



## **CATIE – A tropical center for education, research and scientific exchange**

### **What is CATIE?**

- The Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) is a regional center dedicated to research and graduate education in agriculture, and the management, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Its members include Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Venezuela, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the State of Acre in Brazil.

### **Our mission, vision, strategy and values**

- CATIE, as an international entity with a unique combination of science, graduate education and innovation for development, has its bases well-grounded and a clear action plan for creating professionals with a distinct perspective who can also contribute to the sustainable growth of the communities. These are our pillars:

#### **Mission**

- Increase sustainable and inclusive human well-being in Latin America and the Caribbean, promoting education, research and outreach for the sustainable management of agriculture and conservation of natural resources.

#### **Vision**

- To be an excellent international land-grant type of university specialized in agriculture and natural resources that effectively integrates education, research and outreach in alliance with multiple partners and countries through a solid regional scientific platform.

#### **Strategy**

- To promote the development of climate-smart territories as a tool to achieve sustainable and inclusive human well-being and the effective integration of actions in education, research and innovation for development, in alliance with multiple public and private partners.

### **Why CATIE?**

- CATIE is Latin America's oldest graduate school dedicated to tropical agriculture research and natural resource management.
  - Numerous global relationships expand our capacity to provide unique, quality professional training, educational, research and exchange opportunities.
  - Visitors receive broad cultural and academic experiences.
  - CATIE implements study abroad programs for undergraduate and graduate students and hosts research internships and volunteer programs.
  - Our beautiful campus provides affordable logistical support and facilities for short and long stays.
  - Our visitors enjoy peaceful and tranquil experiences while working hard.

*Come and experience the Pura Vida life style of CATIE and Costa Rica*

The activities described in this document align with the USDA-CATIE Memorandum of Understanding.

## Are you looking for a place to...

- Give opportunities to your undergraduate and graduate students to understand the complexity, challenges and beauty of applied sustainability, then become a part of our **Cooperative Study Abroad Program (CSAP)**. If you are looking for a place to take your students to immerse them in a safe, knowledge-rich environment, we can help you with your study abroad program. [More information about CSAP here.](#)
- Gain a unique perspective of cutting-edge research and development practices being carried out by CATIE and its partners in agriculture, natural resource management, environmental services and community and institutional innovation, then consider organizing an internship or exchange program. Participants will experience a working environment characterized by an international scope and diversity of work approaches. [More information about internships and exchanges here.](#)
- Network and expand your own or your institution's research programs through joint efforts, then make use of our regional platform for research collaboration. CATIE's national offices and representatives can connect you to stakeholders and officials in 13 Latin American countries. Our international alliances make it possible to carry out joint *in situ* projects. [More information about joint research between CATIE's scientists and U.S. university scientists here.](#)
- Expand possibilities for your students to earn credit hours toward their graduate degrees while adding an international experience on a range of applied subjects in sustainability science, then you may want to take advantage of CATIE's reputation as a leader for graduate education in tropical agriculture and natural resource management disciplines. Our graduate courses are open to US university students; many courses require Spanish proficiency, but several courses are taught in English. [To learn more about graduate program visit our webpage here.](#)
- Expand possibilities for your students to earn credit hours toward their undergraduate degrees during summer and under the "*learning by doing approach*", then partner with our Sustainability Seminars Series (SSS Program). SSS offers English-language, experiential learning summer courses taught by CATIE and our partners' faculty members to immerse students in sustainable agriculture and agri-business, applied sustainability, and sustainable tourism and community development. [More information about the Sustainability Seminars Series summer program here.](#)
- Take a sabbatical or post-doctoral opportunity, then you may want to be hosted by an institution with more than 70 years of research, outreach and education programs on agriculture, natural resources management and community development in Latin America. [More information about Sabbaticals and Post-doctoral opportunities here.](#)
- Carry on Masters and Doctoral field research, then check our researchers and fields of expertise covering agriculture, forestry, natural resources management and community development. [More information about having the field research for your master or Ph.D. dissertation at CATIE here.](#)

## Logistics and Finance

All above program and opportunities are possible given the infrastructure and facilities at CATIE. CATIE will organize and coordinate operational resources for research cooperation and it is expected to provide all necessary laboratory, computing and library facilities for the purpose of research and teaching to visiting faculty, researchers, or students. Laboratory and computing costs will be covered by visiting scholar or the host program at CATIE.

The hospitality division at CATIE will assist visitors to find accommodation during the period of the faculty/researcher/student visit but the visitors themselves will cover their costs. We do have very competitive cost for our accommodation.

Visitors may also be assisted by the Graduate School and Research Programs with immigration formalities and work permits where applicable. Visitors should obtain all necessary financial support for their visits to CATIE. The successful implementation of academic visits will depend largely on the availability of funds under the provisions for sabbatical and/or study leaves in the U.S. Institutions' respective schemes of service. CATIE will not be responsible for providing any financial support whatsoever, however, an invitation from CATIE to a faculty member of the other institution to serve as an external examiner, to teach or to supervise students may be supported financially.

Come to CATIE and help us to

*“Increase sustainable and inclusive human well-being in Latin America and the Caribbean, promoting education, research and outreach for the sustainable management of agriculture and conservation of natural resources”.*



# CATIE's Cooperative Study Abroad Program

## Introduction:

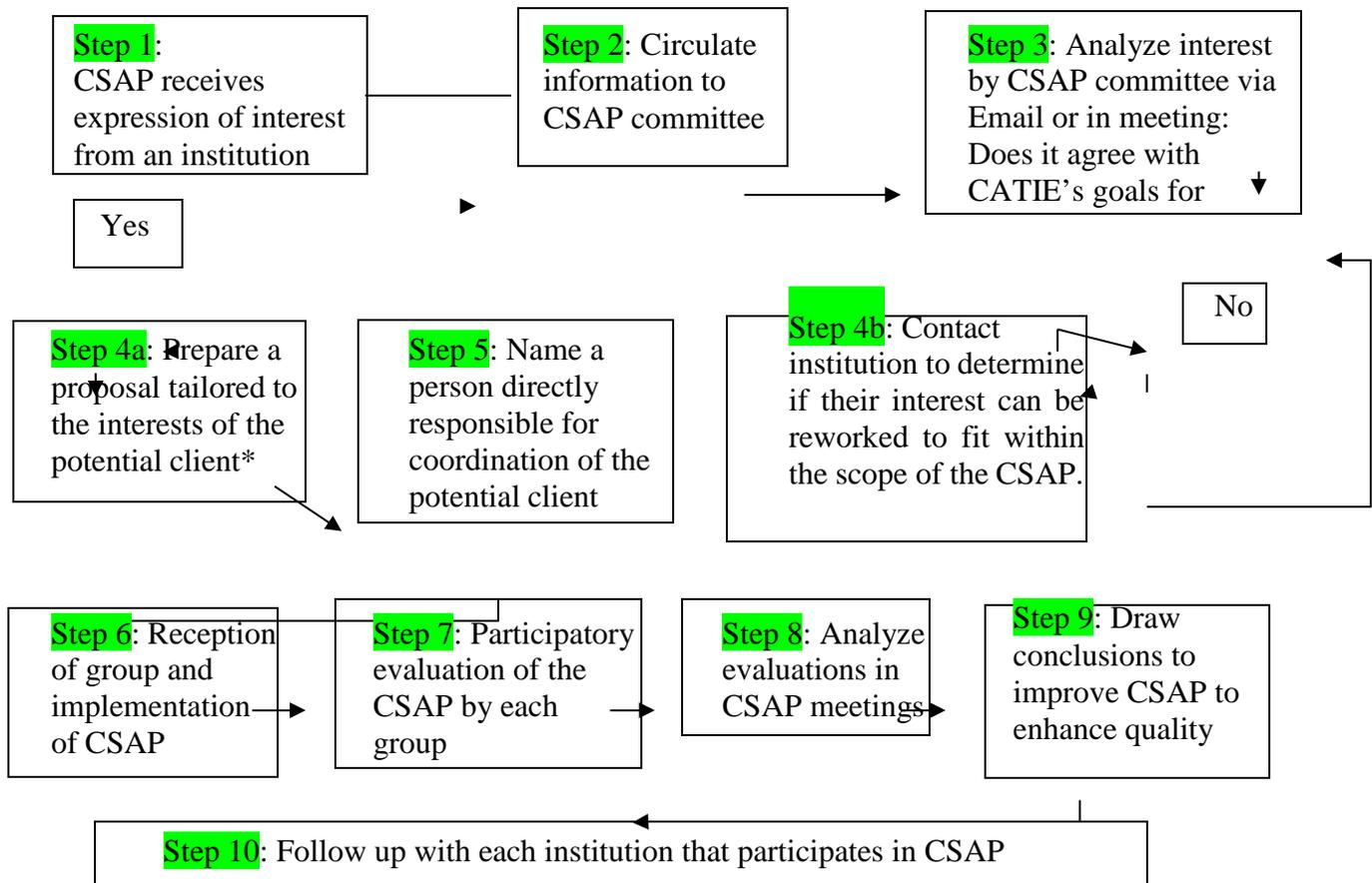
Universities throughout the developed world understand the importance of study abroad programs for their faculty and students as excellent ways to experience cultural differences first hand, to understand globalization and its impact on their countries, and to help students prepare for life after college. Many semester-long programs are inaccessible to students due to costs, job commitments, tight academic schedules, etc. While some short term study abroad opportunities do allow students and faculty to get out of their own cultural boxes to learn and explore through international experiences, often such programs are not structured adequately to optimize the educational aspects of the visits and can turn into two-week tourist vacations.

For the past fifteen years, CATIE has conducted study abroad programs with universities throughout Europe, Asia, and North America to learn about the challenges of sustainable development in the tropics particularly sustainable agriculture, agroforestry and forestry. CATIE combines lectures and field trips to help students better understand how their actions in their home countries can impact farmers, communities and forests throughout the tropics. The study abroad program is designed to teach concepts through hands-on experiences with numerous projects that CATIE manages in Costa Rica.

## How it works...

CATIE's Cooperative Study Abroad Program (CSAP) has grown from only 4 university visits in 2001 to over 15 annually today and maintains flexibility to cater to specific demands from different clients. Formalizing this program within CATIE takes full advantage of opportunities and partnerships with other institutions such as EARTH University, INCAE Business School, Tecnológico de Costa Rica (TEC), National University of Costa Rica (UNA), and University of Costa Rica (UCR) resulting in broadened program scope for clients.

To be part of the CSAP follow the 10 step procedures outlined below.



\* In the fourth step it is important to cover important aspects of the course, not limited to the topics that will be covered, cultural and

Contact Information:

Dr. Eliecer E. Vargas-Ortega CSAP coordinator [evargas@catie.ac.cr](mailto:evargas@catie.ac.cr)

## Internships or exchanges

At CATIE, we are proud to offer internship and exchange experiences to learn about sustainable development and what real, sound environmental management of agriculture and natural resources is all about. We take full advantage of our strengths and experiences; each internship or exchange is developed within the Graduate School to maintain program quality – assuring one of the best study abroad experiences a student can have.

- Because of its extensive experience and international prestige, the Graduate School is an excellent forum for student exchanges and academic enrichment: offering a true window to the world.
- The goal of CATIE’s student exchange program is to offer participants opportunities to conduct research projects, experience in-service training and participate in graduate courses.
- In some cases, exchange students conduct research which leads to earning their undergraduate or graduate degrees from other institutions.

### Frequently Asked Questions about internships or exchanges

#### 1. What types of internships or exchanges exist?

Examples of internships for summer 2018 are provided in the following table (Table 1).

**Table 1. List of potential internship options with Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE), at Turrialba Costa Rica, through 2018-19**

Internship Option	Coordinator	Description	Requirements
Conservation of Genetic Material and Production	Daniel Fernández, Ingeniero Agrónomo de Colecciones del CATIE	What: Plant reproduction and propagation, seed bank management, interface with production and food security. Where: Banco de semillas, áreas de colecciones de café y cacao. 100% time in CATIE	Intermediate to advanced Spanish knowledge required Low physical effort. 6 students maximum
Organic Production and Silvopastoral Systems	Carlos Cordero, Head of Collections	What: Organic fertilization, integrated pest management, silvopastoral systems, carbon neutral dairy operation Where: Germplasm Collection Area, Botanical Garden, and dairy farm 75% time in CATIE 25% time in nearby farms	Basic to Intermediate Spanish Medium physical effort Early morning starters 10 students maximum
Biotechnology of Coffee	María Elena Aguilar Vega, Head of the Biotechnology Laboratories of CATIE	What: micro-propagation processes, multiply the F1 coffee hybrids, somatic embryogenesis, cryopreservation of seeds and different vegetative propagules. Where: Biotechnology Laboratory 100% time in CATIE	Intermediate Spanish Low physical effort Mostly work inside labs 3 students maximum
Silvopastoral systems	Claudia Sepulveda, Researcher for the Environmental Livestock Program	What: Climate Change adaptation and mitigation, Payment for Environmental Services, and Farm Productivity Where: CATIE Farm and GAMMA Building 80% time CATIE, 20% field visits in Turrialba Area	Basic Spanish Medium physical effort 4 Students maximum
Applied Sustainability Research	Eliécer Vargas, Coordinator of Sustainability	What: Resource Use Alternatives, sustainable consumption practices, sustainability education and global	Low physical effort 6 students maximum

Internship Option	Coordinator	Description	Requirements
	Seminars Series	challenges Where: Sustainability House and Botanical Garden 100% time in CATIE	
Community-based Tourism	David Solano, Project Manager for RETUS	What: Community enhancement, sustainable tourism, monitoring, good practices Where: Mollejones and Santa Cruz communities 60% time in communities 40% time in CATIE	Intermediate to advanced Spanish Low physical effort 4 students maximum Homestay for at least 20% of time
Biological Corridors and Biodiversity	Roger Villalobos, Researcher Biodiversity and Forestry Program	What: Monitoring, planning and governance for Biological Corridors Where: Turrialba and CATIE area 70% time in CATIE 30% visiting natural protected areas in Cartago Province	Intermediate to advanced Spanish 4 students maximum
Small Scale Production and Sustainable Consumption	Eliécer Vargas, CSAP Coordinator	What: Alternatives to conventional production, Fair Trade, consumption education Where: Sustainability House and Schools at Turrialba 75% time at CATIE 25% time at Schools of Turrialba	3 students maximum

## 2. What is the process to apply to the internship or exchange?

- a. The enrollment process for summer programs opens the first week of January and closes the first week of April.
- b. Students interested in CATIE's internships fill the FORM F-AD 032
- c. As the partner universities start receiving students' applications (including Form F-AD 032), these are sent to the CSAP Program at CATIE.
- d. As part of this step they also need to submit a resume/CV, cover letter, and potentially a letter of recommendation from a professor/former employer.
- e. CATIE reviews this information and sets-up an interview with the responsible of the Internship Option (through Skype or phone).
- f. After the interview, if everything goes well, the student is offered a final placement.
- g. CATIE will provide information about placements before May 31<sup>st</sup>, and students will be in place in Costa Rica between June 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Any other internship or exchange, outside the summer program, will be handled under the "Guidelines for exchange graduate students at CATIE". This requires first directly contacting a CATIE researcher or professor willing to accommodate the internship or exchange experience. [Guidelines for exchange students](#)

## 3. Do I have housing options on the CATIE campus in Turrialba?

Student apartments will be available from May 12<sup>th</sup> to September 12<sup>th</sup> in the Central America Complex as well as the North America Complex. In total, 40 slots could be reserved for this Internship program. Cost is \$250

USD per month. Each internship will have a standard duration of 2 months so a charge of \$500 USD for housing will need to be considered. Housing fee includes electricity, water, trash collection, security and internet connection. Each apartment has three rooms so each student will have their own sleeping area, however, kitchen, bathroom, laundry and living areas are shared by all three students.

#### **4. How about insurance?**

We do check for appropriate insurance. This is done from the beginning stages of the program. Most partners have international insurance for their students. If the student, or partner university fail to provide evidence of insurance, CATIE offers the insurance: \$80 USD per month for women and \$60 USD per month for men. CATIE completes insurance arrangements before arrival of the students. Also, CATIE prevent health risks by requesting health information using Form F-AD 038.

#### **5. Pre-requisites (if applicable) that I need.**

Pre-requisites are set by each individual internship opportunity; therefore, they are variable. Basic knowledge of Spanish will be ideal for anyone living for two months in Costa Rica. There are always opportunities to engage with Spanish-only speakers during the internship.

#### **6. Academic structure: internships length and number of credits**

Our general summer internship/exchange lasts two months with enough instructional hours to grant 6 internship credit hours. Since, we offer distinctly different internship opportunities, there are no standard schedules. At CATIE, most work is done between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. with one hour break for lunch. Expected schedules should be discussed during Skype or phone meetings with each student.

#### **7. What are my estimated costs?**

In addition to the housing fee (\$500 USD per two months, including electricity, water, and other services), summer internship and exchange cost per students is around \$505 USD per month.

## **Joint Research**

### **Joint Research between CATIE's scientists and U.S. university scientists**

Joint research between CATIE's scientists and U.S. university scientists is usually connected to a Memorandum of Agreement ("Agreement") made and entered into by both institutions. Such agreements set forth the understanding between CATIE and the U.S. university on the intention to establish a linkage in Collaborative Research.

### **Nature of Collaboration**

CATIE encourages research visits from faculty of other Institutions. Research visits may involve some participation in teaching, if agreed in advance by both parties. The research projects undertaken during visits could be joint or individual.

- a. Joint Research Projects.** Joint research projects located at CATIE may be initiated by either of the two Institutions but their execution will have to be approved by the appropriate CATIE authorities to ensure that the projects will be supported with adequate resources and facilities.
- b. Individual Research Projects.** It is expected that there may be some CATIE and U.S. university faculty members, besides postgraduate students, who will be working independently on their own personal projects. Such research visits will have to be approved by the appropriate research administrator(s) of the Institution where the projects are to be located.

**CATIE's Research Themes.** Research activities undertaken between CATIE and U.S. university are intended to focus on those themes examining sustainability and sustainable development in relation to and/or among various constituencies including governmental and non-governmental agencies, host communities, businesses and operators directly and indirectly involved with CATIE. Three research programs established at the Turrialba campus are eager to explore joint research opportunities. These programs are:

Program of Forests, Biodiversity and Climate Change  
Contact: Bryan Finegan, Ph.D, [bfinegan@catie.ac.cr](mailto:bfinegan@catie.ac.cr)

Program of Agriculture, Livestock, and Agroforestry  
Contact: Eduardo Somarriba, Ph.D, [esomarri@catie.ac.cr](mailto:esomarri@catie.ac.cr)

Program of Research for Development, Economics and Environment  
Contact: Leida Mercado, Ph.D, [lmercado@catie.ac.cr](mailto:lmercado@catie.ac.cr)

# CATIE's Graduate School

## Excellent environment for study

Costa Rica: a unique and attractive destination for graduate studies! It's a country well-known as a pioneer in environmental conservation, excellent infrastructure and services, safety and scenic beauty. Its network of national parks and conservation areas, abundant biodiversity, innovative policies and exceptional geographic location make Costa Rica a convergence point for scholars and students devoted to issues related to natural resources, as well as tropical agriculture. We can quite properly say this: CATIE's Graduate Program is the most experienced in Latin America and the Caribbean in agriculture, natural resources and environment. Our contribution to human capital formation began in 1946; we talk about 70 years of active academic life.

Our campus: CATIE's campus is nestled in a rich valley at an altitude of 650 meters (2100 ft.), surrounded by green mountains covered with a mix of coffee, sugar cane, remnants of tropical forest and areas devoted to livestock production.

Average temperatures vary between 70 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit. The cultural, academic and professional diversity of our students is clearly one of the most important attributes of our graduate programs. This strongly multicultural environment fosters an open and international learning environment that promotes a continuous exchange of personal experiences and enriches topics addressed in each class.

## Graduate Program

CATIE is a prestigious graduate level international university of recognized excellence with more than 70 years of experience in preparing leaders in Latin America and the world, in agricultural sciences, natural resources management and the environment. Our education program includes the following academic Master's degrees:

- International Academic Master's in Agroforestry and Sustainable Agriculture
- International Academic Master's in Management and Conservation of Tropical Forests and Biodiversity
- International Academic Master's in Integrated Watershed Management
- International Academic Master's in Economy, Development and Climate Change

Our education program also includes the following Professional Master's degrees:

- International Professional Master's in Development Practice
- International Professional Master's in Biodiversity Conservation Practice
- Master's in International Sustainable Tourism (Joint Program with University of North Texas)

Likewise CATIE have a Virtual Master's degree:

- International Professional Master's in Integrated Watershed Management (on line)

CATIE offers four options in its international doctoral program: a) Joint program, in English, with the University of Bangor, Wales (United Kingdom); b) Joint program, in English, with the University of Idaho (United States); c) CATIE doctoral program, in English, with cooperating universities in the United States and Europe; and d) CATIE doctoral program, in Spanish, with cooperating universities in Latin America and Spain. In the first two options, the "Doctor of Philosophy" degree is awarded jointly with the respective university, while the diploma is awarded by CATIE for the third and fourth options.

The following is a list of 2017 courses offered within the doctoral (Ph.D.), academic masters, and professional masters academic programs and other specializations (title in English means taught in English) (Table 2).

**Table 2. list of 2017 courses offered within the doctoral (Ph.D.), academic masters, and professional masters academic programs and other specializations**

List of Courses
Sustainable Natural Resource Management
Context and Challenges of Applied Sustainable Development
Environmental Policies in a Changing World
Seminars in Sustainable Tourism: Experiences of Successful Practitioners in Costa Rica
Socio-Cultural Contexts of Sustainable Tourism Development
Field Practical Professional Experience with Research Applications (Capstone)
Bases técnicas y conceptuales sobre agroforestería y agricultura sostenible
Sistemas silvopastoriles: producción sostenible y servicios ambientales
Agroforestería con cultivos anuales y perennes
Planificación agrícola y agroforestal y consideraciones económicas para su diseño y manejo
Sistemas agrícolas sostenibles y agrobiodiversidad
Agricultura climáticamente inteligente y seguridad alimentaria
Sistemas de información geográfica **
Retos de la gestión de bosques y la biodiversidad
Bases ecológicas para la gestión sostenible de territorios y sus ecosistemas
Bases técnicas del manejo para la producción y conservación de bosques y biodiversidad
Estrategias de conservación de la biodiversidad
Manejo de bosques naturales
Silvicultura de plantaciones forestales
Economía del cambio climático (2)
Economía ambiental y de los recursos (2)
Métodos cuantitativos para socioeconomistas(2)
Desarrollo rural y creación de institucionalidad (2)
Valoración económica del medio ambiente
Métodos cualitativos para investigación y acción participativa
Sistemas de información geográfica I **
Manejo de cuencas Hidrográficas
Hidrología e Hidráulica para el manejo de cuencas
Gestión de cuencas hidrográficas (gobernanza)
Gestión integrada de recursos hídricos
Planificación y conservación del uso de la tierra
Saneamiento de cuencas Hidrográficas
Gestión del riesgo a desastres de origen hídrico
Economía del cambio climático
Introducción a los acuerdos internacionales de cambio climático
Introducción a la ciencia de decisiones ambientales y sus aplicaciones
Ecosistemas tropicales, sus servicios y el clima
Introducción a las dimensiones socioecológicas de sistemas productivos frente al cambio climático
Acciones de mitigación al cambio climático y sistemas medición, reporte y verificación
Diseño de proyectos de cambio climático
Integración de la adaptación al cambio climático en la planificación
Conservación y desarrollo local
Métodos de facilitación participativa
Fortalecimiento de capacidades locales
Taller de inducción
Gestión Integral de Zonas Marino Costeras

List of Courses (continued)
Fundamentos biológicos y socioeconómicos de la conservación
Estrategias de vida y análisis de situación
Equidad y desarrollo rural
Métodos de análisis social a escala local
Sistematización de experiencias
Práctica supervisada 1
Gobernanza local
Planificación estratégica
Gestión participativa de áreas protegidas
Práctica supervisada 2
Abordaje de conflictos
Manejo adaptativo para la conservación de la biodiversidad
Diseño, ejecución y evaluación de proyectos de desarrollo
Práctica supervisada 3
Seminario de diseño del proyecto de graduación
Trabajo de graduación

The Graduate School enjoys high prestige and international recognition for its quality. Principal characteristics include its clear commitment to serving communities of Latin America and the Caribbean and encouraging excellence, leadership and cooperation among the student community. CATIE's Graduate School promotes a dynamic education system, adapted to the social and labor demands of today's world and to the intellectual interests of each student in order to develop leaders capable of facing the challenges and opportunities of a constantly changing world.

### **Our alumni**

For 70 years, hundreds of students have passed through our "world campus". We've had second and third generations of participants complete their programs at CATIE, an excellent indication of the quality of our Graduate Program. CATIE alumni stay in contact with the institution and enjoy long-term benefits. A mechanism for interaction is the CATIE and IICA Alumni Association (AGCATIE) whose board of directors is comprised of alumni from many countries. There are CATIE alumni associations in many of our graduates' countries.

### **Contact us:**

CATIE's graduate program

posgrado@catie.ac.cr

(506) 2558-2422

## Masters and Doctoral Field Research

CATIE welcomes students conducting Masters and Doctoral field research at our main campus at Turrialba, Costa Rica. Laboratories, genetic materials collections (including coffee, peach palm, cacao), primary forest reserve and forest plantations, seed banks, dairy farm and milking facility, and many more resources are available to enthusiastic researchers completing theses and dissertations. Even if your university do not have a formal agreement with CATIE, by following the procedure below, our facilities and resources can help you carry out your research.

Procedure to request Master's or Doctoral field research

1. The student contacts the office of the CSAP at the graduate school with a general description of the field research that he/she would like to conduct.
2. The CSAP office and the student researchers must answer the following questions:
  - Does CATIE have staff available in the research topic who could supervise the field experience?
  - What are the special requirements that field researchers demand from CATIE?
  - Does the field research collaboration create clear synergies with ongoing CATIE research projects or with CATIE's traditional research lines?
3. CSAP will contact a faculty/researcher at CATIE who best fits the particular research topic.
4. The CSAP office will send a request to the CATIE's Research Division to evaluate the integration of the field research with CATIE's research agenda.
5. If CATIE's Research Division evaluation is positive, then the student will ask to enroll their Field Research at the Graduate School.
6. Completing the enrollment, the student will follow the "Guidelines for Exchange Students" that explain costs and logistics for traveling to and living at CATIE.

## **Sabbaticals and Post-doctoral Opportunities**

If you are a faculty member with an upcoming sabbatical, or are thinking about Post-doctoral research focused on the tropics, we encourage you to contact the CATIE Visiting Scholars Program. We are happy to guide you through several opportunities at our campus in Turrialba.

We encourage you to take full advantage of our facilities and environment and boost your creativity. Our Visiting Scholars Program was established to support faculty members aiming to work with CATIE on researching sustainability and sustainable development among various constituencies, including governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, host communities, businesses and farm operators.

### **Application Requirements**

A visitor scholar must submit his/her description of activities to the Visiting Scholars Program, indicating:

1. Title (objective) of proposed activity
2. Brief description of the proposed research activity. Include interests and availability to help teach courses and advise students.
3. Provide sponsor/collaborator contact information.
4. Proposal and budget documents:
  - Project Description – 4 pages maximum: The project proposal should describe the proposed activity and its scientific and/or educational merit, and explain how CATIE could help facilitate the proposed activity.
  - Budget – a one-page budget justification. Expenses must be itemized by type and cost.

### **Letters of Support**

If letters of support from CATIE are required, please indicate in the application. For self-financed sabbatical or post-doctoral research, a letter from the host-institution leadership is required.

### **Formalization of Sabbatical and Post-doctoral opportunities**

1. Read and accept the terms and conditions of the Visiting Scholars Program.
  2. Confirm accuracy of information provided and applicant identity.
  3. Sign the visiting scholar agreement.
  4. Depending on availability, during the period at CATIE, the visiting scholar will be asked to:
    - give lectures,
    - help teach courses , and or
    - guide student research
- For general information on visiting and working under CATIE visitor scholar program, please contact the Graduate School Office at (506) 2258-2424 or visit at <https://www.catie.ac.cr/programas-de-educacion/posgrado/visitorscholar.html>

# SUSTAINABILITY

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## SEMINAR SERIES

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### COSTA RICA

Eliécer E. Vargas-Ortega

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## 1. What is the Sustainability Seminar Series

The Sustainability Seminar Series is an endeavor of the CATIE's Sustainable Tourism working group that provides our partner institutions with a turnkey method for offering their students the opportunity to study internationally. This third-party study abroad program serves juniors and seniors from the US and European universities and focuses on providing a service that is safe, transformative, and affordable.

We partner with local institutions to offer students opportunities to earn college credits while experiencing the "Tico" culture. Our personal and professional relationships with partner institutions benefit all parties: students are equipped with marketable skills through affordable international study while our partner institutions and CATIE gain invaluable international exposure.

## 2. Objectives

The Sustainability Seminar Series (SSS) objectives include:

- Creating a unique and immersive experience that will imbue attendees with an in-depth understanding of the context and challenges of sustainability from both a theoretical and practical perspective.
- Generating interest in the graduate education focus on sustainability and in the Master of Science in International Sustainable Tourism (MIST) program.
- Developing an international network that brings people with diverse interests and backgrounds together in a common forum, working towards sustainability.
- Delivering enriching experiences for seminar participants that are safe, exciting, and transformative.
- Providing the experience at an excellent price to students, adding value to their undergraduate experience.

## 3. Mission

The mission of the Sustainability Seminar Series is to provide motivated attendees with an intensive sustainability experience that profoundly alters the way they interpret the world. We will accomplish this by building a solid theoretical foundation in sustainability, and enhanced it through hands-on experiences and interaction with the practitioners who shaped the industry. Promoting a new set of parameters by which decisions are evaluated, our graduates will raise awareness for the consequences

of unsustainable behaviors and will work to promote actions that benefit communities, protect the environment, and provide adequate returns for stakeholders.

#### **4. Keys to Success**

The keys to success for the Sustainability Seminar Series are;

- Providing not only a textbook understanding of sustainability, but having the opportunity to hear the strategies, motivations, and experiences of the people who shaped the industry.
- Leveraging Costa Rica and CATIE's resources as a leader in the promotion of sustainable development.
- Maintaining full integration between what students learn and what they live during the seminar.
- Focusing on delivering a tremendous value proposition for attendees.

#### **5. Our Campus**

The Sustainability Seminar Series (SSS) is an academic exchange program headquartered on the campus of the Center for Tropical Agriculture, Research, and Education (CATIE) in Turrialba, Costa Rica. The SSS was created in 2012, in response to demand for an intensive, world-class source for the study and practice of sustainability. Initially focusing on four-week seminars for undergraduate students in selected US universities, the early seminars will focus on these areas:

- SSS 400 Environmental and Global Cultural Issues (6 credits)
- SSS 404 Sustainable Agriculture and Agri-business (6 credits)
- SSS 401 Applied Sustainability to Change the World (6 credits)
- SSS 402 Sustainable Tourism and Community Development (6 credits)
- SSS 500 Applied Sustainable Development (12 credits)

With an increasing emphasis being placed on environmental and socio-cultural concerns, attendees can expect that the skills they develop will be highly sought after by not only governments and NGOs, but companies that are beginning to see the value of a sustainability strategy's long-term outlook.

#### **6. Our target students**

Strategically, targeting juniors from our primary partner schools, who are enrolled majors directly aligned with the seminar concentrations (hospitality, tourism, business, agri-business, biology, geology, hydrology, etc.) affords attendees the opportunity to make the most of their participation by leveraging one intangible advantage they have over seniors; time. Exposing undergraduates who have already completed their foundational classes, but have yet to finish their major courses, allows these students to spread the word about their experience while integrating the lessons they learned into their capstone courses, providing a more holistic perspective into their overall academic experience. In addition, completing the SSS before the end of their undergraduate careers allows juniors to prepare for graduate school and positions them with enough time to complete applications and move directly into graduate studies. We hope that some students will find that their newfound interest in sustainability makes them interested in continuing their studies by enrolling in the MIST program.

Our second group of students is seniors from our partner institutions who are enrolled in programs with direct connections to the series' fields of study. These students will also find tremendous value in undergoing the intensive experience of the seminar, but are less likely to be drawn to the program in order to earn six credit hours. Rather, seniors are likely to utilize the SSS as a means to round out their undergraduate careers while finishing with a unique way of gaining additional skills before hitting the job market, or deciding to apply to graduate programs. The fact that the seminar will provide an affordable means of learning about sustainability with the backdrop of such a renowned destination cannot be overlooked; seniors with a true interest in developing their skills in an academic environment are the true focus of this tier.

## 7. Our Strengths

- Well established reputation of CATIE
- Highly respected researchers and staff
- Strong ties to partner institutions, providing access to more than 34,000 juniors and seniors
- Young and competent staff
- Willingness and ability to quickly adapt to the needs of partner institutions
- Pre-existing infrastructure
- Experience hosting students

We see **opportunities** in strategic alliances offer a source of joint marketing activities to enhance the US reputation of CATIE, and international presence of partners; potential for the series to develop alliances with other universities and reach even more students

## 8. Management of the Series

Overseeing the progress and general direction of the series is Director, Dr. Eliecer Vargas. Developing curriculum, arranging logistics, and teaching students, is the responsibility of the Program Coordinator.

The SSS is designed to not only give a working knowledge of the principles of sustainability, but to show how to apply them in the real world. Equipped with this outlook, the participant will add value to his/her undergraduate experience, and be uniquely prepared for the leadership positions of tomorrow.

During the time in Turrialba, the participant will live in the Sustainability House, a newly-renovated home built in traditional Costa Rican style. More than just a place to sleep, this bunkhouse is designed to be a place where the student can both experience hands-on learning and relax while catching up with classmates. It employs an array of technologies aimed at reducing resource consumption and embodying all that sustainability represents. From capturing rainwater to flush toilets, to featuring the artwork of local painters and sculptors, the Sustainability House will truly be the embodiment of sustainable living. Cost for established SSS courses is around \$2,350 USD per the duration of the program (usually 24 days).