GENERAL ECOLOGY--BIOLOGY 281
Spring 2003 Course Syllabus

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Office Hours: M 10 am-noon, or F 10-11 am, or by appointment

Lectures: 9:00-9:50 am M, W, F
UCB 114


Course Philosophy and Objectives: Ecology is a young scientific discipline that deals with studying the distribution and abundance of organisms, and the interactions of organisms to each other and the environment. To understand patterns and processes occurring in the natural world requires integration and knowledge of biology, chemistry, geology, geography, mathematics, and physics. The objectives of Biology 281 are to: 1) provide students with the introductory concepts of ecology as a scientific discipline, 2) provide the basis for evaluating ecological research, and 3) to apply the basic principles and perspectives discussed to current environmental problems.

Course Policies:
1. Students are responsible for material covered both in lecture and in the textbook. The assigned material should be read before the scheduled lecture.
2. Lectures are meant to complement and expand on material presented in the textbook, but there will be some lecture topics that are not covered in the textbook. You are responsible for both lecture and book material, but the best way to get a good grade in this class is to attend lectures!
3. Extensions on assignments are automatic; however, you will lose S % for each day that an assignment is late. Weekends (Sat. and Sun. will only count as one day).
4. Make-up exams will only be given under extenuating circumstances.
5. Feel free to ask questions; ecology is an integrative subject that often requires discussion in order to understand. Unlike more established sciences, there are still many unknowns in ecology, so all questions are valid and interesting.

Grading:
1. Exams: 65%. There will be three midterm exams (each 15% of grade) and one final (20%). Exams will cover material presented in lecture and material in the textbook. Most of the exam questions will be short answer questions, sometimes requiring you to integrate information or solve new problems. There may be occasional definitions, multiple choice questions, or matching questions on the exams as well.

Grading may or may not be curved, depending on the performance of the class. At the minimum, you can be guaranteed to receive: 90-100%=A- to A, 80-89%=B- to B+, 70-79%=C- to C+, 60-69%=D, below 60%=F.
2. Homework Assignments: 15%. There will be periodic homework assignments throughout the semester (3-5 assignments). These may be problem sets, library exercises, or critiques of scientific papers. These will be assigned in class and you will typically have one week to complete the assignment.

3. Research Project: 20%. A research project exploring some application of ecology relevant to global change will allow for you to integrate the principles of ecology. The project will consist of a review paper and a 5-minute oral presentation. In your paper, you will use primary literature to learn about the types of ecological research being done on global change problems. To help you along in the research process, there will be a schedule of assignments, which will be worth points:
   - Paper concept due (1 paragraph): **10 February (2 points)**
   - Annotated bibliography on topic: **10 March (8 points)**
   - Full paper: **2 April (80 points)**
   - Oral presentation (5 minutes): **in class, late April/early May (10 points)**

Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the University Disability Services Office at 933-0816 (V), 933-3334 (TTY), Campus Center Room 311, as early in the semester as possible.

Ecology Web Resources

1. General information about ecology as a profession and the types of ecological research being conducted:
   - Ecological Society of America: [www.esa.org](http://www.esa.org)
   - Long-Term Ecological Research Network: [http://ltemet.edu/](http://ltemet.edu/)
   - Secretariat for Conservation Biology (Hawaii): [http://www.hawaii.edu/scb/](http://www.hawaii.edu/scb/)

2. Employment Resources
   - Careers in Ecology: [http://esa.sdsc.edu/undergraduate.htm](http://esa.sdsc.edu/undergraduate.htm)
   - Archives of the Ecological Society of America Ecolog List-Serv -- numerous job postings at all levels: [http://listserv.umd.edularchives/ecolog-l.htm](http://listserv.umd.edularchives/ecolog-l.htm)