



**Halmos College of Natural
Sciences and Oceanography**

Department of Marine and Environmental
Sciences: Course Syllabus (Summer 2016)

I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE

Summer 2016

CRN: 51559

Section: DA1

Pre-trip meetings (Skype): 7/1/2016

Alaska Field Trip: 7/23–8/4/2016

I. INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Paul Arena

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Office: Parker 382

Office Hours: TBA

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This field based course introduces Alaska's diverse wildlife in a biological, ecological and evolutionary context. The course will provide students with an overview of the recent research and current issues related to the diverse flora and fauna of Alaska's ecosystems, including effects of climate change, overconsumption and management of populations, and pollution effects of mining and fossil fuel extraction. Local culture and native tribes will be introduced, as well as geography and geology, ecosystem characterization and connections, and wildlife populations and conservation. Students will also meet with local scientists and participate in field work and seminars. Students will be able to observe first-hand the ecological concepts and biological characteristics of Alaska's wildlife.

Prerequisites: ENVS 2000

III. LEARNING OUTCOMES

To complete this course successfully students must:

1. Observe and perform standardized monitoring techniques used to assess Alaskan biodiversity.
2. Evaluate and summarize ongoing biological and ecological research in Alaskan rainforests, coastal habitats, and National parks.
3. Identify Alaskan biota using standardized identification techniques and field guides.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Text: (used for ENVS 2000)

Paulson, D. and L. Beletsky 2007. *Alaska: Travellers' Wildlife Guide*. Massachusetts, Interlink Books, ISBN: 1-56656-652-5.

Journal Readings: Alaska Park Science Journal

Alaska Park Science is a semi-annual journal that shares information learned in Alaska's National parks through the study of vital cultural and natural resources. This is available free online and specific articles will be assigned for review during the trip.

http://www.nps.gov/akso/nature/science/ak_park_science/index.cfm

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

1. Attendance on the field trip to Alaska is required to pass this course.
2. Attendance is also required at all seminars and scheduled events while in Alaska. Absence from these events will adversely affect your grade.
3. Contact your professor as soon as possible if you have an emergency that is causing you to miss a scheduled event or you may be unable to make up the missed work. Expect to provide documentation of your emergency. It is University policy.
4. I expect you to make clear to me when you don't understand something, preferably by asking questions. You should never feel that a question is too trivial (especially if you have tried to study it on your own for a little while first). If you already understood everything about biology, you wouldn't be taking this course.

VI. COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPIC OUTLINE

Timetable:

Pre-trip meetings: Thurs July 1st, 2016.

- This online skype meeting is designed to answer any logistical questions about the trip and go over the materials and equipment you will need for the trip.

Field trip schedule subject to change, but not without prior notification

July 23rd:

- Fly from FL to Fairbanks

July 24th :

- Permafrost Tunnel Tour in Fox (9-11am) – leave UAF @ 8:30am
- UAF Large Animal Research Behind the Scene Tour
- Creamer's Field Hike - Migratory Bird Assessment
- UAF Museum of the North
- Salmon Bake Feast

July 25th :

- Shuttle to Denali be ready and outside Cutler @ 9:10am bus leaves at 9:15am
- Arrive Denali @ Noon, drop off luggage at MSLC
- Lunch & Meet with Park Rangers
- Evening seminar with Park Scientist

July 26th:

- Data collection with park scientist
- Hike above the tree line to area (Mt. Cathedral or Eagle) where Murie studied Denali Wolves and look for wolves, dall sheep and other wildlife.

July 27th:

- Bear Ecology Hiking and seminar by Pat Owen, Denali bear ecologist
- Pack up van tonight so quick easy ~5am departure

July 28th :

- Head back to Denali Main Entrance – need to be at Denali Princess Lodge by 7:15am bus leaves 7:30am
- Arrive Anchorage Airport @ 1:30pm
- Pickup rental car
- Lunch Moose Tooth pizza
- Check in UAA

Jul 29th :

- Climb Flattop Mt. bring water! No bathrooms or filling stations there
- Lunch Glacier Brewhouse - reservations
- Native Heritage Center Tour

Jul 30th:

- Hike Potter Marsh

- Drive to Seward
- Stop at Bear Creek Weir
- Check in Lowell Point
- Laundry drop off
- Hike Exit Glacier

Jul 31st:

- Kayak tour of Resurrection Bay 8am-12pm be at launch site by 8:30am leave house by 8:10am
- Alaska Sealife Center Husbandry Tour

Aug 1st:

- Whale Watching Cruise – 8-5 lunch provided – Dramamine

Aug 2nd: Free Day on Your Own

Possible excursions include fishing, sled dog tours, helicopter tours, hiking, boat tours, etc.

Aug 3rd:

- Breakfast at home
- Check out by 11am. Head North
- Trail Creeks Hatchery Tour
- Head to Anchorage
- Dinner then airport

Aug 4th

- Arrive FLL

VII. GRADING CRITERIA

1) Participation = 10%

Attendance at all seminars and events during the trip are required and will be recorded at the beginning of each meeting. I also expect active participation by each student in the form of discussion of lecture material, readings, etc. Questions or interests should be expressed during class. I appreciate inquisitive students and usually end up learning something myself in the process. If I don't know the answer during lecture, I will do my best to get you an answer by next class!

2) Journal = 30%

All your daily activities will be recorded during your field portion of the course. This includes: trip destinations, travel, accommodations, weather, description of surrounding habitats and biota, observations of wildlife and ecological interactions, historical/cultural experiences, etc. This will be collected at the end of the trip.

3) Presentation of Papers = 30%

A number of readings will be assigned during the field trip and students will present an overview of the research conducted during daily discussion group sessions.

4) Seminar Summary = 30%

Students will attend a number of specialized seminars which will be presented by local researchers, scientists and professors. Students will take notes at these sessions and will write up summaries of the information presented. This will be collected at the end of the field trip.

The information above is just a guide to grading criteria and the Professor reserves the right to change this at any time and to administer quizzes during the lecture periods which will be incorporated into the final grade.

The final grade will be determined by converting the score for each category into the appropriate percentage for the overall course and adding these percentages together. Final letter grades will be based on the numerical average rounded to the nearest whole number. The grading scale is the following: >93% = A, 90-92%=A-, 87-89%=B+, 83-86%=B, 80-82%=B-, 77-79%=C+, 73-76%=C, 70-72%=C-, 60-69%=D and <60%=F.

IX: COLLEGE-WIDE POLICY STATEMENTS

Last Day to Withdraw: To withdraw from a course, it is not sufficient simply to stop attending class or to inform the instructor of your intention to withdraw. In accordance with college policy, contact your advisor to begin the withdrawal process. **The last day to withdraw from this course** may be viewed at <http://www.fcas.nova.edu/calendars/>

Students must visit www.fcas.nova.edu/about/policies.cfm to access additional required college-wide policies. It is your responsibility to access and carefully read these policies to ensure you are fully informed. As a student in this class, you are obligated to follow these college-wide policies in addition to the policies established by your instructor.

The following policies are described on this website:

- Academic misconduct
- Writing across the curriculum
- Last day to withdraw
- Email policy
- Student course evaluations
- Student responsibility to register
- Student responsibility for course prerequisites