Note: this syllabus is for a fully online course. It will be updated to reflect in-person instruction activities for 2022

BIOSC 1610: Conservation Biology
Summer 2021

Instructor: Dr. Karie Altman
Email: karie.altman@gmail.com
Class time: M-F, 10-11:30 am
TA: Nevin Cullen
TA email: NPC21@pitt.edu
Class link: https://sbu.zoom.us/j/93075605618

Please include "BIOSC 1610" in the subject line when contacting me via email regarding the course.

Course objectives

During this course, students will:

- Clearly define terms and principles relevant to conservation biology.
- Understand and describe how humans contribute to environmental problems.
- Identify major threats facing species, communities, and ecosystems.
- Learn basic tools for assessing and addressing environmental health and degradation.
- Understand the complexity of many conservation issues, and how conservation biology operates in a multidisciplinary manner.
- Recognize the importance of economics, sociology, politics, biology, and their interactions in both causing and resolving environmental problems.

Prerequisites

None

Course materials

There are no required textbooks for this section of the course. Course readings, handouts, and other documents will be posted on Canvas.

Course format & assignments

Please note that this is a full semester packed into 3 weeks, so each day is like a week of a full-length semester. Due dates and instructions for each assignment will be communicated via Canvas. Grades will be reduced 10% per 24-hour period following assignment due dates.

This course includes a daily synchronous meeting (Monday-Friday) from 10-11:30 am followed by asynchronous work to prepare for the next daily meeting. In our first synchronous meeting (Topic 1), I will walk through the two projects for the course and take questions regarding the course. Topics 2-12 will include both asynchronous and synchronous components as follows [Topic 2 dates in brackets as example]:

- Afternoon asynchronous:
  - Watch lecture videos [watch videos on M, 7/19]
  - Complete lecture questions by 10 am the day of the activity/discussion associated with the topic (5 points each topic) [due T, 7/20, at 10 am]
  - Read/watch the literature/media associate with each topic [read on M, 7/19]
    - Respond to questions as instructed on each topic's summary document. You will have time to revise your responses following morning discussion; however, I highly recommend drafting your responses before morning synchronous sessions.
- Morning synchronous:
  - Participate in activity or paper discussion associated with topic [T, 7/20]
    - Submit responses as instructed on each topic's summary document by 10 am the day after the activity/discussion [W, 7/21]
    - Students who participate in the activity/discussion will have a reduced response requirement – see each topic's summary document.

Grading scale

Final letter grades are determined on a straight scale as follows:

Final percentage	Grade
92.50 - 100	A
89.50 - 92.49	A-
87.50 - 89.49	B+
82.50 - 87.49	B
80.50 - 82.49	B-
77.50 - 80.49	C+
72.50 - 77.49	C
70.50 - 72.49	C-
67.50 - 70.49	D+
62.50 - 67.49	D
60.50 - 62.49	D-
≤60.49	F

Final grade

The total number of points earned out of 600 will determine your final grade. The maximum points per category are as follows:

Assignment	Points each	Number of assignments	Total points
Lecture questions	5	10*	50
Discussion/activity questions/participation	20	10*	200
Sage grouse project	150	1 (multi-part)	150
Final project	200	1 (multi-part)	200
		TOTAL	**600**

*There are 11 sets each of lecture questions and discussion/activity questions/participation throughout the semester (Topics 2-12), but I will drop each student's lowest score from each of these categories.

Class procedures

Canvas

All registered students can access the course website on Canvas. The class files on Canvas will contain all of the handouts from class, announcements, information about assignments, grading rubrics, etc. Students should check Canvas frequently for course announcements and other information.

Email

I will routinely send out announcements through email and/or Canvas. Given that this is a compressed course, I expect you to read emails send to your University of Pittsburgh email account (or the email account provided upon course registration for non-Pitt students) daily during the work week (Monday through Friday).

Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an email forwarding service that allows students to read their email via other service providers (e.g. Gmail). Students that choose to forward their email from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If email is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to

their University email address. To forward email sent to your University account, go to *http://accounts.pitt.edu*, log into your account, click on '*Edit Forwarding Addresses'*, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished.

Emergency situations

Assignments missed due to emergency situations (illness, serious injury, or death in your immediate family) will be considered on an individual basis. You must submit your request for an extension in writing (e.g., email); verbal communication is not sufficient. Please use the following guidelines to prepare your request:

1) Your request for an extension or accommodation must include your name, a detailed description of the nature of the emergency, and the assignment that you missed.
2) Your missed assignment(s) must be submitted to me no later than one week after the assignment's due date.
3) Documentation must be provided. For example, if the emergency is due to a medical condition, you must include evidence that you sought medical care.

Failure to comply with these guidelines could result in a zero recorded for the assignment.

Academic integrity

Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity (https://as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code) will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor.

Violation of the Academic Integrity Code requires the instructor to submit an Academic Integrity Violation Report to the Dean's Office.

Any attempt to submit work that is not the student's own work is a violation of academic integrity. If I find that a writing assignment contains evidence of plagiarism, the level of severity will determine whether the sanction is an F in the course, a 0 score on the assignment, or partial credit on the assignment. **A second academic integrity offense in the course will result in an automatic grade of F.**

Turnitin

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Students with disabilities

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890/412-624-3346 (Fax), as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, visit http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs.

Course schedule (subject to change)

Day	Date	Synchronous work	Asynchronous work
M	7/19	Topic 1: Introduction to course and projects	Topic 2: Biodiversity: Threats & conservation
T	7/20	Topic 2 activity/paper discussion	Topic 3: Habitat alteration
W	7/21	Topic 3 activity/paper discussion	Topic 4: Invasive species
Th	7/22	Topic 4 activity/paper discussion	Topic 5: Overexploitation
F	7/23	Topic 5 activity/paper discussion	**No new material – time to organize projects**
M	7/26	**Sage grouse project – town hall meeting**	Topic 6: Pollution & climate change
T	7/27	Topic 6 activity/paper discussion	Topic 7: Disease
W	7/28	Topic 7 activity/paper discussion	Topic 8: Habitat restoration & mitigation
Th	7/29	Topic 8 activity/paper discussion	Topic 9: Protected area design
F	7/30	Topic 9 activity/paper discussion	**No new material – final project check-in**
M	8/2	**Sage grouse debates**	Topic 10: Ecosystem management
T	8/3	Topic 10 activity/paper discussion	Topic 11: Conservation and social sciences
W	8/4	Topic 11 activity/paper discussion	Topic 12: Traditionally neglected species; microbiome & conservation
Th	8/5	Topic 12 activity/paper discussion	**No new material – prep for final presentations**
F	8/6	**Final presentations**	Please complete OMETs. Thank you!