Conservation Biology (BIOL 5090)

Credit Hours: 3  Prerequisites: BIOL 3060 or departmental approval; if you have not had an Ecology class, you should talk with me in detail; in the past, students who have not had Ecology have not done well in Conservation Biology.

Instructor: Dr. Bob Boyd  Office: 026 Life Sciences Building  Phone: 844-1626

E-mail: boydrob@auburn.edu  Course webpage: http://www.auburn.edu/academic/classes/biol/5090  Password: extinct

Office hours: 8-9 on Monday and Wednesday, or at any mutually convenient time.

Class meeting time and place: Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30 to 1:45, 112 LSB

1. Course Content/Objectives:
This course is an overview of Conservation Biology. It is a broad summary of a relatively young and increasingly important biological speciality. We rely on the textbook to provide the basic framework for the course, with lectures summarizing important concepts and providing reinforcing examples.

2. Tentative Schedule and Outline of Course Content:
Below is the general plan for the topics to be covered in lecture. It may change but I will always keep you informed about the changes by announcing them in class. Note that the dates for exams, however, are set in stone; they won't change! So, mark your calendars and start preparing in advance.

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<tr>
<th>Tentative Lecture Outline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week (Dates)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1 (Aug. 19, 21)</td>
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<td>Week 2 (Aug. 26, 28)</td>
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<td>Week 3 (Sept. 2, 4)</td>
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<td>Week 4 (Sept. 9, 11)</td>
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<td>Week 5 (Sept. 16, 18)</td>
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<td>Week 6 (Sept. 23, 25)</td>
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<td>Week 7 (Sept. 30, Oct. 2)</td>
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<td>Webpage 1 due: Friday, Oct. 3, Noon.</td>
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<td>Week 8 (Oct. 7, 9)</td>
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<td>Week 9 (Oct. 14, 16)</td>
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Guest lecture #2: 10/16
Week 10 (Oct. 21, 23)

**Exam #2: OCTOBER 21 (Bring blue scan sheet, #2 pencil, eraser)**

Guest lecture #3: Wild Animal Safari (10/23)

Week 11 (Oct. 28, 30)

- Establishing protected areas
- Designing networks of protected areas, managing protected areas

Week 12 (Nov. 4, 6)

- Outside protected areas, restoration ecology
- Guest lecture #4: (11/4)

Week 13 (Nov. 11, 13)

- Conservation: local and national levels
- Guest lecture #5: (11/11)

**Webpage 2 due: Friday Nov. 14, Noon.**

Week 14 (Nov. 18, 20)

- Conservation at the international level
- Guest lecture #6: (11/20)

Nov. 24-28 (Thanksgiving Holiday!)

Week 15 (Dec. 2, 4)

**Exam #3: DECEMBER 2 (Bring blue scan sheet, #2 pencil, eraser)**

Course Evaluation (12/4)

**Final exam: Thursday, Dec. 11, Noon-2:00 PM (Bring blue scan sheet, #2 pencil, eraser)**

3. **Textbook (recommended)**


4. **Grading and Evaluation Procedures:**

Grading: three lecture examinations will be given, plus a final exam. Grade points will be divided up as follows:

- 3 exams @ 100 pts each = 300 points
- Final exam = 100
- Rare species webpage(s) = 100 (2@ 50 pts each)
- Total points = 500 points

Final grades for the course will be assigned on the basis of points earned during the semester, expressed as a percentage of the total points possible. Lower cutoffs for grades will be as follows: A: 90%, B: 80%, C: 70%, D: 60%. Less than 60% will earn a F grade.

Exam format: Exams will use a mixture of question types, including short essay, fill-in-the-blank, matching, multiple choice, and maybe more. Exams will emphasize material presented in lecture, but you are expected to read and study the textbook chapters assigned above. Some exam questions may cover material not presented in lecture but covered in the text, but this will be less than 10% of each exam. You should know the material covered in lecture backwards and forwards, including any examples used to illustrate particular points in lecture. You are required to attend guest lectures and take notes on the information presented, as some exam questions will specifically cover that material. The final exam will be comprehensive.

Make-up Exams: Don't miss the regularly scheduled exams! Valid reasons for absences are: 1) severe illness on the day of the exam, 2) documented personal or family emergencies, 3) official University excuses. You must discuss a valid absence with me, in person or by phone, within 48 hours of the exam you have missed or a zero grade will be recorded. Make-up exams may include more extensive essay questions in addition to the
typical questions found on the scheduled examinations.

Rare species webpages: Lectures in this class will be global in scope, but it’s important to become familiar with local conservation challenges in our home state of Alabama. To this end, each student will prepare 2 rare species webpages during the course of the semester. Students may choose these from a list provided at the start of the semester, selecting only one species from any taxonomic category on the list (note as well that only 1 vertebrate species can be selected per student, so at least one species should be a non-vertebrate). This exercise will enable students to get to know specific details about 2 rare Alabama species and will illustrate some of the problems faced by conservation biologists in finding useful information on the biology of rare species. But this exercise has a potential use beyond that of the course. At the end of the semester, webpages produced by class members will be evaluated for potential use on the Auburn University Natural History Museum and Learning Center webpage in a section designed to provide information on rare organisms in the state. This could potentially become a very useful source of information for teachers, students, and others interested in learning about rare Alabama species. It could also be a source of pride for you, as your name can be listed as the creator of the webpages that you produce if you so desire.

This webpage assignment is similar to your writing a research paper regarding a particular rare species. It should be written so that the scientifically savvy reader can understand it, using citations for the information presented so that your source of all information is clearly evident to the reader. Each webpage will contain photos and a summary of all information available on a particular species in Alabama. It will include a summary of taxonomic, ecological, and distribution information for that species. You should also be alert for information on related species that might indicate something about the rare species. We often know very little about rare species and any information may be helpful. However, be sure you make clear that a particular item of information was actually collected for another species and is being suggested as appropriate for the rare species. In general, you should always try to tell the reader where the information you present was found so they can look it up themselves. A detailed description of the information you should look for is provided on the course website. A rare species webpage template is provided on the course webpage that you should use to create your specific webpage.

Grading: Webpages will be graded based on promptness of completion (10% point penalty per day for late webpages), adherence to above format, completeness of information, grammatical and writing errors, citation of references, and other criteria. See the course webpage for more details.

5. Statement on Class Attendance and Participation:
You are expected to attend class each and every day, but attendance is not recorded on days that I lecture. I can pretty much guarantee that you will not learn as much nor will you do very well on exams if you do not attend lecture and take your own notes. Note that you are responsible for any announcements made in class. 

Guest lectures: Attendance at guest lectures (see syllabus for dates) IS REQUIRED and attendance will be taken on those days. You may miss one guest lecture without penalty, but after that each unexcused absence will result in a 10 point reduction from your course point total at the end of the semester. Valid reasons for absences are: 1) severe illness on the day of the exam, 2) documented personal or family emergencies, 3) official University excuses. You must discuss a valid absence with me, in person or by phone, within 48 hours of the guest lecture you have missed.

6. Disabilities:
Students who need special accommodations are encouraged to meet with me or call me to set up an appointment to discuss their needs. Please do this as soon as possible and bring your memo from the Program for Students with Disabilities to our appointment. Exam accommodations should be arranged at least a week prior to the exam date.

7. Academic Dishonesty: Any violations of the Academic Honesty Code of Auburn University will be
reported to the University Academic Honesty Committee. **SGA CODE OF LAWS, TITLE XII** (Tiger Cub). This may result in failing grade, suspension, and/or expulsion from the University. Note this includes turning in an excuse for an absence that cannot be verified as true.