

Biology 211 – Biodiversity, Ecology and Conservation Biology

Fall 2009 – College of Charleston

Lecture (MWF 11:00 – 11:50; SCIC 218)
Recitation (R 9:25 – 12:25 or 1 – 4; SCIC 223)
<http://sotkae.people.cofc.edu/Bio211.html>

Instructor: Dr. Erik Sotka

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Office: 208 Grice Marine Lab

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Office hours: By appointment

Online Chat: We will designate a regular time for an online chat where we can discuss any questions you have.

Course Objectives: This is a foundation course for intermediate-level biology majors. The first third of the course explores biodiversity and provides a phylogenetic context for the evolution of life. We then synthesize a suite of organismal concepts, including evolution, population-community-ecosystem ecology, behavior, biodiversity, and conservation. Our Discussion periods are focused on providing an opportunity to learn and (more importantly) to practice several practical skills that prepare you for upper-division courses:

1. How to read, discuss and critique primary literature
2. How to write a scientific paper
3. How to visualize, analyse and interpret biological data.
4. How to present data in oral and poster format

Prerequisites: Biology 111, Biology 111L, Biology 112 and Biology 112L.

Text: *Biological Science* (3rd edition) by Scott Freeman

<u>Point Distribution:</u>	3 midterm exams*	40%
	Recitation participation and assignments	20%
	LTER project	15%
	Quizzes and miscellaneous	5%
	Final exam	20%

*The two best scores will be 15%, the worst score 10% of your final grade.

Tentative Grading Scale: A: 95-100, A-: 90-94; B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D+: 67-69; D: 63-66, D-: 60-62, F: <59. At the end of the term, I have the option of lowering this scale, if I feel it is justified. **Do not count on this.** Always assume that the grade you earn based on this scale is the grade you will receive.

Final exam: December 9 @ noon

Course Policies

Attendance: We adhere to the College of Charleston Absence Policy, as described in the student handbook. Miss lecture? Get notes and handouts from another student (note, exam questions come from lecture as well as the text). Make-up exams will be scheduled only for students with valid excuses. These must be cleared with me **before** the missed exam. Contact me by phone or e-mail.

Discussion sessions: Attendance to discussion sections is a **required** component of this course, and is **mandatory**. The discussion sections are a **critical** component of this course. During discussion is where we will build many of the tools of how scientists do science. Particularly we will spend time working on data analysis, presentation and scientific writing. Students will work both independently and in groups (as scientists do in their daily lives). In the discussion sections, we will investigate several research projects. We will develop skills for examining, visualizing and analyzing data. We will examine the primarily literature extensively and investigate published data.

Assignments and late policy: Assignments will be turned in on time to be considered for full credit. A loss of **5%** will be deducted per school day for **any** late assignment. Zero points will be recorded for an assignment if it is

not turned in before the assignment is passed back, discussed in class or key posted. Suitable means to turn in assignment – directly to the instructor or in mailboxes in the Biology office 214 SCIC (office hours are 8:30-4pm weekdays).

Computers: Unless you are told otherwise, **all assignments should be completed on a computer.** A Computer lab is available in the Biology department (second floor SCIC) and is generally open during the day. The Biology computer lab may be reserved for classes or labs so check the door for postings. There are additional computer labs in the Addlestone library and other locations around campus.

Class Courtesies: Be on time, turn off (or put in silent mode) cell phones and other devices that beep (*do not* talk on the phone or text message, IM, use Facebook or conduct web searches not associated with assignments during discussion or lecture), do not eat, drink or smoke in the SCIC Laboratory, do study, ask questions, if you must leave early or arrive late please sit in the back (and let me know before class starts), be courteous to your colleagues. **Bring your enthusiasm – it is contagious.**

Extra Credit

We will offer potential extra credit options all of *minor* point value. A *maximum* of 5 seminars would count as extra credit. NOTE: These extra credits are a token to encourage general campus/civic involvement. *Your time is better spent studying for an exam than doing extra credit!!* To receive credit for options 1-5 you must hand in a typed one page summary of the seminar that you participated in which also includes a description of what you learned from this seminar. We encourage you to be involved in these seminars to get jazzed up by the enthusiasm of other professional biologists, even after you have exhausted your extra credit options. We will announce in lecture the seminars with content appropriately associated with 211 – but times generally include:

- 1) Biology Department Monday 12-1 seminars in SCIC 239 check:
http://www.cofc.edu/~biology/seminar_cal.html for more information
- 2) Ft. Johnson Auditorium Friday 3-4 pm seminars
<http://www.cofc.edu/~grice/fjseminars.htm>
- 3) Study skills seminars typically Tuesdays at 4pm or Weds at 6pm Maybank 100
See website for this semester's dates
<http://www.cofc.edu/studentlearningcenter/studyskills/seminars.php>

All student discipline will be governed by the contents of the Honor Code. This includes but is not limited to plagiarism, class disruption, courtesy to peers and faculty, including email correspondence. If you have questions on how to properly cite, paraphrase or document literature sources, it is your responsibility to consult me for assistance.



