

**Nova Southeastern University  
Oceanographic Center**



**Course Syllabus (Winter II 2016)**

**Last Date Revised: 29 September 2015**

**I. COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:**

TECHNIQUES IN MARINE INVERTEBRATE IDENTIFICATION

Course Number: OCMB

CRN:

Days: Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 6:30 - 9:30 pm.

Building & Room: Forman Bldg. rm. XXX, and Modular Wet Laboratory.

**II. INSTRUCTOR:**

Prof. Charles G. Messing

Phone: 954-262-3658

Email: [messingc@nova.edu](mailto:messingc@nova.edu)

Office: COE-CRES rm. 218

Office Hours: 10:00am – 5:00 pm M-F.

**III. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

An introduction to the morphological methods by which major groups of marine invertebrates are identified, with an emphasis on shallow-water species of the tropical Western Atlantic, and Florida in particular. Coursework includes laboratory dissections and analyses, understanding and application of various terminologies and diagnostic keys, and application to unidentified specimens. Living organisms will be included as appropriate.

**IV. LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of the course, students will have a clear understanding of:

- the tools, procedures and terminologies involved in identifying a wide diversity of local marine invertebrates belonging to several major phyla including Porifera, Cnidaria, Annelida, Mollusca, Arthropoda, and Echinodermata, including a variety of diagnostic keys,
- how to apply these tools to identification,
- collection, preparation and curation techniques for these organisms.

The course will contribute to the following Marine Biology program learning outcomes: Students successfully completing this course will acquire and demonstrate

- effective communication skills;

- understanding of the scientific method;
- an understanding of the taxonomy, natural history, and ecology of marine organisms;
- in-depth knowledge of a specific aspect of marine biology.

## V. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

Reference materials will largely be drawn from the primary literature.

## VI. COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPIC OUTLINE:

31 March	Thu	Introduction, Sponges
05 April	Tue	Cnidaria
07 April	Thu	Mollusca
12 April	Tue	Annelida
14 April	Thu	Crustacea
18 April	Tue	Echinodermata
21 April	Thu	Practical examination

## VII. GRADING CRITERIA:

33.3% – 5 quizzes (each on the preceding session’s material, e.g., quiz on sponges on 05 April)  
 33.3% - Final practical exam  
 33.3% – Notebook

**Notebook:** Students will compile a notebook on the procedures used in identifying organisms, including illustrations and observations.

## VII. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES:

**Pursuant to Nova Southeastern University policy, I will only respond to email coming from your NSU email account.** I cannot respond to email sent from, e.g., hotmail, gmail, yahoo, account.

I encourage questions during lecture, and will stop lecture until you are satisfied that your question has been answered. If a conflict should arise, please come and speak with me as soon as possible. I am willing to negotiate a mutually agreeable resolution to any problems.

After lectures, a portion of class time will be devoted to examining specimens in the Modular Wet Laboratory. These specimens will remain out and available to you throughout the week and until the next examination that will cover their group. As this is largely a practical course in identification, I strongly recommend that you spend a significant amount of time getting to know them and the information provided about them.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance will be taken during every lecture. This is primarily a tool that allows me to learn your names rapidly. However, I will notice those who do not attend regularly. If you miss a lecture YOU are responsible for the material.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

In order to ensure the highest standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior, the NSU policies on cheating and plagiarism will be strictly enforced. See the NSU Student Handbook for more information at <http://www.nova.edu/cwis/studentaffairs/forms/ustudenthandbook.pdf>. I am empowered by the policy to penalize a student suspected of academic dishonesty, plagiarism, or otherwise misrepresenting work and I will do so and report that student to the Dean of the OC. Nova Southeastern University has contracted with **turnitin.com** to provide plagiarism detection services, and I will submit any suspicious documents to this service.

The use of cell phones, or any other electronic devices not specifically allowed by me, during an exam is not permitted. The use of such devices for any reason will be assumed to be for the purposes of cheating and will result in your dismissal from class and administrative action up to permanent expulsion from all NSUOC programs. If you need the phone for emergency notifications, or the like, leave the phone with me or the proctor at the start of class. You will be immediately notified if there is an incoming call.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

You can expect that I will arrive on time for lectures and be well prepared. You can expect that I will be clear about my expectations and the criteria I use in assigning grades and that I will be fair and equitable. I will treat everyone in the class with consideration and respect.

I expect you to come to class, arrive on time, and be prepared for lecture and lab. I expect you to turn off your cell phones, pagers, and hand-held electronic devices as a gesture of reciprocal respect. If you bring a computer to class, I expect you to use it to take notes and record classroom information. I expect you to stay awake, take notes, participate in discussions and ask questions. I expect you to turn in your assignments on time and in good condition.

## **KEYS TO SUCCESS**

In order to maximize your performance in this course, I suggest that you attend every lecture, pay close attention, take good notes, and participate in the discussion. Later, rewrite your class notes in order to ensure that you understand everything. Do not hesitate to come to me with questions or concerns about past lecture material. For some of you, studying together in groups will be a very productive approach. Talking about the material, quizzing each other about the material, and sharing time exploring the material builds your interest and comprehension, and makes learning fun (or so I am told).

## **X: UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICY STATEMENTS**

**A. Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct appears in a variety of forms (including plagiarism). It is a violation of NSU academic policy and may be punished in a variety of ways, from failing the assignment and/or the entire course to academic probation, suspension or expulsion. If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct before handing in an assignment, see your instructor or the NSU Student Handbook at <http://www.nova.edu/cwis/studentaffairs/forms/ustudenthandbook.pdf>.

**B. ADA Policy:** Nova Southeastern University provides accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability for which you believe you require accommodation, please contact Academic Services (<http://www.nova.edu/disabilityservices/>, 954-262-7189).

**C. Last Day to Withdraw:** It is your responsibility to formally withdraw from this course by completing the appropriate forms before the fourth week of the quarter in order to receive a partial refund (<http://www.nova.edu/ocean/coursepolicy.html>). A request for tuition refund must be made in writing at the time of withdrawal. Refunds will be made solely at the option of the university and will be based on the legitimacy of the reason for withdrawal. Should you fail to appropriately withdraw from this course, and then earn a grade below your expectations, I will do what I can to see that the grade is reported on your transcript. I will NOT backdate paperwork so that you can avoid earning a grade lower than you like.

**D. Email Policy:** All email communications between students and faculty must be conducted via NSU email accounts (<http://www.nova.edu/common-lib/policies/emailcomm.policy.html>). This requirement will assist NSU in communicating more effectively and protecting your privacy. Emails sent to faculty from non-NSU accounts will be returned to the sender with instructions to resend the communication from your NSU account. To set up an NSU email account or to get help with an existing account, go to [https://www.nova.edu/sbin/account\\_request](https://www.nova.edu/sbin/account_request). Also, the computer help desk is available to assist you with questions regarding your NSU email account. It can be reached at 954-262-HELP (4357).

**E. Student Course Evaluations:** Student comment and feedback evaluating each college class is an important tool to evaluate program effectiveness. Participation in this process is a responsibility of each student.