

**Explorations in Aotearoa I: the biogeography and culture of the New Zealand North Island  
Biology 297A J-term 2012 (03-26 Jan.)**



**APPLICATION PROCEDURE:**

Admission to the course is by application and interview only. The course is being run entirely through Augustana College and is NOT a UMAIE course. For more information, contact Dr. Daniel R. Howard (daniel.howard@augie.edu) or Dr. Carrie Hall (carrie.hall@augie.edu)

Application review begins April 18, 2011 and will continue until the class is full. The course is limited to ten (10) students, and the cost per student will be ~ \$5,200 (assuming a full class; \$4,660 plus \$120 for books and ~\$400 spending money). Please submit the following materials to Dr. Howard in the Biology Department (GSC 148).

1. Submit an application letter addressing the following points:
  - a. Why do you want to take this course and what do you hope to learn?
  - b. How might this course help shape YOU and/or your WORLDVIEW, either in the short term or long term?
  - c. Please describe in some detail your background and interests in Biology and possible career directions.
  - d. Please describe in some detail your background and interests in indigenous culture.
  - e. Please share your thoughts on living and working under conditions that will at times stretch the participants physically, mentally, and emotionally. Have you had any such experiences? Please describe them.
  - f. Describe your character and work ethic.
  - g. Describe your experiences traveling abroad.
  - h. Some study abroad courses are viewed as party courses. Are you looking for something along these lines? Please discuss in some detail.
  - i. Would you still apply for the course if it did not count as a 300-level biology requirement towards the Biology major? Explain.
  - j. Do you currently have a U.S. passport? If not, are you eligible for one and how soon are you planning on applying for one?
2. A copy of your transcript (unofficial copy is fine). These are available at the Registrar's office in the Administration building, and are free of charge.
3. One reference letter. Please read this carefully and select someone accordingly. In many cases, professors may not know you well enough to answer these questions. It is therefore acceptable to ask someone other than a professor for a reference letter. In any case, please be sure to give your letter writer the instructions below, and ask them to address these items in the letter. Instructions for letter writers are on the following page.
4. Name and phone number of one additional reference from Augustana College.

We may conduct interviews as part of the selection process, and we will inform you of your application status once application review and interviews are completed (by May 20, 2012).

**Instructions for letter writers:** The student who has requested this letter is applying for admission to an Augustana College study abroad course being held in New Zealand and focused on the biogeography and culture of the North Island. We would greatly appreciate your comments on the following:

- a. **Character and Conditioning:** This course is very demanding, physically, mentally, emotionally. We will be trekking across the North Island of New Zealand carrying our belongings in a single backpack, and staying at local YHA facilities (hostels). Additionally we will be doing some daily trail hiking (~ 10 miles) and staying on a primitive island with intermittent access to electricity and running water. Please comment on the candidate's suitability for such conditions.
- b. **Maturity:** Given the nature of the course and the places we will stay, it could be dangerous to the group to take a student that was not mature and responsible, or a student who was looking for a party atmosphere. Please comment on this student's maturity and character. Would you bring her/him to such a place? Why or why not?
- c. **Work Ethic/Teamwork:** We are especially interested in comments on work ethic, enthusiasm for learning, and attitude for teamwork.
- d. **Summary of your Recommendation:** In the last sentence of the letter, we would appreciate a concluding statement that includes ONE of the following choices (please pick one). From what I know, I believe this candidate would be a fabulous, excellent, very good, good, possible, poor candidate for this course.

Please submit your letter directly to [daniel.howard@augie.edu](mailto:daniel.howard@augie.edu).