OVERVIEW OF COURSE:

This extended study program will take place in the Florida Keys. Two weeks will be spent at the Dolphin Research Center on Grassy Key, Florida, and the third week will be spent at Bahia Honda State Park and nearby locations.

The curriculum for this extended study is designed especially for students interested in biology, psychology, and/or neuroscience. The course will focus on current theories, research and methods in behavioral and cognitive studies of marine mammals, with an emphasis on bottlenosed dolphins. Because animal behavioral research and conservation are intimately linked, we will also consider conservation issues relevant to marine organisms and their environment.

Coursework will be integrated with the Dolphin Research Center (DRC) in Grassy Key, Florida, allowing students extensive opportunities to observe and interact with marine mammals such as dolphins, seals, and sea lions. Students will actively participate in ongoing cognitive and behavioral research at the DRC. The third week, students will engage in service-based learning projects focused on conserving marine organisms. Potential activities may include snorkeling, scuba-diving, interacting with tourists at educational centers, observing veterinary activities, restoring coral beds, and collecting survey data on fishes, corals, and other marine animals.