



PUERTO RICO

Ridges to Reefs: Land Use Effects on the Ecology of Forests and Coral Ecosystems

BIO 290 (4 credits) or BIO 451 (4 credits)

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This is a spring semester course that includes travel to Puerto Rico for nine days over spring break. The course will focus on the terrestrial and aquatic ecology of the island, with students conducting fieldwork examining legacy land use effects on forests and the impact of current land use practices on coral ecosystems. Students will also explore the rich colonial history of old San Juan, swim in turquoise waters, hike up to a cloud forest, search for bioluminescent fungi on foot, and be dazzled by bioluminescent phytoplankton with mask and snorkel. After returning to the mainland, students will draw upon their travel experience to help them identify strategies to protect these natural systems from further human disturbance.

The course can be taken at either the 200 or 400 level, with students in the latter group serving as research team leaders and having greater expectations in terms of both depth of study and workload. The course examines connections among forest ecology, marine biology, and environmental science, and gives students the opportunity to focus on one of these areas through an independent project.

Students are encouraged to apply for travel scholarships in the Global Education Office.

For more information visit the Global Education Program office in **Decary 126** or www.une.edu/global/ed

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