

NRM 2303 – Principles of Conservation Biology
Syllabus – Spring 2015

Instructor:

Dr. Patricia Moody Harveson

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Office hours: M,W,TH 1:30-3:30pm

Course Description:

Introductory course on the fundamental issues in the discipline of conservation biology including conservation genetics, habitat fragmentation, natural resource sustainability, and island biogeography.

Course Objectives:

Students will be introduced to the general concepts of conservation biology. Specifically, upon course completion students shall understand:

- The discipline of conservation biology including its past, present, and future challenges.
- The meaning and importance of biodiversity including species diversity, ecosystem diversity, and genetic diversity.
- The threats to biodiversity including mass extinctions and global change, habitat fragmentation and loss, overexploitation, and invasive exotics.
- Methods of maintaining biodiversity through management and protection of individuals, populations, and ecosystems.
- The societal, economic, and political factors influencing conservation.

Textbook:

Hunter and Gibbs. 2007. Fundamentals of Conservation Biology. Third Edition, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, Massachusetts. (required)

Course Outline:

PART 1 – BIODIVERSITY AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Conservation and Conservation Biology

What is Biodiversity?

Species Diversity

Ecosystem Diversity

Genetic Diversity

PART 2 – THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY

Mass Extinctions and Global Change

Extinction Processes

Ecosystem Degradation and Loss

Overexploitation

Invasive Exotics

PART 3 – MAINTAINING BIODIVERSITY

Protecting Ecosystems

Managing Ecosystems

Managing Populations

Zoos and Gardens

PART 4 – THE HUMAN FACTORS

Social Factors

Economics

Politics and Action

Grading:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	30%
Exam 4	20%
Topic Debate & Paper	10%
Assignments & Participation	10%
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Total	100%

Exams

Exams will be given during the regularly scheduled class time. Exams are not comprehensive but will cover that “part” or section of the class. Study questions are available at the end of each chapter in the book.

Assignments

Assignments will pertain to material presented during lecture and will be due the following class period unless otherwise instructed.

Topic Debate & Paper

During the second half of the class, students will be assigned to groups and will research a topic of interest in conservation biology. Students will prepare and written paper based on your research and present the paper in the form of a debate. More information will be given as the semester progresses.

Attendance

Attendance is imperative for the successful completion of this course, but is ultimately the responsibility of the student. If you must be absent, you must contact the instructor BEFORE the scheduled class/exam. It is the student’s responsibility to determine what information was missed and schedule make-up assignments. If you do not have a university approved excuse, you will receive a zero for work given that day. If you must miss a quiz/exam and have an approved university excuse, a make-up quiz/exam will be given during the scheduled final exam at the end of the semester or as arranged with instructor. Contact instructor for details.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes copying, sharing, or obtaining information from an unauthorized source, attempting to take credit for the intellectual work of another person, falsifying information, and giving or receiving information about a test, quiz, or assignment to another student. Any student involved in academic dishonesty will receive no credit (0) for work done and/or may be penalized in accordance with published university rules.

Disability Accommodations

It is Sul Ross State University Policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA Coordinator for Accessibility Services in Ferguson Hall Room 112 or call 432-837-8203.

Additional Outcome Objectives as Required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools:**Program Learning Outcomes for the B.S. in Natural Resource Management**

The graduating student will demonstrate that he/she is able to:

1. Identify species of wildland plants and wildlife common to the western United States and describe their natural history.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the elements of an ecosystem.
3. Communicate about natural resources and conservation both verbally and in writing.
4. Conduct range and wildlife inventories in a team setting.
5. Apply knowledge about elements of an ecosystem into an appropriate conservation management plan.

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Spring 2015 TENTATIVE Schedule

Week		Part
1	20-Jan	1st class day/syllabus
	22-Jan	1 - biodiversity & its importance
2	27-Jan	1 - biodiversity & its importance
	29-Jan	1 - biodiversity & its importance
3	3-Feb	1 - biodiversity & its importance
	5-Feb	1 - biodiversity & its importance
4	10-Feb	1 - biodiversity & its importance
	12-Feb	EXAM 1
5	17-Feb	2 - threats to biodiversity
	19-Feb	2 - threats to biodiversity
6	24-Feb	2 - threats to biodiversity
	26-Feb	2 - threats to biodiversity
7	3-Mar	2 - threats to biodiversity
	5-Mar	2 - threats to biodiversity
8	10-Mar	2 - threats to biodiversity
	12-Mar	EXAM 2
9	17-Mar	spring break
	19-Mar	spring break
10	24-Mar	3 - maintaining biodiversity
	26-Mar	3 - maintaining biodiversity
11	31-Mar	3 - maintaining biodiversity
	2-Apr	3 - maintaining biodiversity
12	7-Apr	3 - maintaining biodiversity
	9-Apr	3 - maintaining biodiversity
13	14-Apr	EXAM 3
	16-Apr	4 - the human factors
14	21-Apr	4 - the human factors
	23-Apr	4 - the human factors
15	28-Apr	4 - the human factors
	30-Apr	4 - the human factors
16	5-May	EXAM 4
	7-May	Debate & Paper due