

Summer  
Study Abroad  
2008



# Easter Island

AND THE ATACAMA DESERT, CHILE  
MAY 23 – JUNE 27, 2008

**Application Deadline**  
February 15, 2008

**Enrollment Limit**  
20 students

**Cost**  
Approximately \$5,950  
plus airfare to/from Chile

**Payment Schedule**

- Non-refundable \$150 deposit due February 15, 2008 (make check payable to the University of Richmond, designated Easter Island Study Abroad Program, and submit with your application)
- 1st payment due March 14
- Final payment due April 18

**Program Director**

Dr. Michael Harrison

**Office**

Weinstein Hall, Room 106

**Phone**

804-289-8239

**E-mail**

mharriso@richmond.edu

## Want to go to the end of the world?

### Geography and Environmental Studies in Easter Island and Chile

Earn up to seven UR credits while experiencing first-hand the splendor of Chile's Atacama Desert and mysteries of historic Easter Island. The driest spot on earth, the Atacama Desert is one of the world's most beautiful and unspoiled places, and is a natural geomorphic laboratory. Protected by the Pacific Ocean and the Andes Mountains, northern Chile is home to some of the most spectacular and isolated scenery in the world. Easter Island has long been the subject of curiosity and speculation: How and why did its inhabitants carve and transport the massive statues which surround the island? What remains of this culture today, and what lessons can we learn from their legacy? First inhabited more than 1000 years ago, Easter Island (called Rapa Nui in the native language), Easter Island has become a showcase of the effects of human influences on the landscape. With a population that peaked at over 10,000 people, the inhabitants quickly exceeded the island's ecosystem, degrading the once-lush landscape and causing a collapse of the native civilization. The island, now controlled by Chile, is being preserved as a living laboratory of sustainable development and a monument to the effects that humans have on the environment. These courses examine the geomorphology, climate, ecology and environmental ethics of these isolated habitats.

This program gives students the opportunity to experience 35 days of classes, excursions, seminars, and independent research. The initial 13 days is spent in central Chile in beautiful Vina del Mar, home to the Universidad Maritima. While attending classes and performing individual research, the students will learn about climate, biogeography, environmental ethics, and development issues, with special emphasis on human-environment interaction. This component of the program will include excursions to Santiago (capital city of Chile), as well as field trips led by active field researchers.

The Easter Island program represents the second part of the program. Students will spend approximately 10 days studying the fascinating his-





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tory and geography of Polynesia, concentrating on the complex relationship between humans and their environment. These studies will include discussions relating to the environmental ethics and implications of human-environment interaction, as well as in-depth studies of the history, archeology, and ecology of the island. This will include numerous outings to various parts of the island, where we will examine the conditions that undermined the culture that once existed here, including a detailed examination of the Moai, the distinctive huge stone heads that have come to symbolize Easter Island.

The final part of the program will consist of a detailed on-site 12 day introduction to the Atacama Desert of northern Chile. Among the driest and most remote spots in the western hemisphere, the Atacama contains some of the most remarkable physical features on earth. A high, flat desert within a short distance to the Andes Mountains, the area presents serious obstacles to human development, and showcases flora, fauna, and landscapes found in no other place.

This program is open to all students, with no formal prerequisites. However, a sense of adventure and a desire to learn more about how society and nature interact are mandatory!

## Courses

- GEOG 250: Introduction to Earth Systems and Physical Geography (NOTES: satisfies FSNB laboratory science requirement!)
- ENVR 269: Environmental Ethics
- GEOG 380: Selected topics in Geography
- GEOG 390: Independent Study in Geography

## Instructors

Dr. Michael Harrison, University of Richmond

Dr. Rebekka Goodman, School for Field Studies

## Topics covered:

- Introduction to the Geography of Easter Island and greater Polynesia
- Geomorphology, geology, and coastal processes
- Climatology and climate change
- Theory and Practice of Environmental Ethics
- Island Ecology
- Polynesian Culture and Commemoration: the Moai

## Costs include:

- Tuition for up to 7 credits for the courses listed above
- All transportation within Chile and Easter Island
- All excursions and field trips in Chile and Easter Island
- Accommodations and meals in Chile and Easter Island

*All dates and costs are approximate and subject to change as are program details. The University of Richmond reserves the right to alter the program costs as a result of fluctuations of international currency.*