

COURSE SYLLABUS OUTLINE

Course Title and Number: Herpetology BSC 406/506

Semester and Year: Fall 2015

Days/Time: Lecture: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-12:15, room S-207
Lab: Wednesday 10:00-11:50, room S-207

Instructor:

Name: Dr. Jayme L. Waldron

Office: S-378

Office Hours: Monday 9:30-11:00 or by appointment.

Office Phone: 696-3361

Email: waldron3@marshall.edu

Office Hours: I make every effort to keep scheduled office hours. Please be aware that sometimes there are conflicts with required meetings, and I cannot be present. When possible, I will make announcements on muOnline if I am unable to make scheduled office hours. I strongly encourage you to make an appointment if you need to meet with me.

Course Description: A survey of the reptiles and amphibians of the world with special emphasis placed on forms resident to West Virginia aspects of zoogeography, anatomy, taxonomy, and behavior.

Credit: 4 hours in biological sciences

Prerequisites: BSC 121 with a grade of C or better.

University Policies: By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs and clicking on "Marshall University Policies." Or, you can access the policies directly by going to http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802

Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment

Text Information:

Required Text: Vitt & Caldwell (2008): Herpetology (4th Edition), An Introductory Biology of Amphibians and Reptiles. Academic Press.

A Field Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles of North America; by R. Conant and J. Collins

*Additional Study Aids: Extra readings will be assigned.

***Computer Requirements:** Microsoft Word and internet

Desired Learner Outcomes/Objectives:

- (1) Understand basic concepts of herpetofaunal ecology and conservation.
- (2) Understand the roles of amphibians and reptiles in ecosystems.
- (3) Learn to recognize important herpetofaunal habitats in West Virginia.
- (4) Acquire skills necessary for identifying herpetofaunal species.
- (5) Understand the natural history of herpetofaunal species.
- (6) Be familiar with current threats to habitats and species of concern in West Virginia.

Expected-learning-outcomes-rubric: how learning outcomes will be practiced and assessed.

Student Learning Outcomes	How students will practice each outcome	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed
Understand basic concepts of herpetofaunal ecology and conservation	Reading assignments, homework, and classroom discussions Regular attendance to lecture and laboratory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Effective classroom discourse will depend on completion of reading assignments. Students must effectively relate reading assignments in classroom discussions. Students will be assessed based on their a) willingness to participate (e.g., ask questions and answer questions), and b) their ability to incorporate reading material into classroom discussions. 2) Student attendance. 3) I will evaluate homework using criteria outlined handouts.
Learn to recognize important herpetofaunal habitats in West Virginia	Reading assignments Classroom discussion Lecture and Laboratory Exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students will be assessed based on their willingness to participate (e.g., ask questions and answer questions) in discussions pertaining to herpetofaunal habitats 3) Students will be evaluated based on their ability to answer lecture and laboratory exam questions about herpetofaunal habitats in West Virginia.
Acquire skills necessary for identifying herpetofaunal species	Homework assignments will give students exposure to key identifying characters (using keys and research), and this information will be used in the development of species accounts of non-North American herpetofauna. Lecture and laboratory exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I will evaluate the students' ability to complete homework assignments correctly and on time. 2) I will evaluate students' ability to work together in the development of species accounts. 3) I will evaluate the accuracy of lecture and laboratory exam questions pertaining to herpetofaunal identification.
Understand natural history of WV herpetofaunal species	Lecture and Laboratory Exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) I will evaluate student performance based on accuracy of answers to lecture and laboratory exam questions about herpetofaunal life history.
Understand the roles of amphibians and reptiles in ecosystems	Classroom discussion Homework Lecture Exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students will be assessed based on their knowledge and insight during classroom discussions about this concept. 2) Lecture exams will assess students' ability to articulate, in writing, current threats to herpetofaunal habitats, herpetofaunal diversity, and global declines.
Be familiar with current threats to habitats and species of concern in West Virginia	Classroom discussion Homework Lecture Exams	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students will be assessed based on their knowledge and insight during classroom discussions about this concept. 2) Lecture exams will assess students' ability to articulate, in writing, current threats to herpetofaunal habitats, herpetofaunal diversity, and global declines.

Grading Policy: Grading scale will be as follows:

90-100% = A 80-89% = B 70-79% = C 60-69% = D ≤ 59% = F

Lecture Exam 1	11%
Lecture Exam 2	11%
Lecture Exam 3	11%
Lab Exam 1	11%
Lab Exam 2	11%
Lab Exam 3	11%
Final Lecture Exam	11%
Final Lab Exam	11%
Home Work	6%
Participation/Discussion	6%

Home Work

Read the assigned chapters and papers prior to the lecture. I will assign homework periodically throughout the semester. When assignments are not turned in on time, a letter grade will be deducted for every day the assignment is late.

Graduate students will be required to write a species account for non-North American herpetofauna using information gathered by everyone enrolled in this class. The species account will cover all aspects of species life history (e.g., growth and reproduction) and morphology. Results should be submitted in a scientific manuscript format. Due date is November 12, 2015.

Lecture and Laboratory Exams

There will be three lecture exams and three laboratory exams that will not be cumulative. Exam dates on the syllabus may change, but exams will be announced at least one week in advance. Lecture exams will include questions from lectures AND reading assignments. Lecture exams will be matching, short answer, and essay. Laboratory exams will be short answer or matching. IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO BRING A BLACK OR BLUE INK PEN OR A PENCIL TO THE EXAMS. **All exams are expected to be taken as scheduled.** Exams will not be curved. Make-up exams will not be given without an excuse from the university.

Final Exam

The final exam will include lecture and laboratory material and will be cumulative.

Field Trips: Field trips will be scheduled as weather permits. All field trips are optional.

Participation: Attendance is MANDATORY. You will have to sign-in during every class period. Please consult the university policy on excessive absences (see link at beginning of syllabus). You can miss three classes (i.e., 10% of lectures). After the third absence, 3% will be deducted from your final grade for EVERY missed class.

Cell phones/texting: Mobile phones are not permitted in class. You will be dismissed from class if you are caught texting or if your phone rings. You will be given an absence for the day.

Laptops/ipads/notebooks/etc: Computers cannot be used during class. Notes must be taken using paper and writing utensils.

COURSE OUTLINE/DAILY/WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

Week (Dates)	Topic	Reading
Week 1 (Aug 25-27)	Lecture: Course Introduction; Systematics & Evolution Lab: Introduction to laboratory procedures; Salamanders	Ch. 1
Week 2 (Sep 1 - 3)	Lecture: Amphibian Evolution & Salamanders Note: "W" withdrawal period begins	Ch. 3 pgs 83-92 Ch. 4 pgs 123-133, 149-150
Week 3 (Sep 8-10)	Lecture: Salamanders Lab: Salamanders	Ch. 5 pgs 157-167 Ch. 9 pgs 256-259; 275-276 Ch. 16
Week 4 (Sep 15-17)	Lecture: Salamanders Exam (Thurs Sep 17) Lab: Salamander Exam	
Week 5 (Sep 22-24)	Lecture: Frog ecology and natural history Lab: Frogs	Ch. 9 pgs 259-265; 276-278
Week 6 (Sep 29- Oct 1)	Lecture: Frogs Lab: Frogs	Ch. 17
Week 7 (Oct 6-8)	Lecture: Frogs Exam (Thurs Oct 8) Lab: Frog Exam	
Week 8 (Oct 13-18)	Lecture: Reptile introduction; Turtle ecology and natural history Lab: Turtles	Ch. 4 pgs 133-146, 150-153 Ch. 5 pgs 167-171 Ch. 7
Week 9 (Oct 20-22)	Lecture: turtles Lab: turtles Note: mid-term	Ch. 9 pgs 265-267 Ch. 18
Week 10 (Oct 27-29)	Lecture: Squamata ecology and natural history Lab: Lizards	Ch. 9 pgs 267-272; 279-281 Ch. 20 Ch. 21 part I
Week 11 (Nov 3-5)	Lecture: Lizards Exam (Thurs Nov 12) Lab: Lizard & Turtle Exam	Ch. 11 pgs 337-341
Week 12 (Nov 10-12)	Lecture: Snake ecology and natural history Lab: snakes Note: Graduate student species accounts due Nov 12	Ch. 9 pgs 272; 278-279
Week 13 (Nov 17-19)	Lecture: Snakes Lab: Snakes	Ch. 21, part II
Week 14 (Nov 24-26)	NO CLASS! Thanksgiving Break	
Week 15 (Dec 1 - 3)	Lecture: Snakes, Conservation Biology Lab: Final Exam Note: Dead Week	Ch. 14
FINAL EXAM	(Thursday Dec 10): Time: 10:15-12:15 Note: Final Exam will be cumulative, including comprehensive questions about the entire course and laboratory material.	