



CARIBBEAN MARINE ECOLOGY

Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium

Course Dates: May 22—June 2, 2023 (space is limited)

Course Level & Credit: Undergraduate, 4-credits

Prerequisites: General Biology 1 and 2

Course Location: Abaco Island, The Bahamas *course requires international travel*

Course Description: The United Nations Millennium Ecosystem Assessment determined that the Caribbean is the region in the world that is most dependent on tourism for jobs and income, largely due to the natural resources and seemingly pristine nature of ecosystems that make the Caribbean alluring to visitors. Yet increasingly, human activities are seriously affecting the ability of the Caribbean to sustain its tourism-based economy, and provide additional valuable ecosystem services. As such, it is critical to better understand the role that Caribbean ecosystems play in providing cultural, economic, and environmental benefits to humans and to explore conservation efforts to protect these critical services.

This is an intensive 10-day long, field-oriented course focused on understanding the ecosystem services provided by terrestrial and aquatic environments endemic to the Caribbean region. Specifically, students will explore the cultural, health, economic, and ecological importance of Bahamian ecosystems, and learn about the role that humans play in influencing these environments. Students will explore course content through daily field activities, lab analyses, guest lectures, tours, and self-reflection.

Course Objective:

1. Identify (and compare) Caribbean terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, including key flora and fauna within each system
2. Analyze the role that humans play in affecting services, and how humans may play a role in protecting and/or restoring these ecosystems
3. Demonstrate understanding of ecological and human health benefits provided by Caribbean ecosystems
4. Generate an understanding and appreciation of the synergies and connections between local Caribbean non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders working to solve environmental problems
5. Reflect on personal experiences related to course content, activities, and cultural or social interactions

Course Instructors: Stephanie Archer, Ph.D, LUMCON; Dr. Elizabeth Stoner, Ph.D, Bentley University; Dr. Elizabeth Whitman, Ph.D, Florida International University

More course information and details: lumcon.edu/university/

Cost: \$200/student—Travel to the Bahamas, housing, and meals are provided. Students will be responsible for transportation to and from the New Orleans airport, extra baggage fees beyond 1 checked bag, and extras/incidentals. Students also need to provide their own swimsuit, mask, snorkel, and fins.

Application: Louisiana students will apply through LUMCON. Applications must include a completed application form (lumcon.edu/university/), letters of recommendation, transcripts, and a 250 word statement of interest. Application deadline is **February 17, 2023**. Selection of students will occur in early March 2023.

