

CARIBBEAN MARINE ECOLOGY

May 20-31, 2025



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 Objectives

1. Identify Caribbean terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, including key flora and fauna within each system
2. Demonstrate understanding of ecological and human health benefits provided by Caribbean ecosystems
3. Analyze the role that humans play in affecting, protecting, and/or restoring ecosystems & their services
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

Where?

Abaco Island, The Bahamas

*course requires a valid passport for international travel *



Cost

\$2,275/student—Travel to the Bahamas, on island transportation, housing, and meals are provided. Students will be responsible for transportation to and from the New Orleans airport, extra baggage fees, extras/incidentals, and provide their own swimsuit, mask, snorkel, and fins. Students are also required to provide proof of travel insurance

To Apply

Louisiana students will apply through lumcon.edu/university/ Applications include: Application form, letters of recommendation, transcripts, and a 250 word statement of interest.

Deadline is January 31, 2025 Selection of students will occur in Mid-February 2025.

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

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