Wildlife Ecology & Conservation

Fall 2010 11:704:464

Lecture: Tuesday 9:15 to 10:35, ENR 123

Lab: Tuesday 10:55 to 1:55, ENR 237A

Instructor: Blake Mathys, Ph.D. mathys@rci.rutgers.edu

Course Website: Sakai

Office Hours: by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Holly Vuong hvuong@rci.rutgers.edu 732-932-3209 ENR 166

Office Hours: Thursday 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. and by appointment

Tentative Schedule: Schedule may be modified; if so, students will be notified.

Date	Lecture	Lab	Readings (Mills)
Sept 7	Class introduction	Intro to Lab and Excel	Ch. 1, 2
14	Population Vital Rates	RAMAS 1,2	Ch. 4
21	FIELD TRIP: CHIMNEY ROCK HAWKWATCH		RAMAS 1,2 due
28	Population Growth	RAMAS 3,4	Ch. 5, 6
Oct 5	Population Projections	Start on Projects 3,4 due	Ch. 7
12	Predation	RAMAS 5,6 4,5 due	Ch. 8
19	Genetic Fitness	Work on Projects 5,6 due	Ch. 9
26	MIDTERM EXAM		
Nov 2	Multiple Populations	RAMAS 7,8	Ch. 10
9	FIELD TRIP: DUKE FARMS		RAMAS 7,8 due
16	Human Perturbation	Work on Projects	Ch. 11
23	Small Populations	Work on Projects	Ch. 12
30	Focal Species	Work on Projects	Ch. 13
Dec 7	Harvested Populations	Presentations	Ch. 14
20	FINAL EXAM 8 to 11 a.m.		

Course Objectives:

Students will

1. Gain an understanding of the mechanisms that impact wildlife populations
2. Learn about the patterns that can be seen in size fluctuations of wildlife populations due to biotic (including anthropogenic) and abiotic influences
3. Learn how ecologists, wildlife biologists, and others monitor and evaluate wildlife populations over short and long time scales
4. Consider the various management and conservation practices utilized to maintain and increase the population size of endangered and threatened wildlife populations

Textbook: Conservation of Wildlife Populations; L. Scott Mills; 2007

There will be other reading assignments given out during the semester

Lab: Applied Population Ecology; Akçakaya, Burgman, Ginzburg; 1999 (distributed in lab)

Classroom Conduct: Please make every effort to be on time for class. If you must be late to lecture, please strive to enter quietly and with as little disruption as possible. During lectures, I ask that you refrain from distracting other students with electronic devices. If I notice such distractions occurring during the lecture period, I may ask you to cease using the device. If you need to have your cell phone on for some exceptional circumstance (family emergency or something similar), please just inform me and it will not be a problem.

Academic Honesty: I take academic integrity very seriously. I will make every effort to limit opportunities for dishonesty; however I am well aware that it is not possible to exclude all possibility for cheating. If I detect cheating, I will pursue it; please be sure to read Rutgers' "Academic Integrity" document available here: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Absence: Attendance at all lab sessions and both field trips is required. If you must miss lab or a field trip for a legitimate reason (family emergency, *etc*.) please contact me as soon as possible, preferably before the absence.

Participation: I am including a participation grade as part of your final grade. This is meant to encourage you to be actively involved in the lecture, field trips, labs, and presentations. Being on time, asking questions, and generally taking an interest in the subject matter are things that will positively influence your participation grade.

Asking for Help: Please ask for help when you need it. There will be many opportunities for you to get help over the course of the semester, whether during scheduled meeting times or outside of them. The time to ask for help is during the course, when such help can still be effective at increasing your comprehension and influencing your final grade. Do not wait until the end of the course and ask for leniency; we are more than happy to help you do as well as possible, please just ask.

Lab: Lab will focus on wildlife population dynamics. We will be working through exercises using RAMAS EcoLab 2.0 software and the Applied Pop Ecology pdf textbook. This population modeling software can be found only on the computers in ENR 237A. At the end of each assigned chapter are exercises. You will be responsible for working through each assigned exercise on your own in lab, answering the associated questions, and turning it in the following week. Based on what you learn from those exercises you will work with a sample data set to create your own management plan and present it to the class at the end of the semester.

Grading:

Midterm: 25%
Final: 25%
Lab: 45%
    Exercises: 15%; Peer-evaluations: 10%; Group Presentation and Report: 20%
Participation: 5%
    This is a real participation grade, and will be determined based on your attitude and interest in the course (see above)