The Macalester-Pomona-Swarthmore Consortium Program at the University of Cape Town

“Globalization and the Environment: South Africa”

Spring Semester

The Macalester-Pomona-Swarthmore Consortium Program offers its students a unique opportunity for focused study on the theme of “Globalization and the Environment.” The program has been designed by the environmental studies faculties of these three liberal arts colleges in consultation with the University of Cape Town.

The program’s overall educational purpose is to enable participants to experience the lure and durability of a deeper understanding of the natural world and its interconnections with human activity. To do so, students will grapple with the philosophical, scientific, social, aesthetic, and ethical dimensions of the program theme. The academic program provides high-quality teaching, discussion, reading, educational excursions, and includes a directed study project.

The program is based on the understanding of two key concepts. Globalization is the dynamic and complex process involving the interplay between the universal laws of science across diverse environments and the particular challenges confronted by local populations as they engage with the natural world. Natural Environment investigates the physical and biological systems of the planet and its connection with the human condition. Students will investigate the claims humans make on other species and on the earth’s resources, and how this has been expressed over time and across cultures, with a specific focus on South Africa.

Cape Town

South Africa provides an extraordinary physical, historical, and cultural environment for this program. Its physical and geographical features are strikingly diverse, and its cities and towns offer a fascinating mix of people and cultures. Visitors quickly observe the juxtaposition and complexity of its First and Third World elements, and the country’s struggle with political/social/economic/racial issues in the post-apartheid era. It is a country in transition with a host of developmental challenges.

South Africa

The University

The University of Cape Town (UCT) was founded in 1829, and is South Africa’s oldest university. It has established itself as one of Africa’s finest teaching and research institutions. Its student enrollment totals approximately 19,000 students with about 52% white/48% black (African, Indian and Coloured students). The international enrollment is about 2,500 students from 75 different countries. The language of instruction is English.

The university campus has a beautiful hillside setting on the outskirts of the city. It boasts handsome architecture, vast green spaces with numerous trees and plants, and extensive sports fields. The university is situated close to residential areas, shops, cafes, etc.

The academic program is housed in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science in the Faculty of Science. Student support services are provided by the University of Cape Town International Office.
Academic Program
The program includes the following academic components:

Pre-departure reading (no credit). All participants are expected to read several background books in preparation for the semester. The program provides a list of suggested readings.

Core Seminar: Globalization and the Environment (4 semester credits or 1 course credit). This required core course is organized in two parts, and conducted in January and February before regular UCT courses begin. The first part is taught by the Consortium Visiting Professor from one of the three colleges, who will be in residence during this period. The second part is taught by a selected local faculty member with guest presentations by other local academics and practitioners. The seminar includes guided field trips, films, and other educational activities related to selected sub-themes.

Directed Study Project (4 semester credits or 1 course credit). Students engage in a directed study project individually or in small groups on a pre-approved topic in consultation with the program's academic staff. Each student or group works under the supervision of an on-site project advisor, and submits a well-documented paper (15-25 pages) and presents a 30-minute oral report.

Credit
Each participating college in the United States will post academic credit on their transcripts based on grade reports submitted by the Resident Director. All students must carry a full-time course load as determined by their individual colleges. Each college will handle grades and transcripts in a way consistent with each college's study abroad policies and guidelines.

Housing
Consortium students will be housed with international students in self-catered houses in the general vicinity of UCT.

Program Fee
Consortium partner institutions set their own fees for this program according to their institutional policies on tuition and financial aid for study abroad. The program includes tuition, room and board, local transportation for program-sponsored activities, and all on-site academic support and administrative fees.

Program Dates
The program begins in early January and ends in mid-June.

Eligibility
All applicants must demonstrate a sustained intellectual interest in the program theme, usually through a declared major in a relevant field of study. Preference in admissions is given to those with a GPA of 3.5 and who have reached junior status. Priority also will be given to those students who have completed four semesters of environmental-studies-related courses, of which at least two are in the natural sciences and at least one in the social sciences.

Application Procedures
Application forms are available from each college's study abroad office. Individual interviews on the home campus are part of the application process. A review committee of representatives from the Consortium will make final admissions decisions.

For Further Information
Please contact your College study abroad office and your environmental studies program. The study abroad libraries keep detailed program information, material on the University of Cape Town, as well as books and guides to South Africa.

Note: The Consortium may be obliged to alter program features as described in this flyer.

www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/es/UCT