Frequently Asked Questions-II, Tanzania Study Abroad 2015

This is mostly new stuff; for old stuff refer to FAQ-I

Academics:

- **What are the classes I’ll be taking?**
  You will need to register for LARCH 499E, 499F, and 499G

- **Class scheduling in Tanzania?**
  We’ll be front-loading the seminar readings, focusing on the first week or so as people get acclimated to life at the Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre (http://www.udzungwacentre.org/) in Mang’ula. The next weeks will include some reading but mostly applied work—field in the morning to collect data, and studio in the afternoon/early evening. We aim to have solid studio projects completed by the end of this intense summer semester, along with systematically organized data for future work, and depending on how things are going may need to pull some longer days to ensure that we are on schedule.

- **What will the other weekends be like? Will we have time to explore on our own/as a group?**
  You will have one or two weekends unscheduled. On one of those, you might want to hike, with a guide, to Sanje Falls or other locations in the Park http://www.tanzaniaparks.com/uzdungwa.html. We will be invited to participate in World Environment Day if a celebration occurs nearby (the weekend closest to June 5) but that need not involve the entire group. Exploring alone is discouraged.

Living arrangements:

- **How will I do my laundry?**
  Laundry is available in the hotels we stay in, at your own cost. At the Monitoring Centre, laundry will be done every three days or so and will be included in program costs. It will be washed by hand and hung out in the sun to dry. Don’t expect fabric softener; bring fast-drying durable clothes.

- **What about the security of my stuff and me?**
  All places we stay have night watch-persons, *askaris*, whose job is to protect you, your belongings, and the facilities. This is standard practice in Tanzania. In your room at the Monitoring Centre you will have a lockable cabinet. This is not super-secure, but will suffice for leaving small amounts of spare cash, camera memory cards, your laptop, pictures of your dog/family/best friend.

Travel:

- **Are we traveling to the location as a group?**
  We strongly prefer to travel to Tanzania as a group. Our route will almost certainly be Washington, DC - Dubai-Dar es Salaam on Emirates airline (good route, great airline, with shortest layover). We will be moving on booking those soon. Let the instructors know if you have other plans.
• **What do we do about visas?**
  You will need a passport valid through January 2016. If you do not have one, start the process now. Once tickets are purchased, we will mail passports to the Tanzania Embassy in Washington for visas. That will happen soon after Spring Break you must bring your passport back then, with two passport-size photos.

• **Are planned field trips included in the tuition budget?**
  All the program field trips and some others we will make up on the way are included in the Education Abroad fee that you will pay. We’ll also give you a meal allowance for when we are traveling. In general, you will need to access money via ATMs, so make sure you have an ATM card.

**Health and Safety:**

• **Do we have to schedule shots ourselves?**
  Yes. Check out CDC advice at [http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/tanzania](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/tanzania), then get a travel medicine consultation with your own doctor or Penn State University Health Services Travel Clinic ([http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/services/clinicalServices/travelClinic.shtml](http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health/services/clinicalServices/travelClinic.shtml)). For University Health Services there is a Patient Registration Form to fill in and return and then call 863.0774 for a consultation. **Do this very, very soon as they have long lead times.**

• **What does taking malaria medicine entail? Is it likely to be covered by insurance plans?**
  Malaria medicine is in pill form, and is taken either weekly or daily, depending on the type. There are several types—see CDC website. Malarone or Doxycycline are daily tablets and commonly recommended for the types of malaria found in Tanzania. Payment for the tablets depends on your insurance, though other students have had good luck with insurance coverage. **This is NOT optional. We will check to make sure that everyone is keeping up with their malaria medicine.**

• **How safe is Tanzania?**
  There can be serious crime in Tanzania, but in general it is safe, especially in rural areas and if you take the usual precautions—don’t carry much cash in cities, never wander around alone, lock your valuables up whenever possible, be more careful at night. Become aware of Tanzania laws and customs to avoid surprises. See [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1038.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1038.html) for more information.

**What will be the likely things that we should purchase in order to be prepared for the trip?**

• **Backpack and hiking gear?**
  Daypack, to haul a computer (Penn State loaner laptop) and materials to and from Mang’ula. Larger backpack if you want to hike or camp in the park. More information next month on other things you should pack—flashlight, sunscreen, walking and hiking shoes, etc.

• **Types of clothing/attire (what is best for the climate and culturally acceptable [esp. for women])?**
  We’ll arrive at the end of the rainy season, and it may be a bit wet in May. Plan for monsoon-style rain, heavy but short bursts. Temperatures will probably range between about 70 and 85°C, with hot sun and humid, especially in Dar es Salaam. Short-sleeve tee-shirts and longer shorts will probably be what you wear most of the time, with sandals for the hostel, long pants and cross-trainers for walking in the villages, and sturdier, ankle-covering, hiking shoes or boots for the park. You must wear hats and sunblock the sun is really intense close to the equator. **You must be aware of what is culturally acceptable.** Females, especially, must dress more modestly than usual, particularly in rural areas and on the Muslim Coast—**NO short shorts, spaghetti-strap tops, tight leggings or yoga pants,** etc. Long skirts are fine but we recommend loose-fitting long pants for working. More on this next month.

• **Books?**
  Look into a travel guide for Tanzania—Lonely Planet guide is a good one, as is the Rough Guide. Google “guide Tanzania” on Amazon and you’ll find the ones above plus many others.
• Are we limited to what we can bring?
Normal limits for travel: no illegal drugs, firearms, flammable liquids, etc. There will be a weight limit on
the flights, and we require that you travel light to save space in buses and other vehicles.

• How will I get phone and Internet access?
We will have local phones for your use—you will buy call minutes. We will not always have adequate
Internet access to support Skype. Internet at the Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre will be via cell
modems—low speed and not always reliable. You will be able to communicate by e-mail and telephone
but will have the occasional interruption in service and other related problems. Towns, and particularly Dar
es Salaam, will have better Internet connections—but we won’t be there very much.

• Will my electronics work in Tanzania?
Electric current is 220-250V AC, 50 Hz, higher than the 110V American norm. Most computers, iPods and
cameras have transformers built into the power brick. However, hair driers, soft contact lens cookers, etc.,
may not have such capabilities and will be damaged. Before you bring those, check the fine print on the
power brick, and if it does not say 220-250V AC, 50 Hz, purchase a power converter that changes the
electricity to 110V, 60Hz that we use in this country. Note that the plug style is different as well—mostly
British style three-pronged and some older two-pronged. Both converters and plugs can be bought on-line
and at Brookstone, etc. We’ll show you examples.

Itinerary, May-June 2015
(in-Tanzania dates may vary slightly; departure and return are firm)

Monday 18 May: Depart Dulles, Monday morning. Arrive Dar es Salaam Tuesday afternoon, 19 May
19-21 May: Accommodation at Passionist Fathers House (hostel—search Internet for description of all
destinations)
20-21 May: Orientation, University of Dar es Salaam—history, biodiversity, human-wildlife conflict,
etc.
Afternoons—logistics generally enable students to acclimatize to jet-lag, new surroundings
22 May: Travel to Hilux Hotel, Morogoro, morning; relax and get a sense of the town
23 May: Lecture, Sokoine University of Agriculture, trip to Uluguru Mountains
24 May: Visit water development project near Morogoro field exercise, morning
25 May: Depart early for Udzungwa Mountains National Park, passing through Mikumi National
Park; afternoon—settle-in at Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre hostel
26-29 May: Orientation to Udzungwa Mountains (short hikes); Mang’ula (walking tours); Udzungwa
region beginning fieldwork; Afternoons/Evenings—seminar reading and discussions
30 May-31 May: Overnight in park, at Sanje Falls (optional for students)
1–6 June: Village observation/data collection in mornings; afternoon studio work; evening seminars
7–9 June: Safari in Mikumi National Park
10–12 June: Village observation/data collection in mornings; afternoon studio work; evening seminars
13–14 June: Free
15–19 June: Udzungwa Ecological Monitoring Centre; prepare final presentations, etc.
20 June: Deliver final presentations; final celebration, Hondo Hondo Udzungwa Forest Tented Camp
21 June: Depart for Dar es Salaam and Passionist Fathers House
22–24 June: Depart for Kilwa and Kilwa Dreams Beach Resort (three nights)
25 June: Return to Dar es Salaam and Passionist Fathers House; souvenir shopping
Friday, 26 June: Drive to airport and depart Friday afternoon. Arrive Dulles Saturday morning, 27 June
Any follow-up questions that the above questions-answers do not cover?
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