University of Oklahoma Biological Station, Session II, July/Aug 2016

Field Studies in Biological Conservation, BIOL 4583-050

Instructor
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Course Description
The Field Studies class is designed to introduce students to the complex conservation issues currently facing the citizens of Oklahoma. Student readings on conservation issues will come from a variety of valid sources, representing several different aspects of each issue. Our classroom time will be devoted to a discussion of these issues. Discussions will be supplemented by field trips, with the much of our time being spent outdoors, seeing first hand Oklahoma’s diverse ecoregions and associated conservation issues. The field trips are designed to help students better observe the natural world, create awareness of Oklahoma’s biodiversity, and have a deeper understanding of conservation issues facing Oklahoma and the southern Great Plains.

Biological Conservation Issues to be addressed may include:

- History of logging and current forestry practices
- Wetlands conservation and restoration, wetlands mitigation and banking
- Endangered bats and white nose syndrome
- Suburban sprawl
- Phenological shifts and climate change
- Prescribed burning as grassland and woodland management technique
- Invasive species – including exotic species, woody plant encroachment, feral hogs, and pathogens
- Reintroduction of extirpated species, both plant and animal
- Water rights and groundwater withdrawal
- Ecotourism
- Energy industry – including wind farms, oil and gas extraction, and hydroelectric
- History of settlement – including relocation of Native Americans and European landruns
- Endangered Species Act, Oklahoma’s federally listed species, and what it means for legal protection

Potential Sites to Visit:

- Chickasha Cultural Center, human history and ecology
- Ancient Cross Timbers forest, Lake Texoma
- TNC Pontotoc Ridge Preserve, invasive species removal
- TNC Oka’ Yanahli Preserve, rare plant restoration & wetland mitigation site
- Noble Foundation Ranch, prescribed burning & invasive species control
- Denison Dam, hydroelectric
- Chickasha National Recreation Area, human history & ground water usage
- Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge, wetland & invasive species management
Course Materials
There is no text for this course. Readings will be provided by the instructor.
You will need a field notebook. This will be for you to write notes and observations while out of the classroom. If you
are interested in sketching in your book, you might consider unlined paper. I recommend an inexpensive
Composition book or other permanently bound journal type notebook. I discourage the use of a spiral bound
notebook or notebook with flimsy covers as your field journal. However, you may want to have a normal notebook for
classroom notes.
If you have a laptop, tablet, or other portable computer, you may find it useful while not in the field. Readings will be
made available as PDFs.

The Nature of Field Studies
We will be outside for at least half of our time at the Biological Station. You need to be prepared to be outside in
natural areas. For field trips you will need:
closed toed, sturdy shoes (old sneakers are fine)
shoes you don’t mind wearing in water (Keens, Chacos, or old sneakers)
long pants
long-sleeved shirt (light-weight quick dry material is best)
hat (large brimmed, field hat is better than a ball cap)
sunscreen
insect and tick repellant
field notebook

You will not be allowed to attend field trips if you are wearing flip-flops or do not have a full water bottle. Other items you might
find useful during the Field Studies course: camera, umbrella, shoes to wear in water,
backpack to carry field supplies, sunglasses,
binoculars, field guides to your favorite
organisms, and, handlens.
Please take extra precautions if you have a known
allergy to insect stings or poison ivy. Please let the
instructors know about any potential medical
issues that could affect you during field trips.

Schedule
• Reading assignments and mini quizzes daily. Participation grade will be given daily. Field Notebook will be
checked regularly to give students guidance on the quality of their notes.
• Essay Exam to be held Friday August 11, in the late morning. Field Notebook will be turned in immediately
before exam.
• Course activities and field trips are flexible and weather dependent. We will have partial and full day field trips,
in class group discussions, outside hands-on activities, scheduled time for work on independent projects and
field notebook, and evening movies.
Grading
You will earn your grade through: active participation in discussions, field trips, and hands-on activities; daily mini-quizzes over assigned reading; field notebook; independent project; and final exam assessing your comprehension of the issues covered during the class.

Grade breakdown:
- Participation: 25%
- Project: 15%
- Field Notebook: 15%
- Mini-quizzes: 20%
- Essay Exam: 25%

Questions?
Contact Priscilla Crawford regarding information about this course. 405-255-8106, prill@ou.edu.
Questions about the Biological Station and how to enroll, please call 405-325-5391 or go to the website at: www.ou.edu/uobs.

Important University Policies
Reasonable accommodation
Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent the full demonstration of his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

Adjustments for pregnancy/childbirth related issues
Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see www.ou.edu/content/eoo/pregnancyfaqs.html for commonly asked questions.

Title IX resources
For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24.7, counseling services, mutual no contact orders, scheduling adjustments and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office 405-325-2215 (8-5) or the Sexual Assault Response Team 405-615-0013 (24.7) to learn more or to report an incident.

Religious holidays
It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays.

More information about OU student policies, please go to: http://www.ou.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook.html