



**Advancing Your Academic Success:
Summer 2025**

Instructor: John Davis

UO Credits: 1

Contact Hours: 10

Heredia, Costa Rica

Course Description

Welcome to Costa Rica, and to The University of Oregon!

In the time we spend together, we'll explore the ways we can be better in two important ways: as citizens of the world and as students determined to get the most from our experiences in life, including our University Experience. These two goals are similar in many ways, and we'll discuss the context that both places share, as well as their differences. You'll likely be overwhelmed at first - as you will be with every brand new experience in life - but you'll learn that your confidence and ability will grow as you assimilate the New Worlds you've chosen to explore. You'll see: you will emerge from this adventure with a different perspective of the world, and of yourself as a part of it.





Course Objectives

This is an easy course, as courses go. While we'll prepare for the academic - school book oriented - study when back on campus, we'll also begin to broaden your thinking in ways that will open the doors of your learning while here in Costa Rica. In terms of learning new things, and expanding your understanding of, well, understanding, our time together will be instructive by discussing in a classroom followed by application in the world outside. Both

University and Costa Rica are new worlds for you, and learning how to learn will be your most useful take-away.

Our goals for this time together include:

- * Provide a broad understanding of the differences between the school experience you've had and that of a University setting: study habits, prioritizing, the value of learning.
- * Prepare you to 'bring your A-game' to the University Experience.
- * Help you organize and prioritize the many, varied opportunities you'll encounter at The UO.
- * Explore students' expectations and interests in the world and in their educational experience to come.
- * Familiarize students with the support networks provided at The UO.
- * Recognizing your strengths and weaknesses.

Evaluation

Your grade for this class will be pass/fail. Please don't think you can skip it or not take it seriously. The learning in this course is helpful to you from Day 1 at The UO, and will serve you well in life after you graduate. Unlike many of the courses you'll take at The UO, this will be a low-stress environment - as long as you attend every meeting and participate in each gathering.



Further, you'll be expected to speak up, ask questions, reveal your thinking on the topics we discuss, and approach the class with curiosity and an open mind about learning. You'll be expected to...

- * Participate: be there every time we meet, add to the discussion, make a contribution and be ready to understand others' perspectives on life and travel.
- * Complete the experiential assignments. These include one-on-one visits with the Instructor, completing the real-world assignments among the local community, and keeping a journal of your thoughts and experiences, diary-style. You'll be sharing your thoughts & observations with your classmates.



- * Demonstrate a progression in your growth from this experience as the term proceeds.

Course Outline

Our classes will meet, formally, only during the first three weeks of the term. Meeting twice a week during the first two weeks, we'll quickly become comfortable with each other and share our experiences in an active discussion format. You'll be asked to join the discussions and be ready to learn with your fellow travelers.

DATES & TIMES	MODULE	TOPICS COVERED
Week 1: 7/29 & 7/31	The Big Picture: University Life	Define your goals for the University journey. Resources available to help you. Relying on Yourself.
Week 2: 8/4 & 8/6	Being a Citizen of the World: Fitting in & Contributing	Being a valuable person. Observing, Thinking, Improving.
Week 3: 8/11	Being a Thinking Person	It's ON YOU to be Who You Will Be. Travel, Health, Learning, Growth & course correction.

Helpful Hints:

Come with an open mind: the world is a big place full of new things.

Humility and gratitude set us up for our best learning.

The most exciting things are often a bit scary...and 'New' is one of them.

