

ANIMAL AND VETERINARY SCIENCE INTERNSHIPS: HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISORY PACKET

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OVERVIEW

The animal and veterinary science internships provide students an opportunity to participate in rotations gaining first-hand experience in a variety of settings while allowing them to gain in-depth knowledge working with animals. Students can choose from programs in Australia, Belize, Costa Rica or Thailand.

Due to the nature of these programs, there are important factors relating to health and safety that should be considered prior to enrolling.

This Program includes travel and may expose you to insect/wildlife transmitted diseases found and/or not commonly found in the US. Spending time outdoors elevates the risk of catching insect/wildlife transmitted diseases. Before you travel abroad make sure to visit the [U.S. Department of State](#) website and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) for country-specific travel information regarding your destination and any specific travel advisories recently issued. When appropriate follow recommendations on treating clothing and gear with recommended insect repellents/avoiding areas where wildlife transmitted diseases are prevalent. Upon your return if you are feeling ill, please discuss ANY post-return symptoms with your doctor, including stating travel/exposure from study abroad.

This Program includes activities that may expose you to zoonotic diseases found and/or not commonly found in the US. Animals can sometimes carry harmful germs that can spread to people and cause illness' known as zoonotic diseases. Before you travel abroad make sure to learn more about zoonotic diseases and safety advice via the UC Davis Occupational Health [page on Zoonotic Diseases](#) as well as visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) for information regarding zoonotic diseases. Upon your return if you are feeling ill, please discuss ANY post-return symptoms with your doctor, including stating travel/exposure to animals.

Students may have the opportunity to perform physical exams and assessments on dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, and other wildlife on the programs. Any animal has the potential to bite.

Due to the nature of the program activities, which includes working with live animals as noted above, you may be at risk of contracting rabies if exposed to an infected animal. UC Davis Student Health and Counseling Services recommends that you receive the rabies vaccination prior to departure. Consult with UC Davis Student Health and Counseling Services or your private healthcare physician about this further.

Read below for more specifics on each program.

AUSTRALIA

Program Locations

Caloundra and Wildlife Park, Australia

Program Snapshot

[Wildlife, Conservation and Veterinary Science](#)

While in Australia, students will participate in a full-time internship, spending approximately two weeks each at the Walkabout Wildlife Park (or similar) and Australia Zoo. All participants should be comfortable working with animals and getting dirty.

Walkabout Wildlife Park: This portion of the program will include a veterinary course in nature, including labs and veterinary lectures and hands-on teaching from Loop Abroad vets. You can expect to work at least 40 hours per week.

Zoo: The zoo internship will not be with the veterinary team, but will be working directly with zookeepers while earning animal experience hours. You may be involved in a field-based conservation project or assisting keepers with their normal daily animal care.

Please make sure to read the Program Risk Advisories, which can be found on the [On Site tab](#) on the program webpage.

Animals You May Come in Contact with

On this program, you may come into contact with wildlife and zoo animals, such as reptiles (non-venomous snakes, lizards, turtles), marsupials (bilbies, wallabies, bandicoots), domestic mammals (rabbits, Guinea pigs, goats, pigs, alpaca), and birds (tawny frogmouth, kookaburra, cockatoo, emu) as well as possibly dingoes.

If rabies vaccinated, you may have the opportunity to help care for flying foxes.

Please note that this list of animals is not exhaustive.

BELIZE

Program Locations

Cayo, Belize

Program Snapshot

[Large Animal Science in the Caribbean](#)

This internship program, in collaboration with CELA-Belize, takes place in Cayo, Belize. Weeks 1 and 2 involve intensive coursework in Large Animal veterinary medicine. This may involve traditional classroom time, field assessments, written assignments, presentations, and a full course assessment at the end of week 2. Weeks 3 and 4 may involve immersive-field experience rotations at local farms (both private and government), government agencies, and government labs.

Students will have the opportunity to learn hands-on veterinary examination techniques at working ranches and farms (horse, sheep, cattle and pigs) as well as learn about animal agriculture in Belize, including analyzing laboratory specimens in a laboratory. This course is designed for the veterinary, pre-veterinary, animal science or zoology students to gain working knowledge of the husbandry, and health issues confronting farm animals such as horses, sheep, pigs and cattle (beef and dairy) in Belize.

Please make sure to read the Program Risk Advisories, which can be found on the [On Site tab](#) on the program webpage.

Animals You May Come in Contact with

On this program, you may come into contact with horse, sheep, goats, cattle, pigs, dogs and cats.

Please note that this list of animals is not exhaustive.

COSTA RICA

Program Locations

Wildlife Rescue Center and Quepos, Costa Rica

Program Snapshot

[Wildlife, Conservation and Veterinary Science](#)

While in Costa Rica, students will participate in a full-time internship, spending approximately two weeks each at Kids Saving the Rainforest and an animal clinic near Quepos. All participants should be comfortable working with animals and getting dirty.

Kids Saving the Rainforest: This portion of the program will provide the opportunity to observe and learn wildlife medicine in a rescue, rehabilitation and release facility. The site has veterinarian staff, emergency veterinary clinic on site, classroom space, lab space, and is home to birds, primates, sloths, and other small mammals.

Small Animal Clinic (PAWS): PAWS is home to approximately 100 cats and dogs. It offers a veterinary clinic that provides spay-neuter surgeries twice a week and sees small animal patients for routine and emergency visits, as well as providing care for abandoned and rescued animals.

Students will have the opportunity to shadow veterinarians and also learn from the facility staff at each location, along with participating in supplementary labs and interactive lectures supporting what they are learning. You can expect to work 30-35 hours per week.

Please make sure to read the Program Risk Advisories, which can be found on the [On Site tab](#) on the program webpage.

Animals You May Come in Contact with

On this program you may come in contact with cats and dogs at PAWS, and Costa Rican wildlife while at Kids Saving the Rain Forest.

At PAWS, you may see dogs that have not been vaccinated against rabies. At Kids Saving the Rainforest, students may come in contact with birds (mostly parrots), marmosets, tamarins, sloths, kinkajous,

coatis, squirrel monkeys. Wildlife that may come close on nature walks (but students are not permitted to touch) are capuchin monkeys, lizards, amphibians, birds, spiders, and snakes.

Please note that this list of animals is not exhaustive.

THAILAND

Program Locations

Chiang Mai and Elephant Nature Park, Thailand

Program Snapshot

[Wildlife, Conservation and Veterinary Science](#)

While in Thailand, students will participate in an internship for 35-40 hours per week. Students will have the opportunity to live in both city and rural settings in Chiang Mai and at the Elephant Nature Park 60 km north of the city. All participants should be comfortable working with animals and getting dirty.

Chiang Mai Wildlife/Zoo: For two weeks of the program, students will be working behind-the-scenes with a zoo vet to learn the proper handling and health assessment methods for various birds, reptiles, and mammals, as well as helping to provide them with the necessary healthcare. The veterinarian will teach students about the anatomy, behavior, and care for these animals, including how ethograms are used for animal research and how to create and assess enrichment projects in a zoo or animal sanctuary setting.

Elephant Nature Park- Small Animal Clinic and Elephant Volunteer: For three weeks, students will live at the Elephant Nature Park surrounded by Thai staff, volunteers from around the world, and all kinds of animals that call the park their home. This sanctuary is home to over 80 elephants and approximately 1,000 other animals, including hundreds of cats and dogs, and provides the opportunity to gain an understanding of the intersection of conservation, culture, and development.

For two of those weeks, students will work with a Thai vet and a Loop Abroad facilitator/translator in the small animal clinic to learn and practice clinical skills while providing care throughout the day.

For the other week at Elephant Nature Park, students will work as an elephant volunteer and learn the history of the elephant sanctuary while helping with husbandry tasks such as preparing elephant food and cleaning enclosures. You get to observe elephants up-close and contribute to their rescue.

Please make sure to read the Program Risk Advisories, which can be found on the [On Site tab](#) on the program webpage.

Animals You May Come in Contact with

On this program, you may come in contact with cats, dogs, and elephants. During the zoo week, you may come in contact with reptiles (non-venomous snakes, tortoises, turtles, lizards), birds (owls, parrots, buggies), and mammals (meerkats, small wildcat, sheep, goats, miniature horses, miniature donkeys).

Dogs and cats are often vaccinated for Rabies on intake. It is Loop Abroad policy that at the dog and cat clinic in Thailand, students who are not vaccinated for rabies cannot handle dogs and cats that have not been rabies vaccinated.

Please note that this list of animals is not exhaustive.

RISK ADVISORY FOR ZOOBOTIC DISEASES

This Program includes activities that may expose you to zoonotic diseases found and/or not commonly found in the US. Animals can sometimes carry harmful germs that can spread to people and cause illness' known as zoonotic diseases. Before you travel abroad make sure to learn more about zoonotic diseases and safety advice via the UC Davis Occupational Health [page on Zoonotic Diseases](#) as well as visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) for information regarding zoonotic diseases. Upon your return if you are feeling ill, please discuss ANY post-return symptoms with your doctor, including stating travel/exposure to animals.

Students will have the opportunity to perform physical exams and assessments on dogs and cats and some other mammals on the programs. Any animal has the potential to bite. Read the program webpages for more specifics on each program.

PROTOCOL FOR RABIES EXPOSURE

Per Loop Abroad policy, any bite wound must be assessed by a doctor in-country. On all programs, even if a dog (up-to-date with rabies shots) bites a student who is vaccinated, the student still must go to a doctor for assessment. In Thailand, it is policy not to allow unvaccinated students to handle dogs that haven't been rabies vaccinated.

In cases where students in are bitten, staff will follow up with the owner/shelter/facility/etc. to ensure the animal doesn't show or develop any clinical signs for two weeks.

Due to the nature of the program activities, which includes working with live animals, you may be at risk of contracting rabies if exposed to an infected animal. UC Davis Student Health and Counseling Services recommends that you receive the rabies vaccination prior to departure. Consult with UC Davis Student Health and Counseling Services or your private healthcare physician about this further.

RESOURCES

UC Davis Occupational Health webpage on Zoonotic Diseases

<https://safetyservices.ucdavis.edu/units/occupational-health/surveillance-system/zoonotic-diseases>

This webpage included Zoonosis information by species of animal, including Care and Use Information as well as a Risk Assessment worksheet.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/onehealth/basics/zoonotic-diseases.html>

This webpage includes information on what Zoonotic diseases are, who is at risk and how you can protect yourself from Zoonotic diseases.

U.S Department of State Travel Information

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>

These webpages provide safety and security information for every country of the world to help you assess for yourself the risks of travel. Each country information page contains a Travel Advisory, Alerts, and other important details specific to that country that could affect you.

Australia

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Australia.html>

Belize

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Belize.html>

Costa Rica

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/CostaRica.html>

Thailand

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Thailand.html>