

University of Oklahoma Biological Station, Session III, July 2018

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 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 and hand-on projects on the grounds of the OU BioStation. Much of our time will be spent outdoors learning about conservation projects in the state and helping to implement these projects. Our focus conservation topic will be Restoration Ecology. We will explore the variety of strategies, philosophies, and practicalities of restoration ecology. Students will design a restoration project that could be implemented on the campus of the OU Biological Station. Students will learn about restoration techniques through site visits and field activities.

We will discuss many conservation issues that affect restoration such as:

- 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
- Novel ecosystems
- Energy industry – including wind farms, oil and gas extraction, and hydroelectric
- Historic landuse

Potential Sites to Visit:

- TNC Oka'Yanahli Preserve, rare plant restoration & wetland mitigation site
- Noble Foundation Ranch, prescribed burning & invasive species control
- Hagarman National Wildlife Refuge, pollinator garden project
- Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge, wetland & invasive species management, monarch butterfly habitat restoration

Course Materials

There is no text for this course. Readings will be provided by the instructor on Canvas. 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. You need to be prepared to be outside in natural areas. For field trips and outdoor work 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 repellent
- field notebook

You will not be allowed to attend field trips or outdoor work if you are wearing flip-flops and 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.



Schedule

- Reading assignments, participation grade, and mini quizzes daily. Field Notebook will be checked regularly.
- Essay Exam to be held near the end of our session. Field Notebook will be turned in on the last morning of class.
- 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 projects, and evening documentaries.

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	10%
Mini-quizzes	10%
Individual Research Project & Presentation	25%
Field Notebook	10%
Group Restoration Plan Project & Presentation	25%
Essay Exam	20%

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>