WILD 4500
WILDLIFE SCIENCES SUMMER PRACTICUM

I. Instructor: Dr. H. Lee Stribling
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II. Pre-requisite

   2.0 overall GPA or greater prior to enrolling in Summer Practicum
   WILD 5400 – Problem Solving in Wildlife Sciences
   One of the following:
   BIOL5750 - Ornithology
   BIOL5760 - Mammalogy
   BIOL5740 - Herpetology

III. Course Format

   The course will be an 8 credit hour course lasting for 6 weeks (8 hours/day, 5 days per week) during the summer following the student’s junior year. Portions of each day will consist of field work/instruction and classroom instruction.

IV. Text

   No Text. All material developed/provided by instructors.

V. Course Description

   Wildlife Sciences Summer Practicum WILD 4500 is intended to provide students with applied training and tools used in wildlife ecology, conservation, and management. Students will learn how to solve wildlife and natural resource management problems by forming objectives, alternative solutions, collecting data and/or other information, analysis of this information, and choosing the best solution based on all of the above. Students will be expected to evaluate problems presented to them from not only different ecological aspects but from input of human user groups and stakeholders as well. Students will apply the principles of Structured Decision Making (SDM) and be introduced to Adaptive Resource Management (ARM). They will use SDM to learn how to modify, redirect, and reanalyze their land management issue after they present their initial conclusions and recommendations, based on feedback they receive.

   Additional opportunities to learn skills and receive certifications in a variety of areas will be available to students in attendance. Examples include, but are not be limited
to: firearms safety, first aid and CPR, agricultural equipment safety, ATV safety, logging operations safety, boating and water craft safety, etc.

VI. Course Requirements/Evaluation

Students will be evaluated via a running field notebook, writing assignments, presentations, quizzes, and participation in certification courses. Quizzes will conclude instructional days (e.g., GIS; approximately 10 quizzes) and will count for a total of 15% of the final grade. Pass/fail evaluations of certification courses will count another 10% towards the final grade. Students will be instructed in the use of, and expected to maintain a field notebook and will be required to submit the notebook weekly for evaluation. The notebook will count 20% of the final grade. Students will write reports at the end of weeks 2, 3, and 4; each report will count 10% of their final grade. These reports will be combined in week 5 (addressing concerns and comments from instructors) into a final report that will count 15% of their final grade. Students will also give a presentation on their work that will count 10% of their final grade. The standard grading scale will be used (i.e., 90-100% = A; 80-90% = B; 70-80% = C; 60-70% = D; <60% = F).

VII. Course Policies

Students are expected to attend and participate in all activities associated with the Wildlife Sciences Summer Practicum.

VIII. Academic Honesty

Students should become familiar with the Student Academic Honesty Code that is published in the latest version of the Tiger Cub. Students in this class are expected to strictly adhere to this code, and any violations of the code will be brought before the Academic Honesty Committee.

IX. Students with Disabilities

Students who need special accommodations in class, as provided for by the American Disabilities Act, should arrange a confidential meeting with the instructor during office hours the first week of classes - or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. You must be a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have these forms but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/ TT) or e-mail: scw0005@auburn.edu.
Week 1 – Basic field techniques in wildlife sciences

Introduction to common tools and techniques used in the wildlife and natural resource fields, including, but not limited to: GPS, sampling, compasses, surveying, and basic trapping.

Week 2 – One dimensional problem in wildlife sciences

Relationships between species occurrence/density and habitat type. Involves data collection on species presence/abundance and habitat characteristics. Analysis of data will be required to assess problem.

Week 3 – Two dimensional problem in wildlife sciences

Relationships between species occurrence/density, habitat types, and habitat alteration. Data collection on species presence/abundance, habitat characteristics, and projected changes in habitat. Analysis of data will be required to assess problem and develop potential solution.

Week 4 – Multiple dimensional problem in wildlife sciences

Relationships between species occurrence/density, habitat types, habitat alteration, and social and economic considerations. Data collection on species presence/abundance, habitat characteristics, projected changes in habitat, and social factors. Analysis of data will be required to assess problem and develop multiple, alternative solutions.

Weeks 5 and 6 – Survey of advance tools and techniques in wildlife sciences.

Survey of advanced techniques used in wildlife sciences including, but not limited to, capture and handling of wildlife species, population estimation, GIS, habitat manipulation (prescribed burning, timber harvest, etc.), and wildlife damage management. Includes field trips for exposure to multiple ecosystems and wildlife management problems. Additionally, students will receive certification in a selection of topics, such as firearms safety, first aid and CPR, agricultural equipment safety, ATV use, logging operations, boating and water craft, etc.