

BIOL TBD, Special Topics in Zoology Desert Field Ecology, Summer, 2022

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Office Hours:	(Anytime during the trip & by appt.)
Lecture/Lab:	(All day every day)

How to use this syllabus

This syllabus provides you with information specific to this course, and it also provides information about important university policies. This document should be viewed as a course overview; it is not a contract and is subject to change as the semester evolves.

Major adjustments to the syllabus will be announced in class and posted on blackboard.

Academic Integrity

Students at Wichita State University are expected to uphold high academic standards. WSU will not tolerate a lack of academic integrity. Students are responsible for knowing and following the Student Code of Conduct http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch8_05.htm and the Student Academic Honesty policy http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch2_17.htm. When the faculty member determines sanctions are warranted for violations of academic integrity, regardless of severity, the faculty member must report the infraction to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. If you need more information about the process or wish to appeal a decision, please visit https://www.wichita.edu/about/student_conduct/ai.php

Gist: Cheating is bad m'kay? Academic honesty violations will result in a 0 assigned for the assignment in question and further action as warranted.

Course Description

Lecture/Lab will cover the general evolution, ecology, and natural history of desert organisms and their ecosystems. We will combine basic natural history of a wide variety of desert organisms with general fieldwork, sampling theory, sampling techniques, and approaches to taxa-specific identification.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Classify and describe the major lineages of desert organisms.
- Apply identification skills to several desert taxa.

- Articulate the ecological roles played by different clades.
- Explain current statuses and distributions of extant groups.
- Identify and be able to explain major problems faced by desert species.
- Identify and discuss differences in major desert regions of the SW United States
- **Graduate students** will additionally synthesize major themes from the course and create an original scholarly work (in this case, a “scavenger hunt”) and demonstrate a higher level of familiarity with the flora and fauna of the ecosystems (additional 50 organisms on project).

Required Texts/Readings Textbook

There are no required books for the class. Field guides are useful and encouraged. Several will be present on the trip, but you can bring your own as well.

Other Readings

Additional readings and recorded presentations will be provided through the class blackboard site.

Other Equipment/Materials

Always bring plenty of water, hiking shoes, loose fitting lightweight clothing, and broad brim hats are appropriate clothing for hiking in most parts of the desert. A day pack is a good idea. Be sure to carry any needed medical equipment (e.g., inhaler, EpiPen, insulin) on any field excursions. Coffee may also be useful for early morning birding trips as well. The mountains can be **cold** in the spring before the sun comes out and the desert is **hot** during the day. Dress in layers rather than a heavy jacket (a light rain jacket is a great utility layer).

This is the desert... We are going to be in the sun! A sun hat is a good idea as is sunscreen and plenty of water. Don't forget water.

Class Protocol

I take attendance daily. If you come to class, you are expected to be attentive and respectful to your classmates. Engaging in disruptive activities such as using a cellphone or practicing dance moves during non-dancing parts of class will all be grounds for me to ask you to engage in those activities in places other than the classroom. Active participation is an expectation of good scholarship and learning to be a good advocate for your own learning. **You are encouraged to ask questions.**

Contact Policy

Email communication is always preferred. I am not a particularly formal person (in case you don't know), but I think it is important for you to develop skills around proper email etiquette for your future professional interactions. With this in mind, I will ask you to use this course as practice. Please get in the habit of:

- Using the course name in the subject line of the email
- Using a salutation (hi, hello, howdy, etc.) at the beginning of the email
- Signing your name at the end of the email.
- Using complete sentences.

Response Time

To Email: I usually respond within 24 hours. If I have not responded within 24 hours please email me again or try my personal email at tomluhring@gmail.com. **You are not bothering me to follow up on emails!** I take it as a sign of determination, not as a sign of nagging or bothering. During the course aske me directly! I should be easy to find.

Feedback on Assignments: I intend to grade assignments within a week from their due dates. However, I usually do this within a couple of days (I don't like to have these things hanging over me and you deserve to have fast feedback).

Grading Scale

WSU uses a +/- grading scale for final grades and to calculate grade point averages. In this class, grades are assigned according to the following chart. (Other classes might assign grades differently: Be sure to understand the different grading scales in all of your classes.)

Points/Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Points	Interpretation
100-93	A	4.00	<i>A range denotes excellent performance</i>
92-90	A-	3.70	
89-86	B+	3.30	
85-83	B	3.00	<i>B range denotes good performance</i>
82-80	B-	2.70	
79-76	C+	2.30	
75-73	C	2.00	<i>C range denotes satisfactory performance</i>
72-70	C-	1.70	
69-66	D+	1.30	
65-63	D	1.00	<i>D range denotes unsatisfactory performance</i>
62-60	D-	0.70	
<60	F	0.00	<i>F denotes failing performance</i>

Tentative Class Schedule (Subject to adjustment)

Day	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	May 20 th Depart KS	Day 1 of Landscape Journals Road trip Bingo 1
2	May 21 st Sante Fe	Quiz 1, Day in Sante Fe area (visit TBD)
3	May 22 nd Depart NM	Day 2 of Landscape Journals Road trip Bingo 2
4	May 23 rd Madera Canyon	Quiz 3 Low Elevation Desert
5	May 24 th Madera Canyon	Quiz 4 Mid Elevation Sky Island
6	May 25 th Madera Canyon	Quiz 5 High Elevation Sky Island
7	May 26 th Madera Canyon	Sonoran Desert Museum Scavenger Hunt
8	May 27 th Madera Canyon	Quiz 6 Patagonia
9	May 28 th Madera Canyon	Quiz 7 Free Exploration
10	May 29 th Madera Canyon	Buenos Aires NWR
11	May 30 th Madera Canyon	Quiz 8 Free Exploration
12	May 31 st Depart AZ	Day 3 of Landscape Journals Road trip Bingo 3
13	June 1 st Carlsbad Caverns	Carlsbad Caverns
14	June 2 nd Depart NM	Quiz 9, Day 4 of Landscape Journals Road trip Bingo 4

Assignments

Level	Assignment	Points	% of Final	Due Date
Undergraduate	Quizzes	360	18%	Most Days
	Road Trip Bingo	400	20%	Various
	150 Organisms	700	35%	June 15th
	Landscape Journal	400	20%	May 28 th & June 8th
	Scavenger Hunt	140	7%	May 26th
	Total Available	2000		
Graduate	Quizzes	360	18%	Most Days
	Road Trip Bingo	400	20%	Various
	200 Organisms	700	35%	June 15th
	Landscape Journal	400	20%	May 28 th & June 8th
	Scavenger Hunt	140	7%	May 26th
	Total Available	2000		

Quizzes

Quizzes are open notebook and can refer to a bird call, a snake we found, a cactus you stepped on, etc. Basically anything that should be written down in a field notebook (species observed, weather, number or sex of a species, who was sampling, etc.) is fair game on the quiz! **Take lots of notes**, sketch, take photos, etc. Most of the quiz questions will be natural history or zoology/ecology based, but there will be a few “notebook” questions thrown in there. I’m doing this rather than grading your notebooks on top of the other grading assignments. **Only the physical notebook is allowed for use during the quiz.**

150/200 Organisms! Collection

See handout for details and stipulations. A derivation of the 100 verts assignment from last summer’s field vert zoo course. Graduate students have the added “pleasure?” of an additional 50 organisms to add to their list. Any living organism or their sign counts!

Road Trip Bingo

Details will be covered on the first day of class (the first day of driving).

Landscape Journal

You will be observing and sketching changes in scenery as we move across vast sections of the SW US. The journal will serve as a reflective place for you to consider what factors may be causing these shifts. Ask yourself questions that you do not know the answers to and then answer these questions with appropriate sources. Draw a map of each day’s trip and notate where you see major shifts. We’ll provide an atlas to use as a reference for each day’s trip. A handout with more instructions will be sent prior to the start of the trip.

Sonoran Desert Museum Scavenger Hunt

The Sonoran Desert Museum visit will be a day-long event where groups of 2-3 students will also be given a list of riddles/questions/challenges to solve/answer. Details of the challenge will be given on the morning of the hunt....

Late Assignments

Late assignments accrue -10 percent penalties per day.

Missed Assignments and Quizzes

Missed assignments accrue penalties as noted above for “Late Assignments.”

Missed quizzes can only be made up in the case of an emergency. Contact the instructor ahead of your absence or as soon as you can afterwards. Generally speaking, in the absence of an alien invasion, zombie apocalypse, or state-declared emergency, you will need a signed note from a medical professional (e.g., Health Services, Family Doctor) that specifies that you were unable to make it in for that day’s quiz. Kudos if you are able to get a Dr.’s note during a zombie apocalypse! No, a malfunctioning alarm clock is not a state-declared emergency. Instructor reserves the right to reschedule quizzes in the case of state-declared emergencies, school closings, or zombie apocalypse. The timing and location of make-up quizzes will be at the instructor’s discretion and will follow as quickly as possible after the missed quiz. The instructor reserves the right to create an altered version of the original quiz for make-up quizzes.

Undergraduate vs. Graduate Credit

Undergraduate students enrolled in 700 level courses will receive undergraduate credit (not graduate credit) unless they have a previously approved senior rule application or dual/accelerated enrollment form on file in the Graduate School. Undergraduate credit earned in 700 level courses cannot later be counted toward a graduate degree.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit.

Syllabus Policies and Student Resources

All students should familiarize themselves with the course-related policies and student resources that can be found at: www.wichita.edu/syllabuspolicies

These include, but may not be limited to:

Information on:

- COVID-19 conditions
- Important Academic Dates
- Academic Integrity

- Definition of a credit hour
- Video and Audio recording
- Shocker Alert System
- Intellectual Property
- CARE Team
- Counseling and Prevention Services
- Student Health Services
- Heskett Center and Campus Recreation
- Inclusive Excellence and Respect for Diversity
- First Generation Students
- Names and Pronouns
- Students with Disabilities
- Title IX
- Concealed Carry Policy