ECOLOGY  GBIO 395  Fall 2011
Lecture: Mon & Wed  11:00 – 12:15, NBB 322
Dr. Janice Bossart – NBB 304 – jbossart@selu.edu
Office Hours: Monday 1– 4:00; Thursday 9 – 3:00; Friday 8 – 10:00; and by appointment


*** SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO FUTURE MODIFICATION***

Course Objectives:
- To gain a basic understanding of and appreciation for the broad science of ecology.
- To become knowledgeable about fundamental ecological principles and theories.
- To become familiar with the language that ecologists use and learn about questions that ecologists study and methods they use to study them.
- To develop skills in analytical and critical thinking.
- To become better adept at applying knowledge learned.

READINGS

Aug  W17 Introduction
  M22 Physiological Ecology – Generalities
  W24 Physiological Ecology – Individuals & the Abiotic Environment
  M29 Physiological Ecology – Individuals & the Abiotic Environment

Sept W31 Physiological Ecology – Biomes
  M5 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY
  W7 Ecology of Populations – Generalities, Population Structure
  M12 Ecology of Populations – Population Structure/Dynamics
  W14 Ecology of Populations – Population Dynamics
  M19 EXAM 1
  W21 Ecology of Populations – Population Dynamics
  M26 Population Biology – Life Tables/Survivorship
  W28 Life Tables/Survivorship & Ecology of Interacting Populations

Oct  M3 Ecology of Interacting Populations
  W5 Ecology of Interacting Populations
  M10 Community Ecology – Generalities, Community Structure
  W12 Community Ecology – Community Structure
  M17 EXAM 2
  W19 Community Ecology – Development
  F21 LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW
  M24 Community Ecology – Development
  W26 Evolutionary Ecology – Generalities, Population Genetics
  M31 Evolutionary Ecology – Population Genetics

Nov  W2 Evolutionary Ecology – Life Histories
  M7 Landscape Ecology – Generalities, Landscape Mosaics
  W9 Landscape Ecology – Global Diversity Patterns
  M14 TBA
  W16 EXAM 3
  M21 Ecosystem Ecology – Generalities
  W23 NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK
  M28 Ecosystem Ecology – Form, Function & Processes

Dec  W30 Ecosystem Ecology – Form, Function & Processes
  W7 COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM – Wednesday 2:45 – 4:45
  M12 LAST DAY TO RETURN TEXTBOOK WITHOUT A FINE
Assigned Readings:
Assigned readings (from the text and supplemental handouts) are intended to reinforce and complement lecture material and to further develop your analytical skills. The more you read the more you will learn. I encourage you to read the material prior to it being covered in lecture so that you will be in a better position to ask questions. You only need to concentrate on the areas within each chapter or handout that corresponds with lecture material because you are not responsible for concepts in the readings that are not covered in lecture. However, concepts in the reading materials that deal with topics covered in class ARE fair game for exam questions.

Grades:
Your grade will be based on the following components:

20% … Three Homework exercises
60% … Three regular exams, each worth 20%
20% … A comprehensive final exam

Homework assignments will be given out a week before they are due.

Homework 1: Eminent ecologists
Homework 2: Life-table analysis
Homework 3: Genetics/Hardy-Weinberg

Exam questions will be in a variety of formats, e.g., multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, problems, definitions, and short (or longer) essay. Any questions regarding grading must be directed to the instructor within one week after return of the item in question – after that period, grades will not be changed.

**VERY IMPORTANT NOTE** Any student with a lecture average ≥ 90% going into the final will be exempt from taking the final.

Attendance/Assignment Policies:
Note that success in a course is positively correlated with attendance. If you want to succeed in the course, you must attend lecture. Class attendance will be taken as per University policy. Any student receiving excessive unexcused absences (e.g., 10% of the total classes) prior to the established withdrawal date may be withdrawn from the class with a grade of W at the discretion of the professor.

Missed exams and quizzes will result in a grade of ZERO unless you have a recognized excuse (i.e., one identified as legitimate by the student handbook and accompanied by proof). Assignments handed in late will be docked 5% points for each day late unless you have a recognized excuse. I need to be informed in writing (email is okay) of scheduling conflicts that arise because of college sponsored activities prior to the actual conflict. In the case of a valid excuse, point deductions will commence from the date agreed upon by the professor and the student.

Extra Credit:
Throughout the term there may be opportunity for attendance at campus events and seminars that I consider a valuable aspect of your academic/professional development. If you are aware of ecology related events, e.g. special seminars, please let me know. All extra credit opportunities will be announced in class. Extra credit will be given to students who attend and hand in a 1½-2 pg. reaction to the event or seminar. Also, there may be unannounced group activities that randomly occur throughout the term. These activities are worth ‘free’ points and serve two purposes. First, they provide opportunity for informal discussion of conceptual aspects of ecology and their application, and second, they present a way for me to recognize and encourage regular class attendance. Extra credit points cannot be made up even if you miss because of a legitimate excuse (sorry in advance to anyone that may ultimately be affected by this policy).
Grading Scale:

A  89.56 – 100%
B  79.56 – 89.55
C  69.56 – 79.55
D  59.56 – 69.55
F  59.55 and lower

Written Work:

All written work must be produced using a word processor with an 11 or 12 point font, double-spaced with 1” margins, stapled. Points will be deducted for unstapled (5%) and/or hand-written (15%) work. Any work that requires a graph or table must also be computer generated unless the professor states otherwise. Points will be deducted for hand-drawn graphs (10%) when relevant. Microsoft Excel is available on the terminals in the computer lab and is sufficient for producing simple graphs and charts. Microsoft Word is also available and easily makes tables. Any other comparable programs are fine also. If you are unfamiliar with Excel and Word (or analogous programs), NOW is the time to learn. DON’T wait until just before work is due.

Important University Policies:

Disabilities: "If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Disability Services, Room 203, Student Union. No accommodations will be granted without documentation from the Office of Disability Services."

Cell phones, etc: Use of cell phones, headphones, and beepers during class is inappropriate. These are very disruptive to the professor who is trying to speak and/or to other students who are trying to listen and learn. Silence them AND put them away. If there is some specific emergency reason why these need to be on, please let me know in advance.

Children: University Policy states that the classroom is not a place for children, and students are not to bring their family members for day care or baby sitting.

Civility: “Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of beepers, cellular telephones, or other electronic devices; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as “crossing the civility line.” In the event of a situation where a student legitimately needs to carry a beeper/cellular telephone to class, prior notice and approval of the instructor is required.” Classroom behavior which is deemed inappropriate and cannot be resolved by the student and the faculty member may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs for administrative or disciplinary review as per the Code of Student Conduct which may be found at http://www.selu.edu/StudentAffairs/Handbook/.

Email: Important messages related to the course will be sent to students via email using Blackboard. Please check your email frequently, i.e. at least every couple days. Per University Policy, I can only respond to e-mails that are from your SELU account. Please include Biol 395 in the subject line.

Academic Integrity: “Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Behavior that violates these standards is not acceptable. Examples are the use of unauthorized material, communication with fellow students during an examination, attempting to benefit from the work of another student and similar behavior that defeats the intent of an examination or other class work. Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, improper acknowledgment of sources in essays and the use of a single essay or paper in more than one course without permission are considered very serious offenses and shall be grounds for disciplinary action as outlined in the current General Catalogue.