

**AMAZON EXPEDITION 2018 APPLICATION**  
**(detach and keep pages 7-8)**

Return to: Dept. of Biological Sciences, 235 BH  
Wright State University  
Dayton, OH 45435

Course Leader: Tom Rooney      thomas.rooney@wright.edu

Up to 8 students may be selected for the Amazon Expedition course that will take place in the Peruvian Amazon in summer 2018. Additional qualified students will be named as alternates. Names of accepted students and alternates will be **notified** December 8, 2017. We are still finalizing costs, but estimate that the course fee will be ~\$3500. This includes all travel from Dayton to Peru, and in country travel, meals, and lodging. It **does not** include tuition, vaccinations, passport fees, or outfitting (clothing, gear, etc.). Partial scholarships may be available through UICE and/or the Biology department.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE** is December 4, 2017. Return your completed application to the Biology office. Selection of those who will be permitted to sign up will not be made until the entire pool of applicants is available for our review.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Information you provide on Parts A, B, and C of the application will be treated with strict confidentiality and will have no bearing on your selection for the course.

**A. Basic information**

Birth date (month-day-year) \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the category that applies to you:

\_\_\_\_\_ WSU Graduate Student with Major in \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ WSU Undergraduate with Major in \_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently have a passport? (circle one: YES NO)

What countries have you visited outside the U.S. (if any)?

*Like Wright State Amazon Expedition on Facebook: @WrightStateAmazonExpedition*

**B. Emergency Contact**

Provide the name, address, phone of relative or other person to be contacted during field trip in case of emergency:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact's home phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact's cell phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Health and Wellness**

What is your general state of health? \_\_\_\_\_ Date of last checkup? \_\_\_\_\_

The course includes hiking and physical activity in extreme heat (heat index will usually be over 100°F) and rain. We travel extensively on motorized canoes, small planes, and passenger vans, each of which involves prolonged sitting and can contribute to motion sickness. Do you have physical limitations that you feel might restrict your activity during the field course (circle one: YES NO):

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you take any medication daily? (circle one: YES NO) If so, please list:

Do you take any medications that require refrigeration? (circle one: YES NO)

Are you allergic to bee stings? (circle one: YES NO)

Are you afraid of heights? (circle one: YES NO)

Do you have any food allergies or sensitivities? If so, please list:

Do you have any dietary restrictions (vegetarian, etc.)? Please list:

#### D. Skills and Abilities

1. Are you or have you been CPR-certified? (circle one: YES NO)
2. Can you swim? (circle one: YES--strong swimmer YES--average swimmer NO)
3. Do you speak or understand any Spanish? (circle one: No, I don't know Spanish – I know a few basic phrases – Sí, puedo pedir preguntas y entender palabras en español – Sí, hablo español con fluencia.)
4. Do you have any special skills (like paramedic, lifeguard, outdoor leadership, wilderness survival, military experience etc.) relevant to the group's well-being?
5. Do you have any special natural history skills or interests (identifying birds, reptiles, plants etc.) relevant to the group's field experience?
6. List all upper level (BIO 2000 level and higher, or their equivalent if taken elsewhere) Biology courses you will have completed by the end of Fall 2015. Also indicate if you are enrolled in or have completed BIO 2310 –Evolution and Ecology.

What is your current GPA? \_\_\_\_\_

When do you plan to receive your degree?

\_\_\_\_\_ semester

\_\_\_\_\_ year

Provide the name and department a WSU faculty member most familiar with your academic performance and potential.

Name

Department

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### **E. Personal Goals and Learning Dimensions**

Describe your post-university goals:

Why you want to participate in this course:

Describe one of your favorite places:

What do you hope to experience in the Amazon that you cannot experience through a class, the internet, or a tv-nature special?

1 = Statement does not describe you at all 2 = Statement describes you very little 3 = Statement describes you somewhat 4 = Statement describes you pretty well 5 = Statement describes you exactly

\_\_\_ The world of plants and animals is important to me.

\_\_\_ I enjoy learning new words and do so easily.

\_\_\_ I do not get lost easily and can orient myself with either maps or landmarks.

\_\_\_ I feel really good about being physically fit.

\_\_\_ I like to be with all different types of people.

\_\_\_ I often think about the influence I have on other people.

\_\_\_ I like to read.

\_\_\_ I enjoy learning about nature.

\_\_\_ I have the ability to represent what I see by drawing or painting.

\_\_\_ I enjoy new or unique social situations.

\_\_\_ I like to keep a daily journal of my daily experiences.

\_\_\_ I often think about the problems in my community, state, and/or world and what I can do to help rectify any of them.

\_\_\_ I can remember the tune of a song when asked.

\_\_\_ I enjoy hiking in natural places.

\_\_\_ I do like to tell stories in a group.

\_\_\_ I feel safe when I am with strangers.

\_\_\_ I like encountering insects in the wild.

\_\_\_ I am an adventurous eater and like to try new foods.

\_\_\_ I usually have a good appetite and like to eat healthy foods.

(detach and keep these last two pages, p 7-8)

## AMAZON EXPEDITION FIELD COURSE

Taught during summer session 2018

**Course Goals:** This course is an upper level undergraduate biology field course, although non-biology majors and graduate students will be considered.

Since tropical ecology is a complex subject, it is difficult to list all useful background courses. We assume that everyone submitting an application knows the names and major characteristics of the phyla, and grasps the major concepts of ecology. Course work (e.g., *Evolution & Ecology*, *Conservation Biology*, *Tropical Ecology*, *Ornithology*, *Marine Biology*) or previous ecological field experience is extremely helpful.

Students are selected on the basis of their qualifications to take the course, the strength of their undergraduate academic performance, the skills they bring to the expedition, and their expressed commitment to share their knowledge and experience with others. Needing the course to graduate is not a sufficient reason to be selected.

This expedition is fun and life-changing (just ask former students!), but also physically-demanding. At times, you will be sleep-deprived. You will be overheated. You will get wet. You might at times feel ill. This is counterbalanced by the fact that very few people have the opportunity to visit the most biologically-diverse parts of the Amazon rainforest.

It is challenging to see wildlife in the Amazon, because the thick forest cover limits sight lines. Still, some wildlife is easy to find. Students will certainly see wild primates, including howler monkeys, squirrel monkeys, and capuchins. You will definitely see parrots, macaws, and around 100 species of tropical birds (which Dr. Rooney will teach you to identify if you are so inclined). In previous courses, the class has seen giant anteater, jaguar (two separate classes have seen jaguar!), tapir, capybara, anaconda, and other iconic Amazon wildlife. We will take forest hikes and will have opportunities to see the rainforest from above in a canopy tower. In addition to learning about the rainforest, we will examine some of the problems confronting conservation of tropical rainforests. We expect you to take advantage of this tremendous opportunity by working hard on the course, even if you find yourself ill, overheated, uncomfortable, or tired. Thus, we expect an active group of enthusiastic and fully engaged students – others need not apply!

I encourage engaging in a physical conditioning program in March-April, 10-12 weeks before departure. This should include 3-5 cardio workouts per week (20-30 minutes each) and some basic strength training exercises.

## RISKS AND CONDITIONS SUMMARY

Students will sign a release waiver acknowledging risks associated with this course. Students that have never been to the Amazon believe this list is over-the-top. Students who return from the Amazon view this as a reasonable summary of risks and conditions encountered.

- air, van and boat accidents during travel to and from Peruvian rainforest from Dayton;
- staying in urban areas and frontier towns where violent crime is not common;
- traveling on roads where accidents are common;
- altitude sickness during our time in the high Andes;
- encountering potentially dangerous animals, plants, or microbes in the rainforest;
- traveling by boat on rainforest rivers, which contains dangerous animals including caiman, anaconda, and candiru;
- traveling in boats that can overturn or sink in rapids or log jams;
- climbing canopy towers and using canopy walkways that do not meet U.S. safety standards;
- be exposed to food-borne illnesses, including travelers diarrhea, typhoid, and Hepatitis A;
- spending long days in extremely isolated areas under the types of extremely strenuous hot and humid conditions increase risk of dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke;
- experiencing hypothermia in these same forests, during infrequent but regular cold spells;
- being exposed to dangerous and potentially deadly diseases, including but not limited to intestinal parasites, Dengue fever, bubonic plague, Chagas disease, Leishmaniasis, influenza, rabies, and others that may be completely unknown to science and medicine, and/or many poisonous or venomous animals including snakes and Africanized bees;
- being exposed to irritating and dangerous and potentially deadly biting and stinging insects, both when asleep and awake, including killer bees, other bees and wasps, bullet ants, army ants, bedbugs, chiggers, mosquitoes, and spiders;
- being in habitats shared by large predators that can kill people, including aggressive, venomous snakes, jaguars, pumas, wild dogs, peccaries, harpy eagles, anacondas and other constrictors, piranha, and caiman;
- being injured or killed by falling trees and branches, palm nuts, and other large fruits;
- being injured or killed by lightning strikes;
- being captured, injured, or killed by members hostile Amazon tribes (yes, really);
- being injured or killed by other means not listed here;
- being in locations where there nearest medical help is at least two day's journey;
- being subject to laws and customs different than those found in the United States;
- traveling extensively in areas where neither English nor Spanish is spoken;
- being delayed due to bad weather, broken equipment, landslides, natural disasters, or other unforeseen circumstances that may result in changes to the planned itinerary;
- reside in jungle lodges where there are no means of communication with the outside world;
- living without any expectation of electricity, hot running water, cell phone service, or internet access, and not being able to flush toilet paper or other non-human waste down toilets