The 2016 Grand Canyon Semester investigates the landscape, cultures, and politics of the greater Grand Canyon region. The Grand Canyon Semester offers a life-changing learning experience in the high mountains of northern Arizona and the deep canyon country of the Colorado Plateau. Students with a wide variety of interests and passions come from across the United States and around the world to join faculty in the natural sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities to investigate how humans impact, manage, interact with, and value the natural world. On backcountry field trips, in classrooms and art galleries, around campfires, in traditional hogans, and floating down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, we confront key environmental and social challenges in these diverse natural and cultural landscapes.

GCS was an incredible experience that taught me not only to think outside the box about many different kinds of issues currently surrounding the Colorado plateau, but to fully observe my surroundings in a way that I had never thought about before. And because of my involvement in GCS, I was able to get an internship at Grand Canyon National Park, which helped me with my college degree. -- Anna GCS 2014

The Grand Canyon Semester’s broad theme is climate adaptation, fostering a deep exploration of the intertwined issues that surround how natural and cultural worlds adapt to a changing climate. Using interdisciplinary approaches, students experience the economic, political, artistic, ecological, social, and spiritual forces that shape the greater Grand Canyon region.

Honors students and honors-eligible students from across the country are encouraged to apply.
Dates: August 26 to December 13, 2016

Total Semester Fees - $8,950
Fees cover tuition, fees, housing, insurance* for the term as well as transportation and food during field experiences. Financial aid is available.
* Insurance required of students who cannot show proof of existing medical insurance.

Grand Canyon Semester 2016 Courses

All Grand Canyon Semester courses are seminars that interconnect content, projects, and site-specific, place-based learning experiences. The semester is centered on the Applied Core, Humans and the Environment. The Integrative Seminar and Directed Study courses complement the Applied Core by providing students the opportunity to contextualize their experience and choose a portion of the semester for in-depth study.

Applied Core: Humans and the Environment

ANT 399H: Human Ecology of the Grand Canyon Region
3 credit hours in Anthropology, Native American Studies, or Humanities
Students learn how modern and ancient people have interacted with and adapted to the Grand Canyon region. Emphasis placed on contemporary cultures.

ENV 399H: Environmental Science of the Grand Canyon Region
3 credit hours in Environmental Science or Biology
Students will study the patterns and processes that shape the ecology, geology, and natural history of the Grand Canyon eco-region.

POS 399H: Environmental Policy & Management of the Grand Canyon Region
3 credit hours in Political Science or Environmental Science
Students will learn about the policies, practices, and politics that determine how human cultures manage and utilize natural resources in the Grand Canyon region.

HUM 399H: Integrative Seminar: Grand Canyon as Text
3 credit hours
Students integrate their learning while cultivating their sense of place through personal reflective writing and creative projects, as well as learning from the creative work of other artists, writers, and explorers of the Grand Canyon region. Using creative and non-fiction writing, journaling, art, and multi-media, students creatively document their own Grand Canyon experiences.

HON 485: Directed Study: Undergraduate Independent Research Project
4 credit hours
Students design a hands-on, integrative research project on a topic of their choice related to the greater Grand Canyon region. Students perform research and gather data in order to answer their research questions, receiving help from faculty, research partners, and mentors. Projects will be a cumulative integration of learning and investigation on topics relating to the environment, policy, culture, and humanities.

Questions about the 2016 Grand Canyon Semester may be addressed to Academic Director Ted Martinez at theodore.martinez@nau.edu.

Apply online at nau.edu/gcs

Early Application Deadline: December 1, 2015
Application Deadline: February 15, 2016

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