

# Fundamentals of Ecology :: BIO/ESS 148

## Syllabus, Fall 2020

- **Lecture Time:** Tuesdays and Thursday, 09:00 - 10:15AM
- **Lecture Location:** Zoom Link
- **Discussion section times**
  - Friday 1:30-2:20 Zoom Link
  - Friday 2:30-3:20 Zoom Link
  - Friday 4:30-5:20 Zoom Link
- **Instructor:** Justin D. Yeakel
- **Teaching Assistant:** Irina Barros
- **Course Website**

Everything that we do this this course will revolve around two principle websites. In some cases, information will be duplicated on both sites (link to readings), and I will attempt to cross-link as necessary.

The \*\*\*CatCourse Page (Canvas)\*\*\*: Turning in assignments, grades, lectures, links to readings

The \*\*\*Ecology Course Page (this one)\*\*\*: Basic course information, discussion section activities, links to readings

- **Course Schedule:**  
Course Schedule
- **Course Description**

This course fulfills an upper division requirement for the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) emphasis track of the Biological Sciences Major, as well an upper division requirement for the Earth Systems Science Major. This course provides an introduction to ecology - the scientific study of how organisms interact with each other and their physical environment. Prerequisite: BIO 001 or BIO 005 or ESS 001 or ESS 005 or consent of instructor. Normal Letter Grade only.

- **Format & Procedures**

This course is structured as follows: two 75-minute lecture sessions and one 50-minute discussion section per week. Discussion sections will provide students an opportunity to discuss in more detail scientific findings from peer-reviewed publications. Your participation in discussion section is graded (see Grading below).

We will also spend a Saturday morning in March exploring the Vernal Pools ecosystem just off campus to apply some of our newly gained ecological

knowledge to the field. All students are required to attend and participate. Field observations from the Vernal Pools will be used to write a Field Report towards the end of the semester.

- **Course Requirements & Grading Procedures**

- ***Class Attendance and Participation Policy***

- \* Attendance and participation in the discussion section is required and will be a component of the student's course grade.

- ***Required and Supplemental Readings***

- \* **Required Textbook:** W.D. Bowman, S.D. Hacker, and Cain, M.L. 2017. Ecology, 4th Edition. Sinauer Associates, Inc., Publishers. Sunderland, MA.
    - \* Readings will also be assigned for the Discussion section and instead of the book for some lectures. These are required and will be provided on the course website.
    - \* Note: other editions (1st, 2nd, 3rd) of this textbook may be used but are not recommended.
    - \* Book Website: <http://sites.sinauer.com/ecology4e/index.html>
    - \* This companion site is designed to help students using the Bowman et al. Ecology, 4th Edition textbook to master important concepts in ecology. It provides resources for reviewing each chapter, learning key terminology, working with data from actual experiments, and using simulations to explore model systems. The site also includes self-study quizzes to gauge your comprehension of each chapter.

- ***Course Assignments and Projects***

- \* Late assignments (e.g., homework) will not be accepted.
    - \* **Homework:** Throughout the semester, homework assignments will be assigned and turned in during the Discussion Section consisting of exercises provided by the Teaching Assistant/Instructor.
    - \* **Quizzes:** Quizzes will be given periodically during the lecture period. They will not necessarily be announced.
    - \* **Exams:** There will be 3 “midterm” exams during the semester and 1 comprehensive final. There will be no make-up exams or early exams. If you are sick during an exam, please bring a note from your doctor verifying your illness. Your grade for the missed exam will be based on your average score from the other exams. You cannot miss more than one exam for an excused illness and taking the final is mandatory in order to pass the course.

- ***Grading:*** Your final grade will be based on the following: class/section participation: 5%, homework: 20%, quizzes: 10%, midterms: 45% (three, 15% each), and comprehensive final exam: 20%.

- \* Grades will be given using the approximate framework: A: 90 - 100%, B: 80 - 90%, C: 70 - 80%, D: 60 - 70%, F: < 60%. This framework is subject to change given the distribution of the final

grades.

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- **Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is the foundation of an academic community and without it none of the educational or research goals of the university can be achieved. All members of the university community are responsible for its academic integrity. Existing policies forbid cheating on examinations, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.
    - Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of California, Merced's Academic Honesty Policy
    - Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work.
    - You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. You can give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from such students. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in the form of an e mail, an e mail attachment file, a diskette, or a hard copy. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Policy can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.
    - During examinations, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examinations will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and University disciplinary action.
    - Examples of academic dishonesty include:
      - \* receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on examinations
      - \* using unauthorized materials during an examination
      - \* plagiarism - using materials from sources without citations
      - \* altering an exam and submitting it for re-grading
      - \* fabricating data or references
      - \* using false excuses to obtain extensions of time or to skip course-work
    - The ultimate success of a code of academic conduct depends largely on the degree to which the students fulfill their responsibilities towards academic integrity. These responsibilities include:
      - \* Be honest at all times.
      - \* Act fairly toward others. For example, do not disrupt or seek an unfair advantage over others by cheating, or by talking or allowing eyes to wander during exams.
      - \* Take group as well as individual responsibility for honorable

behavior. Collectively, as well as individually, make every effort to prevent and avoid academic misconduct, and report acts of misconduct which you witness.

- \* Do not submit the same work in more than one class. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, all work submitted to fulfill course requirements must be work done by the student specifically for that course. This means that work submitted for one course cannot be used to satisfy requirements of another course unless the student obtains permission from the instructor.
- \* Unless permitted by the instructor, do not work with others on graded coursework, including in class and take-home tests, papers, or homework assignments. When an instructor specifically informs students that they may collaborate on work required for a course, the extent of the collaboration must not exceed the limits set by the instructor.
- \* Know what plagiarism is and take steps to avoid it. When using the words or ideas of another, even if paraphrased in your own words, you must cite your source. Students who are confused about whether a particular act constitutes plagiarism should consult the instructor who gave the assignment.
- \* Know the rules --- ignorance is no defense. Those who violate campus rules regarding academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including suspension and dismissal.

- **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The University of California Merced is committed to ensuring equal academic opportunities and inclusion for students with disabilities based on the principles of independent living, accessible universal design and diversity. I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances. Students are encouraged to register with Disability Services Center to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

The instructor will make every effort to accommodate all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. Please speak with the instructor during the first week of class regarding any potential academic adjustments or accommodations that may arise due to religious beliefs during this term.