

Texas Global May Term Abroad in North Queensland, Australia: The Politics of Protecting the Great Barrier Reef

Summer 2027 Itinerary Highlights (subject to change)

Day 1 – 5 Brisbane

Koala Sanctuary

Learn about koalas (and see them up close!) at the world's largest koala sanctuary. View other native Australian wildlife such as the platypus, Tasmanian devil, dingo, wombat and wallaby, and enjoy hand feeding the kangaroos!



Welcome orientation and group dinner

Queensland Parliament visit

Visit the State Parliament building in Brisbane and meet with local politicians to discuss a variety of political issues surrounding the Great Barrier Reef. Meet a Queensland Member of Parliament.

Site visits to the Office of the GBR & World Heritage, Sugar Cane Growers Association and Environmental Defenders Office.

Guest speakers: Queensland Seafood Industry Association



Free day to explore Brisbane

Walking tour of Brisbane city

Rapid change is not new to Brisbane. It is a city that has seen constant developments in industry, politics, lifestyle, architecture, and technology over its history, building layer upon layer. Learn about the history and future of Brisbane, led by a local guide.

Day 6 – 8 Townsville

Hands on Wildlife experience

Discover which dangerous animals live in the region and learn what you should do if you encounter them. You will get up close and personal with some of these creatures in a safe and secure environment.

Tour of the Port of Townsville

Guest speakers and class sessions

Hear lectures from various stakeholders and interests:

- Fisheries in multiple-use marine parks
- Policy and permitting on the reef
- The GBR and Journalism

Day 9 – 14 Magnetic Island

Travel by ferry to Magnetic 'Maggie' Island

Tour of the island with a local guide

Spend time with a local Magnetic Island guide to learn about current issues that residents are facing and their perspectives on protecting the Great Barrier Reef. In the evening, enjoy watching the local Rock Wallabies at Geoffrey Bay and stay on for an optional night at the local Toad Races.



Explore Magnetic Island by boat and snorkel

Visit secluded bays and pristine beaches, hear stories and the history of the area from your Master Reef Guides, and interact with marine wildlife. There will be an opportunity to swim and snorkel on the fringing reefs.

Talk & film viewing with local photographer/videographer

Community panel: A local's perspective

The island is managed by several levels of authority, including local, state and federal government. It is also home to a diverse range of community groups and organizations. During this session, participants will meet some of these islands residents who will share their perspectives on the pros and cons of 'life on Maggie'.



Case study and hike to Radical Bay

Hear from local 'Charlie' about the politics of Radical Bay, which boils down to a three-way tug-of-war between private development, public access, and environmental preservation before embarking on a hike to view the beautiful bay itself!

Free day to explore the island

Day 15 – 17 Townsville

Excursion to a sugar cane farm

Visit a sugar cane farm to learn about growing techniques and the connection between farming and the reef.

Marine conservation field activity at Alva Beach

Hear about the impact of climate change and plastic pollution on marine life, specifically on turtles, and determine your own carbon footprint. You will spend time at the beach, undertaking a study on the impact of microplastics in marine ecosystem and contribute your findings in the Australian Marine Debris Database.



Guest speakers and class sessions

Hear lectures from various stakeholders and interests:

- The GBR and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community
- James Cook University Academic

Day 18 – 23 Port Doulgas

Travel by coach via Mission Beach to Port Douglas

Visit the Living Coral Biobank

The world's largest collection of hard corals and a 'living coral ark' for future species preservation.

Marine Biologist led sessions

- Safety briefing for your GBR days
- Evolution of coral reefs, fish identification
- Indigenous Ranger overview



Two full day snorkel and study the Great Barrier Reef trips

Have an unforgettable experience snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef. You will encounter schools of tropical fish, coral gardens, sea turtles, eels, reef sharks, and much more!

Walkabout Tour of Mossman Gorge & Daintree Rainforest

Gain insights into the First Nations people's connection to nature, learn about bush foods and medicines, and hear stories about the land and waters of the Kuku Yalanji people with the backdrop of the incredible ancient Daintree Rainforest the world's oldest continuous tropical rainforest, estimated at over 135 to 180 million years old and Mossman Gorge with crystal-clear waters rushing over giant granite boulders.



Guest speakers and class sessions

Hear lectures from various stakeholders and interests:

- Editor of local newspaper
- Australian Marine Conservation

Farewell dinner

Day 24 Depart for USA

Board your return flight home - safe travels!

Faculty Leader

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Education Abroad

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Apply by Nov 1, 2026

More info at

global.utexas.edu/abroad

liberalarts.utexas.edu/cas/gr eat-barrier-reef-may-term/

