



2019-2020

**Experience-Centered Seminars
Course Information**

**Placement Criteria and
Seminar Descriptions**

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Table of Contents | 2 |
| Placement Criteria | 3 |
| ECS Scholarship Information | 4 |
| Bonaire: Evolution on an Ocean Planet | 5 |
| La influencia mora en España: Language immersion in Granada, Spain | 7 |
| Power to the People: How you can change the world | 9 |
| Studio Glass: Emergence of a new American art form | 10 |
| Storytelling Through Film | 12 |
| Wilderness Emergency Medicine On Santa Cruz Island, CA | 13 |

Placement Criteria

Placement in ECSs are assigned according to the following criteria:

- Grade Level
- 2019-2020 Enrollment Contract Return Date
- Preference Ranking of Previous ECS Placements
- Gender and Grade Level Ratios

In the event of a tiebreaker, the following criteria may be taken into consideration:

- Demonstrated Career or Life Interest
- Educational Sensibilities
- Behavioral and Social Indicators

Before submitting the ECS Preference Form (**due Tuesday, May 21st**) please note the following points.

1. Graduation from CSS is contingent upon each student completing and passing an ECS for each year of attendance at the Upper School. An ECS is equivalent to one (1) Carnegie unit of instruction (defined as 120 hours of contact time with an instructor). As such, each ECS is recorded on a student's transcript and counts towards the calculation of Grade Point Average.
2. Attendance is a critical component to the ECS experience. Missing just one half-day of an ECS is roughly equivalent to missing an entire week of a traditional 45-minute class period. Per the CSS Student/Parent Handbook, "excused absences that cause a student to miss significant portions of an ECS will be managed in a variety of ways but often involve supplementary, independent work and the design of alternative, relevant experiences by the students. The family will be expected to cover non-refundable course costs incurred by CSS on behalf of the student even if the student is unable to reap the benefits of the experience due to conditions beyond their control." In most cases, reservations for transportation and housing are difficult and costly to change, and penalty charges may become the responsibility of the family that has requested the change. Consider ECS preference rankings carefully and thoughtfully with regard to potential personal conflicts to *avoid making changes later*.
3. Students are encouraged to rank seminars based on individual interests and/or career ambitions, not according to social influences. Course descriptions include a feature, "Student interests that match this ECS", which is intended to orient students to themes and topics that each ECS will explore. It is our hope that students will submit placement rankings based on the alignment between their personal passion(s), intrigue, or value system and the topic that each ECS will explore.
4. At CSS, we use technology very intentionally to meet our educational objectives. School policies limit the use of personal tech devices in divisionally specific ways. In the Upper School, we generally emphasize responsible use. However, students cannot use phones during class other than use authorized by a teacher. ECSs represent a significant reduction or a complete break from personal tech use for our students. We have observed (and

research supports) that there are substantial benefits for personal social skills and group dynamics when students take a break from technology. Individual ECS instructors will review the specifics of their seminar cell phone policy during the parent meeting in November.

5. CSS values the opportunity for underclassmen to “get their feet wet” on a local or regional seminar. Additionally, upperclass students generally accrue the most points according to the Placement Process Index and, therefore, have the greatest likelihood of being placed in a popular international ECS. Underclassmen are encouraged to rank ECS preferences with an aim for getting placed in a top-choice ECS, but with mindfulness towards the possibility of not accruing enough points to be part of an international ECS.
6. Costs are close approximations and could change slightly. Also, students tend to value ECS experiences more when they help pay for them. We encourage students to apply themselves during a summer or two to earn part of the cost of their eventual ECS. An ECS scholarship program does exist to support students in pursuing a topic area of passion or interest. [Applications](#) are due Wednesday, May 15 by 10:00 p.m. Late submissions will not be accepted.
7. Students who have demonstrated behavioral problems at school may not be sent on national or international seminars. It may not be possible to reimburse families for costs incurred if a change in seminars must be made due to a disciplinary issue.
8. Independent ECSs are generally discouraged, but are allowed on rare occasions. It is very difficult for most students to organize and execute a suitably academic seminar, and some aspects of the program are usually lost (especially cooperative learning, team-building, and personal growth). A student must collaborate with the Director of Student Programs *prior to the summer (2019)* to review expectations for the independent ECS proposal process. Students should still submit a Preference Form for the existing ECSs (by the May 21st deadline) in case efforts to design an independent ECS do not result in approval by CSS.

Bonaire: Evolution on an Ocean Planet

Instructors: Natalie Hanson and Greg Johnson

Expected Cost: \$3,950 - \$4,150

Dates of Travel: Approximately Friday, March 6, through Monday, March 16, 2020 (TBD)

Essential question: How have the changing physical properties of the ocean influenced the biological evolution of marine life from precambrian to present?

Course Description: Unique in our solar system, there is nothing like Earth's oceans. The origin, evolution, and physical properties of Earth's oceans are a defining influence on the biological evolution of life on Earth. The oceans remain home to an incredibly diverse web of life, intricately connected to our planet's well-being. This course will examine these topics through lab activities, demonstrations, discussions, and field trips, culminating in an underwater exploration of the ocean surrounding Bonaire, one of Earth's great diving environments. Every student will complete an open water diver course and receive lifelong scuba certification. In addition, students will engage in scientific data collection and a local service project on Bonaire.

Pertinent information related to this ECS:

- A passport is required. The expiration date must extend three months beyond the return date of our visit. Passport renewal is required for a date of expiration prior to June 30, 2020.
- [Vaccine recommendations](#) from the Centers for Disease Control for travel to Bonaire:
- US State Department [Travel Information](#) for Bonaire:
- Statement of SCUBA risk: *Scuba diving can be safe with proper training and adherence to standard safety practices as outlined in the scuba certification class and by the many scuba professionals we will encounter while on the ECS. Scuba dangers include malfunctioning equipment, pulmonary embolism, oxygen toxicity, nitrogen narcosis, and marine life. Of particular importance is the student's willingness to adhere to standard scuba safety practices and direct instructions from CSS teachers and other scuba professionals working with our group. Serious behavioral offenses include but are not limited to diving deeper than instructed, leaving one's scuba buddy while underwater or on the ocean surface, ignoring direct, proper instructions from qualified scuba professionals or ECS teachers, leaving the grounds of Buddy Dive Resort without permission from ECS leaders, willful disregard for Bonaire Marine Park rules and regulations, and involvement with illicit drugs or alcohol.*

- Scuba Certification will largely take place BEFORE ECS starts. Must be willing to come to the two full Sundays (8 AM - 6 PM) or make it up on your own time. If not completed by January 3rd, you will lose your place on the ECS.
- ECS Group Dates: Sunday, August 11 and Sunday, August 18 (transportation from CSS provided if needed).
- ECS students will be required to complete the online classroom portion of SCUBA certification before August 11. Once the student roster is complete in early June each student will be provided with a link giving access to course materials.
- Student must be a strong swimmer: Must be able swim at least at least 200 yards in open water, unassisted, or 300 yards with mask and snorkel.
- Sinus or ear issues: Must be able to equalize ear pressure. You won't be able to go deeper than a few feet below the surface if you can't clear your ears.
- Must be willing to follow strict safety guidelines and instructions.
- Over the summer, students and families should complete the required scuba physical exam simultaneous with the required school physical exam. Complete the required medical [form](#).
- There is no expectation that you buy SCUBA equipment for the ECS. If you prefer, and within the ECS budget, all SCUBA equipment may be rented through Buddy Dive Resort. [Equipment List](#)

Student interests that match this ECS:

- STEM, Earth Science and Geologic Time, Environmental Science, Coral Reef Ecology
- Exploration and outdoor adventure

Cell Phone Policy: Student cell phones will not be permitted during the travel portion to Bonaire. Communication will be handled through the instructors.

La influencia mora en España: Language immersion in Granada, Spain

Teachers: Ms. Amanda Abrahams. Mrs. Marta Kunze

Travel dates: March 5-16, 2020

Cost: approx. \$4,700-4,800

Essential question: ¿What was the influence of the Moorish culture in the Spanish architecture, language and culture? ¿ How is the Moorish heritage still present in Spain?

Course description: This ECS travels to Granada, Spain. Students will hone their Spanish language skills, explore topics related to the Moorish culture and its influence in the Spanish culture, and engage in meaningful service learning projects. Students will experience a traditional Spanish lifestyle via a homestay experience provided. On weekdays, students will attend language classes tailored to their language level at the University of Granada (for intermediate and fluent speakers). We will provide students full immersion experiences both in and out of classrooms to help students improve and practice their Spanish.

There will also be local cultural excursions, art and music activities throughout the week. On the first weekend we will go to Seville, which is the capital of Southern Spain's Andalusia region, famous for the Alcazar castle complex, built during the Moorish Almohad dynasty. During our last weekend we will travel to Madrid, Spain's capital, where students will explore *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia* (Queen Sofia Arts Center), *Madrid Alcazar*, *El Parque Retiro* (El Retiro Park), the Prado museum and other historically significant sites.

Language Immersion in Granada will be the perfect tool to improve your language skills, gain appreciation for a different culture and enjoy the food and sites of Spain.

Company that we will use for this trip: WorldStrides.

WorldStrides is an educational travel organization that has 50 years of experience. They work closely with teachers to design each program to turn student travel experiences into life experiences. During the summer of 2018, Profe Kunze had the chance to visit the different offices, educational sites, landmarks and homestays in Granada, Spain. She was deeply impressed by the professionalism and commitment to immerse students in Spanish culture and tradition. Profe is sure this trip will be a life changing experience for CSS students.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Students Prerequisites:

- Travel authorization to enter Spain. Valid Passport until October 2020.
- Intermediate level of Spanish will be beneficial for a complete language immersion. Minimum Spanish requirement: completion of Spanish 2.

Student interest that match this ECS:

- Spanish language
- History of the Southern part of Spain (Andalucia)
- Interest in immersing themselves in the Spanish culture. This includes homestays in Granada.

Cell phone policy: Students cell phones will **not** be permitted during this ECS. Communication will be handled through the instructors.

Power to the People: How *you* can change the world

Instructors: Amy Johnson-Smith and David Benson

Expected Cost: \$350-\$500

Dates of Travel: We will be out of town the first 2 days of the ECS. Otherwise, we will expect to travel during school hours for the rest of the ECS. This ECS is compatible with regional and state basketball and pre-season Spring sports.

Essential Question: The famous quote by Mahatma Gandhi “Be the change you wish to see in the world” is well-known and often repeated, but *how* and *why* one becomes and furthers that change is the question. How can ordinary individuals make a difference in and do extraordinary things?

Course Description: When people hear the word “politics,” they may think of annoying, lying, cheating politicians and all the madness surrounding today’s polarized political climate. While that is part of what politics include, learning about politics is at its core learning to understand power -- the ability to influence people and events in our lives. This ECS will examine the ideas and practice of power in a wide variety of settings.

We will look at politics - local, state, and national -- as well as movements of dedicated people working together to make change in a wide variety of fields, from citizen activism to youth movements to government, we will examine a wide variety of strategies people have used to make changes in the past and in the present for our future.

This ECS will start with a 2-day retreat at a remote mountain cabin where we will examine the dynamics of power, society, and how people work together and against each other through hands-on activities, including some social role playing games. From there, we will dive into the world of politics as students choose a political party and candidate to follow here in Colorado. We will spend time in Denver, our state capitol, and we will also look at the daily realities of working in government at the city, state, and national levels. Our group will also examine the successes and failures of people and groups committed to making change in our world, whether it is related to education, the environment, civil rights, or other topics of interest.

Student interests that match this ECS: Social justice, youth activism, politics, community organizing, and more. Whether you consider yourself a conservative, a liberal, a progressive, a socialist, a moderate, independent or just plain undecided...this ECS is for you!

Cell Phone Policy: no cell phones during daily activities, and no cell phones during our 2-day expedition.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Studio Glass: Emergence of a new American art form

Instructors: Hans Wolfe, Jody Welch

Expected Cost: \$2,800 - \$3,200

Dates of Travel: Approximately Wednesday, March 4, 2020 through Thursday, March 12, 2020.

Essential Question: How has the artisan glass movement in the U.S. influenced the development of new techniques and materials to build a thriving and diverse culture of glass artistry?

Course Description: Almost everyone has seen sculptures by Dale Chihuly, or admired by the beauty of glass art on display in galleries and people's homes. Until the 1950's, in this country, glass artists were limited to fragments of information smuggled out of closely guarded glass factories on the island of Murano, Italy. After WWII, glass art moved from factory produced objects, to a craft form and then into the world of fine art. Working with little experience and big ambitions, glass artists in the US began to experiment with new materials and processes to develop their own art forms, ultimately leading to a Renaissance in the world of art glass making and whole new areas of experimentation with materials. In this ECS we immerse ourselves in the world of modern glass art, from the production of new colors and textures in artisan factories, to the development of specialized glass for torch-working, while we learn and practice hands on with artists on the cutting edge of the glass art movement. We travel to the mecca of the glass world in the Pacific Northwest to see first hand how these artists have influenced glass making, while learning techniques like glass blowing, cold-working, fusing, sandblasting, casting and torch-working.

In the end, we will bring inspiration and techniques from these artists into our own glass art.

Pertinent information related to this ECS:

- No prior glass experience required, however students with some experience will move faster into new areas of exploration and develop more advanced glass artworks.
- Potential for exposure to heat and flame.
- Natural fiber clothing and closed toe shoes will be required for all studio days.
- Travel accommodations will require students sharing rooms.
- Age restrictions may apply in certain studio settings – alternative glass processes will be provided to students affected.

Student interests that match this ECS:

- Art making, marketing and collecting
- Production and innovation of artisan materials
- Economic and cultural impact of art on communities
- Ability to engage in art making processes and follow instructions
- Collaboration – glass art is a team process!

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Cell Phone Policy: Cell phone use will not be a part of student's daily ECS experience, other than for logistics when travelling.

Storytelling Through Film

ECS Instructors: John Longo, Aaron Schubach, Kaja Reynolds, Vicki Vaughan

Estimated Cost: \$600-\$800

Travel Dates: TBD (Denver, Pueblo, and Victor, CO). This ECS is compatible with regional and state basketball and pre-season Spring sports.

Essential Question: In this age of digital information, how can you creatively tell your story through film?

Course Description: Have you ever imagined yourself directing a Hollywood movie, winning a Sundance Institute Award for a short documentary, or working behind the scenes as a grip on a production set? This ECS provides an opportunity to learn the basic art of filmmaking. You will learn how to be a producer, director, production designer, editor, screenwriter, grip, gaffer, sound technician, cinematographer, or a documentarian.

If you have an interest in any of these roles, this local ECS will provide an ample scope of how they all work together to produce the end result – a movie that tells a story. Experts in the field of movie making will spend time with our class, and we will visit production studios for some hands-on learning. Day trips to local and regional sites, both urban and rural, will offer opportunities for compiling “B-roll” and practice from behind the lens.

Initially, students will focus on learning more about the industry and how to work through the planning process from beginning to end. Guided assignments will provide opportunities to storyboard, screen write, edit, stage an interview, light a set, design a commercial, or even act. You will learn tricks of the trade, like bouncing light on a subject with cardboard, or applying the camera operator two-step: “wide, medium, tight, tight, tight.” You will study how to pace and structure a documentary through the problem and solution process, saving the emotional touch for the end, the grand finale.

Lastly, you will apply what you learn to your own project, taking it from preproduction and weaving it through the editing process to the final cut. You will have an opportunity to showcase your movie in our inaugural CSS Film Festival to close out the ECS. Who knows, maybe Hollywood will come knocking at your door?

Pertinent Information: Students will be encouraged to use their personal cell phones for capturing video; however, video cameras will be provided as well.

Students who select this ECS should possess the following:

- a curiosity for filmmaking, creativity,
- a cell phone that can capture video, and
- a story they want to tell.

Cell Phone Policy: Cell phones will be utilized for filming in the field

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Wilderness Emergency Medicine On Santa Cruz Island, CA

Instructors: Jennifer Hedden

Expected Cost: \$2500 - \$2800

Dates of Travel: Approximately March 3 - March 18, 2020

Essential Question: How does one persevere through the physical and mental challenges of participating in a Wilderness First Responder program, and why are these skills an important part of being a responsible outdoors person?

Course Description: If you're serious about the outdoors, this is the class for you. The Wilderness First Responder is considered the 'gold standard' in wilderness medicine. This course is 80 hours of skill sessions, hands-on training, and practical scenarios. Designed specifically to prepare you to provide advanced emergency care, this is perfect for those leading groups in a wilderness setting. CSS partners with 4Points Expeditions, an innovator and leader in wilderness medical training. The WFR course is a challenging, in-depth course that will require a level of maturity and competence far above the WFA (Wilderness First Aid) requirements. Each participant will complete not only the physical aspects of the WFR (carrying gear over rough terrain; hiking and performing rescues in both day and night conditions; being able to perform tasks in potentially adverse weather conditions; carrying patients over rough terrain, in the dark and more); participants must also accept the mental challenges of this program including working in stressful situations; performing at various times as a participant AND a leader--being able to step up and lead a rescue is an essential part of the WFR course; all while maintaining a positive attitude, being a solid team player and completing the curriculum requirements. The WFR is valid for 3 years and shows competency as a provider of wilderness emergency medicine.

Santa Cruz Island is an incredible location for adventure, challenge, learning and exploration. Santa Cruz is a huge island, about twice the size of Manhattan; it's history is rich and diverse from Native American Chumash who lived on the island for thousands of years, to ranchers and now conservationists and educators who are working to preserve the island's history, while restoring Santa Cruz to its native habitat. The island itself is separated into two parts: The smaller National Park side (24% of the island area--Scorpion Anchorage is the landing site here) and the larger (76% of the island area) is owned by The Nature Conservancy and is accessed via Prisoners Harbor. We are fortunate enough to be able to travel to BOTH sides of this amazing island and explore the varied landscapes as we move from one side to the other; from South to North, and West to East.

Our accommodations on The Nature Conservancy property will be The University of California Reserve Field Station. This site has bunk rooms, bathrooms, showers, a kitchen facility, fire ring, and is the

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

launchpad for our explorations of secluded beaches, high peaks, and hidden waterfalls. We will spend time here studying our WFR materials, practicing our skills, and hiking, kayaking and snorkeling the shoreline.

Once we hike East along the high ridges of the interior, we will eventually set up camp at Scorpion Campground on the National Park property. This more rustic setting includes NPS campsites with running water, pit toilets, amazing hiking trails and the beautiful waters of Scorpion Anchorage. This will be the location for our final coursework and skills examination during our night rescue scenario. We will have time left over to hike and explore the coastline, mountains and beaches of the Eastern side of the island before we return to the mainland. On the mainland we will “practice” our newly acquired skills through planned scenarios, while we canoe, climb, and hike. During this time, our base camp will be Wheeler Gorge in the Los Padres National Forest.

Student interests that match this ECS:

- Outdoor physical activity and hard work
- Being on and in the water (ocean)
- CPR and First Aid, wilderness medicine
- Camping
- Hiking
- Leadership, group dynamic awareness

Pertinent information related to this ECS:

- Recommended minimum age for WFR course is 16; however, exceptions can be made with a demonstrated maturity necessary for the course.
- Student must be physically able to participate in the activities related to the WFR course.
- This program includes hiking with packs. Our average length of hike will be 3-5 miles with packs ranging between 15-20 lbs maximum.
- Our cross island hike will by far be the longest trek; this will cover 13 miles on mostly undulating plateaus with some short steep sections.
- Student will be asked to carry what s/he brings.
- Students should be comfortable with being in the ocean swimming, snorkeling, or in a kayak or canoe. (Previous experience is not required)
- Students should be comfortable with climbing in an outdoor, top-rope system. (Previous experience is not required)
- Students should be comfortable in a camping setting for an extended time.

Students who select this ECS should possess the following:

- Positive attitude
- Willingness to work on the WFR course material individually and with the group.
- Willingness to participate in and lead the WFR scenarios

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Cell Phone Policy: There is virtually no cell service on Santa Cruz Island, so students will leave cell phones in Colorado Springs. Our partner company, 4Points Expeditions, will have landline access when available and a Satellite phone. Communication will be handled through CSS and 4Points Expeditions instructors. Cell phone use will also be limited during the local portion of this ECS.