbs the peace and quiet during times for studying and sleep.
3. To neglect cleaning responsibilities in your dorm.
4. To bring non-students to the dorms.
5. To have electrical appliances which are not authorized in the Housing Contract.
6. To hurt other students either verbally or physically.
7. To use other people's belongings without their consent.