

GUYANA: The Essential Life
Spring 2013 Interdisciplinary Study Abroad Program
Florida Gulf Coast University
College of Arts and Sciences

Patricia Fay, Professor of Art (lead faculty) 590-7229 pfay@fgcu.edu
Mary Voytek, Associate Professor of Art mvoytek@fgcu.edu

Class Meeting:

Wednesday 5:00-7:45, AC 140 (Ceramics Studio)

Student Course Assignments:

ART 4930 ST: Culture and Ecology in Guyana CRN 11021

- Michelle Manta
- Lauren Sinett
- Meaghan Shaw
- Cydney Chasky

IDS 3301 C&S: Culture and Ecology in Guyana CRN 11663

- Chris Steiner
- Kendry Vasquez

ARH 3670 Caribbean Art CRN 12059

- Cam De May
- Kel Campbell
- Knoel Blake
- Maria Jijon

Course Description

This faculty-led study abroad program will provide FGCU students with a fully contextualized, cross-cultural interdisciplinary learning environment focused on traditional Macushi Indian culture and community-based ecotourism in the South American country of Guyana. The Spring 2013 course schedule will include eight weeks of intensive academic study and preparation for the discipline-based service projects followed by the two-week in-country experience. After returning to FGCU the students will develop and present a public event to share their experiences with the Southwest Florida community, and will finish with a student poster presentation for Research Day 2013.

Instructor Expertise in the Region

Patricia Fay has been intensively involved with craft education, development and documentation in the Caribbean region since 1993. In 2008, she designed and delivered a faculty-led study abroad course for FGCU with ten students in Nicaragua working with in-country partner Potters for Peace. In 2010 Professor Fay and Professor Win Everham developed and led ten students in a combined art and environmental studies program in St. Lucia. The interdisciplinary, service-focused model developed for these programs is being used for the current project in Guyana, which was fully researched by Professor Fay during a two week visit to program sites in the summer of 2011. Professor Voytek has traveled extensively in developing countries; her expertise in sculpture and environmental studies, plus prior experience teaching art in the school system, will be invaluable assets to the program curriculum. In addition, Fay, Voytek, and the students will work with program advisor Guy Marco, a Macushi Indian colleague who grew up in the region we will be visiting, and is currently pursuing a master's degree in heritage education and interpretation at Newcastle University in the U.K.

Guyana Study Sites

As the trip itinerary details we will begin and end our journey in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, for visits to major museums and heritage sites. The core of the program will take place in the Macushi Indian village of Yupukari working with program partners Rupununi Learners and Caiman House, who have hosted several previous university and college groups. Rupununi Learners has developed unique educational programming based on indigenous wisdom offered from a community perspective, and the in-country curriculum will focus on essential concepts for living in full collaboration with the natural environment. During our travels to and from Yupukari we will visit multiple environmental and community-based tourism sites, including the Iwokrama Rainforest, Surama Village, Katoka Village, Karanambu Ranch, and Kaieteur Falls.

Course Readings

A course reader will be developed for this program covering general Guyanese history, culture, and ecology; the historical and contemporary experiences of Macushi Indians in Guyana; and the evolution and practice of community-based ecotourism in the country. See following pages for the complete reading and resource list.

Course Objectives

- 1) Develop a personal and contextualized understanding of the contemporary developing country environment in Guyana through readings, discussions, research and in-country experiences of historical, political, social, and cultural issues
- 2) Through a specifically interdisciplinary approach, consider in depth the essential elements of a productive and sustainable life in a supportive rural community emphasizing the integration of the human experience with the natural environment through the indigenous wisdom of the Macushi people
- 3) Understand and experience contemporary ecotourism practices, philosophies, and sites in Guyana, from the national-level 'low carbon' strategy to community-based cultural ecotourist strategies
- 4) Work in discipline-based teams to gain necessary expertise for in-country service projects; develop and create tangible products to offer Guyanese partners
- 5) Travel together with student colleagues and faculty members for two weeks in Guyana as a member of a well-prepared, tightly-knit collaborative group with the two-fold intention of both learning and sharing knowledge.
- 6) Disseminate the program experiences through a comprehensive public presentation, and with targeted research poster presentations for FGCU Research Day/Celebration of Excellence.

Course Assessment

- 20% In-class quizzes on assigned readings
- 20% Comprehensive paper
- 10% Presentations in class and at Research Day
- 50% Participation in all aspects of the course and trip

Attendance: classes cannot be missed, except in the case of a documented emergency.

Service Learning Projects

Through service projects integrated into the coursework, students will earn FGCU service-learning hours, and will be expected to pursue research and skills development to support effective service contributions to our partners in the Macushi Indian village of Yupukari. Our intended service project is the presentation of a five-session arts camp for village children at the elementary school level, including the development of projects and exercises that can be repeated in future and integrated into the curriculum for the Yupukari Primary School. Students and faculty will experiment with local materials and product design to contribute to existing efforts in craft development, and everyone will collaborate on the Ocarina Project to deliver a completed product to artisans and to the school. Total service-learning hours will be decided on as the result of a collaborative decision-making process.

The Earth Charter

The program will work closely with the FGCU Center for Environmental and Sustainability Education to explore and apply the principles of the Earth Charter in relationship to this project. Both in terms of human and ecological factors, the Earth Charter offers a uniquely specific relevance to the interdisciplinary subjects we will be studying and experiencing, and will be used as a primary 'text' for this project.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Spring 2013

Making Up Work for Missed FGCU Classes

In order to complete our two week in-country experience during the dry season in Guyana, students will miss one week of classes at FGCU during the week following Spring Break. All students are required to sign completion-of-work contracts with the professors teaching their additional courses, and to fully maintain their academic responsibilities.

FGCU: Wednesday January 9 – Wednesday February 27

Eight weekly class meetings, to include discussions, readings, research, service project development, travel preparation, cohort building, and assessment activities.

Wednesday January 9 Course and Program Introduction

WORKSHOP: The Ocarina Project

Wednesday January 16 Art, Culture, and the History of the Caribbean

WORKSHOP: The Ocarina Project

Readings: Guyanese history in Ali, essays in Caribbean Visions

Wednesday January 23 Guyana: People, Place, and Ecotourism

WORKSHOP: Fish Prints

Readings: State Dept Report, Earth Charter, A Different Sort of Time, Rupununi: Lost World

Wednesday January 30

Alice Layton, President, Board of Trustees, Rupununi Learners Foundation

5:00 Public presentation on study and research opportunities in Yupukari

6:30 Class conversation with students

Dinner at Tricia's house to follow class.

Wednesday February 6 The Amerindian Experience

WORKSHOP: Working with Paper – folding, drawing, rubbing, marbleizing

Readings: Through Indian Eyes, Indigenous Resurgence, Uncle Basil, Low Carbon Dev Strategy

Wednesday February 13 Understanding Guyana

WORKSHOP: The Art of Recycling

Readings: Last Resorts, Tourism and Responsibility, Jonestown

Wednesday February 20 Projects and Presentations

5:15 Pre-Departure Orientation, Brent Spencer, FGCU International Services

Wednesday February 27 Preparation and Packing

GUYANA: Saturday March 2 – Saturday March 16

While in Guyana we will be working with the texts and handouts, and having regular evening discussion and reflection sessions. Students will bring the entire course packet and readings, as well as journals and notebooks, and supplies and handouts for the service project. During the trip, students will be researching, developing, and drafting text for a major course paper on *Guyana: The Essential Life* according to stated guidelines. This paper will be due on Wednesday March 27.

*specific activities on this itinerary are subject to change.

FGCU: Wednesday March 20 – Wednesday April 24

Wednesday March 20

Trip debrief, set schedule for final assignments and poster presentation for Research Day

Develop program for public presentation

Wednesday March 27

Public presentation

Wednesday April 3

Research/reflection essay test due

Juried Student Show and Celebration of the Arts – no class

Wednesday April 10

Review research projects and plan poster presentations

Wednesday April 17

Develop poster presentation for Research Day, Friday April 19 (required attendance)

Wednesday April 24

Final class meeting, program review and celebration

University Statements

Academic Behavior Standards and Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to demonstrate honesty in their academic pursuits. The university policies regarding issues of honesty can be found in the FGCU Student Guidebook under the ***Student Code of Conduct*** and ***Policies and Procedures*** sections. All students are expected to study this document which outlines their responsibilities and consequences for violations of the policy. The FGCU Student Guidebook is available online at <http://studentservices.fgcu.edu/judicialaffairs/new.html>

Disability Accommodations Services: Florida Gulf Coast University, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the university's guiding principles, will provide classroom and academic accommodations to students with documented disabilities. If you need to request an accommodation in this class due to a disability, or you suspect that your academic performance is affected by a disability, please contact the Office of Adaptive Services. The Office of Adaptive Services is located in Howard Hall 137. The phone number is 239-590-7956 or TTY 239-590-7930

Student Observance of Religious Holidays: All students at Florida Gulf Coast University have a right to expect that the University will reasonably accommodate their religious observances, practices, and beliefs. Students, **upon prior notification to their instructors**, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances. Where practicable, major examinations, major assignments, and University ceremonies will not be scheduled on a major religious holy day. A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification of the reason for the absence.