NRM 4303 – Range Ecology
Dept. of Natural Resource Management, Sul Ross State University
Spring 2026 – Course Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR:

Eduardo A. Gonzalez-Valenzuela, Ph.D. Visiting professor and Grazing Specialist.
Office Location: Centennial School building 104 A. RAS 108
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday. 9:00-11:00 AM
Office Phone: 432-837-8210.

Ecology is the study of how organisms interact with each other and their environment at the population, community, and ecosystem levels. *Rangelands* are described as "land on which the indigenous vegetation is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs and is managed as a natural ecosystem." *Rangeland Ecology* and Management is a field of study devoted to understanding and managing these crucial ecosystems.

Course Objectives

- Provide an understanding of the ecological theory, which helps improve the range resources and facilitate their use by domestic animals and wildlife.
- To gain an understanding of the broad biological significance of ecology.
- To advance an understanding of the questions that ecologists' study, the methods they use, and the problems that remain unanswered.

Course Outline

- Introduction to Range Ecology.
- Terrestrial environments.
- Climate and Drought
- Soils and water
- Range Models & Resilience.
- Woody plants dynamics.

- Plants basic metabolism.
- Wildlife-Livestock interactions.

Grading

- Exam 1 100
  Exam 2 100
- Exam 3 100
- Final Exam (optional) 100
- The grading scale A = 90-100%, B = 80-89.9%, C = 70-79.9%, D = 60-69.9%.

Your grade will be based on the points accumulated during lectures Lecture exams will cover all material presented during classes and will be combination multiple choice, short definitions, fill in the blank. The final exam will be comprehensive but optional. If you are satisfied with your grade in the class prior to the final, you do not have to take the final exam. Your final grade will be based on the total points accumulated during the semester.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

INSTRUCTOR'S POLICIES

Attendance

1. Attendance is expected! If a student is absent from lecture or lab, **it is the student's responsibility to get the lecture material from another classmate**. The instructor will not give the student lecture notes or a private lesson.
2. If you believe you have an Excused Absence and will not be able to attend an exam, it is up to you to decide to make-up the exam **PRIOR** to the exam's normally scheduled time. If pre-arrangements are not made, and you do not take the exam at the scheduled time, then no make-up exam will be given and you will earn a zero for that exam.
3. If you miss an exam for an excused absence, please bring your excuse to the instructor as soon as you return to class. You will be given an opportunity to make up any exam missed for an excused absence. If you miss aa exam for a reason that is not excused you will earn a zero on the quiz.
4. **What to do if you are absent when an assignment is due:**
   a. If you have an excused absence the day something is due, that makes it due the next class period. You need to bring it to with you the next time you come to class. If you have an excused absence for more than one class day you have that many classes to turn it in when the excused absences are over. For example, if you have an excuse for two class days, then the assignment is due two class days after you return from the

excused absence. If it is received any later than this it will be considered late, and 10% of the possible points will be deducted for each day that it is late.

b. If you have an unexcused absence—for example, you just decide not to come to class, the assignment is due immediately. Homework due at the beginning of class but turned in later that day is considered 1 day late. Homework will be accepted late up to two days after the due date. If you bring it to class next week (5 days late) it will not be accepted.

Cell phones:

The cell phone policy for this class is that all cell phones are to be turned off and put away in backpacks or pockets during class. Please give the campus police number to anyone who may need to contact you in an emergency, and they will interrupt class to contact you if an emergency arises.

Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to adhere to the highest academic standards of behavior and personal conduct in this course and all other courses. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to University disciplinary procedures. Student are expected to be familiar with the current Student Handbook, especially the section on academic misconduct, which discusses conduct expectations and academic dishonesty rules. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Cheating: deception in which the student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered; giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the professor on assignments or examinations.
2. Aid of academic dishonesty: Intentionally facilitating any act of academic dishonesty. Tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a scheduled test.
3. Fabrication: use of invented information or falsified research.
4. Plagiarism: unacknowledged quotation, and/or paraphrase of someone else's work, ideas, or data as one's own in work submitted for credit. Failure to identify information or essays from the internet and submitting them as one's own work also constitutes plagiarism. Please be aware that the University subscribes to the Turnitin plagiarism detection service. Your paper may be submitted to this service at the discretion of the instructor.
5. Lying: deliberate falsification with the intent to deceive in written or verbal form as it applies to an academic submission.

6. Bribery: providing, offering or taking rewards in exchange for a grade, an assignment, or the aid of academic dishonesty.
7. Threat: an attempt to intimidate a student, staff or faculty member for the purpose of receiving an unearned grade or in an effort to prevent reporting of an Honor Code violation.

Other forms of academic misconduct included but are not limited to:

1. Failure to follow published departmental guidelines, professor's syllabi, and other posted academic policies in place for the orderly and efficient instruction of classes, including laboratories, and use of academic resource or equipment.
2. Unauthorized possession of examinations, reserved library materials, laboratory materials or other course related materials.
3. Failure to follow the instructor or proctor's test-taking instructions, including but not limited to not setting aside notes, books or study guides while the test is in progress, failing to sit in designated locations and/or leaving the classroom/test site without permission during a test.
4. Prevention of the convening, continuation or orderly conduct of any class, lab or class activity. Engaging in conduct that interferes with or disrupts university teaching, research or class activities such as making loud and distracting noises, repeatedly answering cell phones/text messaging or allowing pagers to beep, exhibiting erratic or irrational behavior, persisting in speaking without being recognized, repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom or test site without authorization, and making physical threats or verbal insults to the faculty member, or other students and staff.
5. Falsification of student transcript or other academic records; or unauthorized access to academic computer records.
6. Nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications of other university records.
7. Any action which may be deemed as unprofessional or inappropriate in the professional community of the discipline being studied.

Harassment/Discrimination
The University is committed to providing an educational and work environment that is conducive to the personal and professional development of each individual student and employee. Sul Ross State University does not discriminate on a person's race, color, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, veteran status or genetic information as defined by federal law, state statutes and system regulations.

Counseling and Accessibility Services:

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact

Mary Schwartze, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8691. Email: mschwartze@sulross.edu.

Students with Special Needs:

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is a SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request. Please contact me, Ms. Rebecca Greathouse Wren, M.Ed., LPC-S, Director/Counselor, Accessibility Services Coordinator, Ferguson Hall (Suite 112) at 432.837.8203; mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Students should then contact the instructor as soon as possible to initiate the recommended accommodations.