



Summer Short Course Brings Together American and Indonesian Students (Tuanan Biological Research Station, Borneo, Indonesia)

Have you ever dreamed about following orangutans in the jungles of Borneo?

Last summer, a collaborative team of faculty and researchers from Rutgers University and Universitas Nasional Jakarta (supported by USAID) launched the first round of a new study abroad program entitled “Primates, Ecology, and Conservation in Indonesia”. This week-long course provided a unique opportunity for students to gain a hands-on immersive educational experience within Indonesia.



The short course was taught by faculty members from both Rutgers University (Drs. Erin Vogel, Dr. Rob Scott, and Dr. Wendy Erb from the Department of Anthropology) as well as Universitas Nasional Jakarta (UNAS). The program consisted of a single module entitled “*Advanced Primate Behavior and Ecology*” and was held at the Tuanan Biological Research Station in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. Participants included one undergraduate and three graduate students from Rutgers, as well as 11 Indonesian participants from UNAS and other local educational, governmental, and non-governmental institutions.



During the short course, students learned how to:

- Collect behavioral data on wild orangutans;
- Quantify habitat characteristics;
- Collect and process biological samples;
- Analyze mechanical properties of orangutan foods;
- Use GPS units to track primates and record tree locations; and
- Conduct primate censuses, including orangutan nest surveys.



Each day, lectures at the field station were complemented by field-based demonstrations in the forest. In the evenings, faculty from Rutgers, UNAS, and Universität Zürich made brief presentations about their research, which covered topics from traditional Indonesian ethnobotany, to orangutan reproductive strategies, and primate conservation in Indonesia. Students also learned how to analyze and summarize data in the form of a scientific presentation. At the end of the course, they presented their research project results in short group-based PowerPoint presentations to the faculty, students, researchers, and field assistants at the station.

This summer's short course provided students with a scientific foundation of information and skills necessary for successfully conducting future graduate studies in primate behavior and ecology.



This program will continue in June 2014, and will be open for enrollment by students from Rutgers and other international universities through the Rutgers Study Abroad Program for the summer session.

In addition to the program at the Tuanan Biological Research Station, next summer's short course will include a second course module at Halimun National Park in West Java.

This module, entitled "*Applied Conservation and Ecosystem Management*", will present big-picture issues in conservation, environmental policy, and ecosystem management.

- **Theme:** The course will focus on the challenges posed by climate change, human impacts on the ecosystem, and extinction risks.

- **Field Component:** The course will include hands-on training in survey, census, and data collection. Students will also take several organized field trips focused on the interface between human activities and the ecosystem.
- **Duration:** The full program will take four weeks, which includes two weeks for each module and a brief field trip to Seribu Islands at the end of the program, where students will have the opportunity to assist with a sea turtle release program and explore the coral reef diversity of Indonesia.