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INDIGENOUS ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY FIELD SCHOOLS, BARUNGA, NORTHERN TERRITORY, AUSTRALIA

Program Information

PROGRAM SPECIFIC FIELD CONDITIONS

What are the average weather conditions during the time of the field school? (average temperature, humidity levels, amount of rain, wind, variation between day and night, etc.)

The weather at Barunga in July is during the "Dry Season," which characterized by warm, sunny days and cold nights. The daytime temperature usually is around 31°C (88°F) and the nighttime temperature can get as low as 13°C to 16°C (55°F - 61°F). There is no rainfall and the humidity is low, typically ranging between 20% and 35%.

Please describe the site(s) where the students will work, for example, outside and/or inside; in a city, town or rural area; shady or sunny, etc.

The work will be conducted outside in the community of Barunga and in the countryside around the community. We usually visit the neighboring communities of Manyallaluk and Beswick.

Are there special features of the program site, for example, nearby important cultural areas, ambiance or scenery, interaction with staff, access to unique infrastructure, techniques or objects?

There are cultural rules concerning where people can walk outside of the community as there are sacred places that can only be visited by senior Aboriginal people. Walking within the perimeter of the community is fine. These rules will be explained clearly when people arrive in the community.

Will there be other people onsite with the field school or working in the same area? For example, other researchers, staff, or community volunteers?

The only other people on site will be members of the Barunga community.

What does an average week look like (working times, lecture/discussion times, free time, weekends)?

Days start when people get up and have breakfast. We leave for fieldwork around 9am. We take our lunch or return to camp for lunch. The fieldwork finishes around 5pm normally, but writing and talking continues during the evening. Students can have working times in the morning before we leave and/or in the evening. It is up to the individual to manage their time to best suit their own working habits.

What are the options for students to access money? Are there ATMs nearby? Should students plan to bring a certain amount of cash?

There is an ATM at the Barunga community store. A maximum of $AUD 200 can be taken out in any transaction. There are also ATMs in Katherine. There is no need to bring cash.

ACTIVITY LEVEL & ACCESSIBILITY

Please provide information about the physical requirements of the program.

Physical requirements of this program vary according to the student's project. Site recording can involve walking one or two kilometres (about 1.5 miles), and to visit rock art sites the escarpment has to be clambered down (at a safe spot).

Please comment how accessible your site is for people with mobility challenges. Would someone using a wheelchair be able to participate? Someone who uses crutches or other assistive walking devices?

This program could be undertaken by someone on crutches if they did a project that was based in the community (oral history or archival work). It would be harder to accommodate someone who uses a wheelchair as the bathroom facilities are not designed for wheelchairs. However, if someone in this situation wanted to join us, we would seek to accommodate them.

PROGRAM COUNTRY & CULTURAL INFORMATION

What do you love about the country and area you work in? What do you think students will be most excited to discover?

Barunga is located in a region of stunning river and gorge country. Some of the gorges are truly breath-taking with cascading waterfalls and natural, crystal-clear swimming pools. Aboriginal people at Barunga are kind and welcoming. They have a great desire to teach their culture to non-Aboriginal people, and to learn about the lives of people in other parts of the world.

How large is the community where students will be staying? Will students have opportunities to interact casually with local residents? Please describe.

Barunga has a population of 300 people. Students will be working closely with community people. Community people will join us for most meals.

Primary languages spoken by people in the area:

The first language for people at Barunga is Kriol (an English-based creole language spoken by over 30,000 Indigenous people across northern Australia). Their second language is English. Old people also speak Aboriginal languages such as Jawoyn and Ngalkpon.

What are some things students may find surprising about the local culture?

Students may be surprised by the complexity and sophistication of the kinship system.

Are there cultural aspects that students should be aware of before they come, particularly behaviors that could be offensive or misinterpreted (for example, eye contact, dress, gestures)?

Clothing should be modest. Aboriginal women usually wear long dresses or baggy shorts. During the day, long pants, shorts, or skirts can be worn with long-sleeved shirts (to protect from sunburn and melanoma). Also, if swimming in the 'bush', a T-shirt should be worn over swimmers.

Participants should be sure they have a comfortable pair of hiking boots, as some days we may be walking long distances in the bush. They need to have adequate insect repellent, sunscreen, a hat, long pants/shirts and so forth. They will need a light sweater for the evenings.

What cultural enrichment opportunities are students likely to have outside of the program?

Cultural enrichment opportunities are embedded into the program, including a visit to art galleries in Darwin and Katherine and a guided tour of Nitmiluk National Park. Additional opportunities, such as visiting local museums, are available on free days.

Will students have opportunities to explore other areas of the country? If so, what options are available to them (such as available transportation or unscheduled time for exploration).

The program covers a wide range of country. It includes visits to Mataranka Hot Springs and the Ubirr and Nourlangie rock art sites at Kakadu National Park. Days working on the major project are included at Mataranka Homestead, which will provide a different cultural experience of outback Australia.

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

Please describe student accommodations.

Students will be camping and need to bring their own tent, sleeping mat and pillow. These can be purchased in Darwin or Katherine. We use public toilets and showers that are located near our camp.

Please describe how/how often students can do laundry.

There is a laundry opposite our camp, so laundry can be done on a daily basis. The people running the laundry usually do it for us. We just have to drop off and pick up our laundry.

Will the program provide meals? If not all meals, please specify which meals students will be responsible for, and what facilities are available for them to get groceries and prepare meals.

The program will provide meals for all working days, and students will help with meal preparation. A cooking and cleaning roster will be established and students will be expected to take their share of the chores. Everybody will be allocated to a team, so people are working together. Each person will be required to be part of the cooking team at least twice during the field school. Students are responsible for their own meals on non-working days**.**

Please describe typical meals that are offered by the program.

Meals are designed by student cooking teams, so they will vary. Each team has to produce one vegetarian and one non-vegetarian option when they cook, as well as a dessert. People with different dietary needs are welcome but they may need to make special arrangements for themselves.

VISA AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Indicate the visa requirements, if any, for US citizens. If there is a visa requirement, what type of visa should students apply for?

Visa requirements are the responsibility of the student. They should be sure to declare any medication they need to bring into Australia. People attending short courses (under 3 months) in Australia generally need a Visitor Visa (subclassE600), Electronic Travel Authority (subclass 601). There is no visa application charge and most applications from the United States are processed immediately. There is a service charge of $AUD20 to use the ETA. Information can be found here: https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-finder/visit

TRAVEL (TO AND DURING THE PROGRAM)

If students will fly, what airport should they fly into?

Students should fly into Darwin airport.

Where will you meet students? If not at a primary arrival point, like an airport, how should students get to the meeting point?

We will meet students when they arrive at Darwin airport.

If the field site is not close to student accommodations, how will students get there? How long does it take?

Students will be transported to field sites via 4WD vehicles. The time will vary, up to one hour in one direction.

Are there any other aspects of the program, site, or location you want students to be aware of before they arrive?

Drug and alcohol use during the field school will not be tolerated. Smoking is prohibited in the fieldwork vehicles, in or immediately adjacent to the accommodation and in shared places during fieldwork activities. In all other circumstances smokers should consider the rights and comfort of non-smoking companions.

PACKING LIST

Required

- Identification/passport
- Travel documents
- Prescription medication for the entire program period
- Credit/Debit card
- Extra glasses/contacts if worn
- Sleeping bag for cold nights.
- Sleeping mat and pillow.
- Tent (and tarp, if desired).
- Personal food gear (plate, cup, bowl, knife, fork, spoon).
- Laptop computer and accessories.
- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, tampons, deodorant etc).
- Sunglasses.
- Hat or bandanna.
- Walking boots (must cover ankles).
- Flip flops or shower shoes.
- Bathers/Swimwear.
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent.
- Small first aid kit.
- Personal medications.
- Water bottle (at least one litre).
- Personal camera, extra film or SD card and accessories for file transfer.

- Field notebook (not spiral bound).
- Pencils, pens and erasers.
- Pocket-knife/Swiss army knife.
- Torch (flashlight).
- Day pack/Small backpack.
- Small mementos from home and printed photographs of the students' family and hometown to introduce themselves to community members.
- A small gift for a special community member who the student meets during the field school. Gifts are important to relationships and need not be expensive, but should reflect the student in some way (ex. A hat, apron, tea towel, cup from the student's school or home town, or a locally produced craft).

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Please provide your instagram account, if you have one, and any project related websites

https://webcreator.com.au/barc/