The Center for Global Health’s Annual Comparative Health System Exchange Program Trip to Costa Rica provides students the opportunity to see and learn firsthand how a universal health care system works and what make this Central American nation’s health care system a global model. This unique study abroad program is organized and delivered in partnership with the University of Costa Rica (UCR) School of Public Health. The program is scheduled to take place over Winter Break and includes travel to Costa Rica from January 7–19, 2019.

As in prior years, participants will attend a number of meetings and lectures with faculty experts and public health students from the UCR School of Public Health. However, the bulk of the program’s activities and learning take place in the field during site visits to the Ministry of Health, central and regional hospitals, primary health care centers, as well as outreach programs designed to address the health and development needs of at risk populations (e.g. migrant coffee pickers, remote and rural communities, immigrant populations, and indigenous groups).

Understanding the history and culture of the country is vital to understanding the principles and values that underpin its health care system. Therefore, program participants do also have the chance to engage in a range for fun and educational activities which delve into and expose them to Costa Rican geography, history and culture.

This education abroad program is open to both undergraduate (juniors and seniors) and graduate students and is offered as a three-credit 400/500 level course entitled “Universal Health Care in Costa Rica.” Access a description of this exciting comparative health systems course via the Office of Education Abroad’s website.

To find out more about this once in a life-time learning experience and the Universal Health Care in Costa Rica course, please contact John Justino (jjustino@albany.edu), Carol Whittaker (cwhittaker@albany.edu) or Melanie Mongillo, Global Health Studies Graduate Assistant (sph07@albany.edu) at the Center for Global Health.