



## **Auburn University at Montgomery, Organization for Tropical Studies partner to offer tropical study abroad to students worldwide**

*The new AUM/OTS partnership offers semester-long programs in Costa Rica and South Africa and will include scholarships, reduced study-abroad tuition for AUM students*

**Auburn University at Montgomery | Montgomery, Ala., Aug. 30, 2018** — [Auburn University at Montgomery](#) and the [Organization for Tropical Studies](#) have officially partnered to provide students with semester-long study abroad programs in Costa Rica and South Africa. AUM will offer five programs in collaboration with OTS. AUM is well aligned with OTS's mission to use field-based education for undergraduate students to inspire and prepare the next generation of change agents, critical thinkers, scientists and practitioners on their paths to discovery and global leadership.

"AUM is excited to be the new U.S. academic home for the Organization for Tropical Studies. This opens up so many opportunities for our students to study Biology, Environmental Science, GIS, and language and culture in Costa Rica and South Africa," said Dr. Chelsea Ward, Distinguished Teaching Professor and Head of the Department of Biology and Environmental Science at Auburn University at Montgomery.

Under the new AUM/OTS partnership, the programs will offer a comprehensive introduction to field biology, conservation policy and global health in a diversity of ecosystems. Undergraduate students from all over the world may now apply to any of the following semester-long programs: African Ecology and Conservation in South Africa, Tropical Biology in a Changing Planet, and Global Health in an Interconnected World, both taught in Costa Rica. A summer version of the Global Health program will also be available in South Africa in the summer term.

The partnership builds on OTS's more than 50 years of excellence in graduate education to offer innovative and rigorous learning experiences for undergraduate students interested in biology, global health, field ecology, and conservation. AUM, a public four-year university accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), brings 50 years of excellence in rigorous undergraduate and graduate curricula, with robust academic offerings.

"Auburn University at Montgomery is focused on providing opportunities for our students, and this partnership does that for our students," said Dr. Carl Stockton, Chancellor of Auburn University at Montgomery. "In addition to two full scholarships through the program, all AUM students will have the opportunity for reduced tuition for study abroad in Costa Rica or South Africa. This partnership also introduces the tropical biology community to AUM and our students," Stockton added.

In 2017, AUM Study Abroad was among the state's top three programs in terms of the percentage of students traveling outside the U.S. for academic enrichment. The agreement with OTS increases the opportunities for AUM students, as well as students all over the world seeking tropical studies opportunities.

“This agreement with Auburn University Montgomery ratifies OTS’ commitment with the highest standards for our educational programs. It also extends our long-lasting legacy by providing innovative and experiential learning opportunities to forge tomorrow’s leaders. In today’s world these possibilities for students are needed more than ever,” said OTS Board of Directors Education Committee Chair Dr. Lena Struwe.

[The Organization for Tropical Studies](#) (OTS) is a non-profit consortium of nearly sixty universities, colleges, and research institutions worldwide, with operations in three countries and research stations and education programs in Costa Rica and South Africa. For the last half century, OTS has been the world’s leading institution in the study of tropical biology, with more than 360 courses in tropical ecology, conservation and global health and over 8000 students trained, including many of the world’s leading tropical ecologists.

[Auburn University at Montgomery](#) is ranked among the South's top universities by U.S. News and World Report and was named one of the best colleges in the Southeast by The Princeton Review. Consistently chosen as the best university in the area, Auburn Montgomery provides students with detailed knowledge and hands-on, practical experience, often from professionals in the field.

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