BIOL 3401-110, CRN 80359, Ecology
Fall 2019 rev. 07.29.2019
Texas A&M University-Central Texas

COURSE DATES, MODALITY, AND LOCATION
Mode of instruction and course access:
This will be a 16 week course and will be taught face to face in the classroom.

Where: Lecture: 315 Warrior Hall; Laboratory: 407 Warrior Hall

This course uses the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [https://tamuct.instructure.com].

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION
Instructor: Dr. Weiser Erlandson
Office: 302H Beck Family Heritage Hall
Phone: 254-519-5723
Email: CANVAS inbox or laura.erlandson@tamuct.edu

Office Hours:
Office Hours: Monday 1:00 - 3:00, Thursday 10:00 - 12:00, by appt.

Student-instructor interaction:
You may contact me through email, CANVAS, or stop by my office hours. Expect me to respond back to any emails within 24 hours (business days only). If I do not, please check back with me to be sure that your email was not lost in transit.

WARRIOR SHIELD
Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas
Warrior Shield is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in Warrior Shield through their myCT email account.

Connect to Warrior Shield by 911Cellular [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

COURSE INFORMATION
Course Overview and description:
Explore interactions at the organismal, population, and community level, and apply ecological theory to current environmental problems. Emphasis in the laboratory and field exercises is placed on the
ecological methodology and the application of these methods. Students are required to use various statistical methods to analyze and interpret the data. Three hours of lecture and three hours of lab each week. Prerequisite: BIOL 1407.

Course Objective:

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Students will:

a. receive a sound basis of current scientific theories and knowledge
b. be able to apply this knowledge and test theories experimentally
c. be familiar with the interactions between living organisms and their environment
d. learn techniques for gathering data in the field and laboratory
e. understand the scope of the problems that we (humans) are facing such as unsustainable use of ecological resources, erosion, pollution, extinctions, etc...
f. be able to critically analyze new findings in research areas and why results are often contradictory
g. be informed of open areas of research where current knowledge is lacking

Required Reading, Materials, and Textbook(s):

a. Laboratory Coat can be purchased from TAMUCT Hanik Bookstore

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Assessments:

- 35% Three lecture exams (SLO: a, c, e, g)
- 25% Final Comprehensive Exam (SLO: a, c, e, g)
- 10% Assignments (SLO: e, f, g)
- 25% Laboratory reports (due weekly) (SLO: b, d, f, g)
- 5% Participation

Mandatory Laboratory Safety Training:

- All students are required to take the mandatory Laboratory Safety Training Module - found on in your Modules tab in CANVAS.
- You must take the training and bring the signed "Safety Agreement Form" to your instructor before you are allowed in lab!!!
- This is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY - any lab absences because you have not taken the training will be considered unexcused!

Current Event Summary Assignment

Introduction: It is vital to understand the importance of what we learn in the classroom and how it affects us in the real world (to answer the question “why are we studying this?”). Cutting edge research is being conducted all over the world to help us to understand our world at large, live
healthier lives, and have cooler technological gizmos, just to name a few. However, often we see that scientific news is not always reported correctly or that pseudoscience is reported. Many people are deceived and defrauded by pseudoscience. As future scientists, you need to be able to critically view a finding and determine its validity.

Your assignment is to critique current news items for their scientific merit. The article will be provided for you by your instructor. Be sure to research the science (find the original research and/or similar research) behind the article and compare the two (or more) sources.

You need to do the following:
1. Summarize, in your own words (not theirs), what the article is about. (2 pts)
2. Is this scientifically correct, is it pseudoscience? Why or why not. Be specific. (5 pts)
3. Why is the subject of this article important (i.e. to you, your students, the public, etc.)? (3 pts)

HOW TO WRITE UP A LABORATORY REPORT

The general format for a scientific paper will be used in this course. Scientific papers have an introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion and literature cited. Keep in mind that scientists often pay for a paper to be peer-reviewed and published (not the other way around). Peer-review means that all articles are read by other scientists (peers) who make editorial suggestions and ultimately decide whether a paper contains sound research and should be published. Publishing is essential for graduate students and faculty, but costly at $50-200 per page, thus it is important to write concisely.

The Abstract section:
Should be a brief summary of your entire paper. Use a little from each section to make a clear, cohesive summary. Readers will decide from your abstract whether or not they will continue to read your entire research paper. Limit to 200 words.

The Introduction section:
This section is as short as a few paragraphs or as long as a few pages. It serves to introduce your experiment. Start with general statements and become more specific. The first part of the introduction should set the context for your experiment by briefly providing background information. You should provide background and context, present what information is known from previous studies, and then state what additional information your experiment may provide. Be sure to give proper citations when you state facts or ideas from outside sources (see Literature Cited section).

In the second part of the introduction, you should describe the specific questions you chose to study. State what you did in a general way, e.g., "We investigated the effect of obesity on heart rate by comparing heart rates of fat and thin people after they climbed stairs", but do not give away the specific details of your Methods or Results. Specifically, state your hypothesis at the end of the Introduction.

The Materials and Methods section:
The experiment has been completed by the time you write your report, so use past tense. This section includes a brief outline of the methods used in the experiments. The purpose of this section is to allow other experimenters to duplicate the methods you used, so it should be detailed enough so that someone else could read your report and repeat the experiment. However, you should NOT include trivial details (“we used test tubes that were 10cm long”). Be sure to state how you analyzed your data (e.g. ANOVA, T-test, Chi Square, etc…)

**Good Example:**
“We exposed cells to 0, 15, 30, or 45 seconds of ultraviolet irradiation (400nm). Cells from each irradiation treatment were diluted to $10^{-3}$ and $10^{-5}$ of their original concentration. One ml of each of these dilutions was plated on nutrient agar and incubated overnight. The number of colonies was counted the next day.”

**Bad Example:**
“Our lab bench received cells from treatment #1, and these were serially diluted, so that there were 2 different concentrations of bacteria to count on the petri dishes. Lab bench 2 received cells from treatment 2. These were also serially diluted, resulting in 2 different concentrations of bacteria to count.”

The **Results** section:
The results section always starts with normal paragraph (text) format, NOT with tables or figures. You MUST first direct the reader's attention to EACH table and figure before they appear, indicate what they show, and summarize the important data in each.

**Good Example of How to Begin the Results:**
“The mean IQ of TAMUCT biology students was found to be higher than the mean IQ of Harvard students and of students from many colleges (Figure 1)”.

**Bad Example of How to Begin the Results:**
“Figure 1 clearly shows the results of the experiment.”

As with all writing, the results should be organized into coherent logically organized paragraphs and sentences. Data are reported in 3 ways:

1. Text or paragraph form, if there are just a few numbers to report. *Always required!!!!
2. Figure: a graph, picture, or diagram
   ***** A figure will have a detailed legend at the bottom ******
3. Table: something that contains only numbers, and has a detailed legend at the top.

Do NOT discuss the implications of the results in this section, nor attempt to explain why various results occurred. Only the important points of each figure and table should be described in paragraph format; don't reiterate the whole figure.

Raw data is NOT reported in the Results (i.e. the numbers you collect). Readers are usually interested only in summarized data (e.g. means, standard deviations, totals, etc). However, since this is not going to be submitted for publication, you should include any calculations in an Appendix so your professor can detect any errors you may have made.
**The Discussion section:**

This is usually the most important part of your paper. This is your chance to be original, cleverly interpret the results you obtained and draw general conclusions from them. Information in the discussion should go from the specific to the general. This is a typical order of topics which might occur in the Discussion:

Begin the discussion by briefly stating the major conclusions from the results. Explain what the results mean. Discuss whether the results SUPPORT or do NOT support your original hypothesis (es). Your experiment is really very limited in scope, so DO NOT claim that you have "proven" or "disproven" a hypothesis; you perhaps obtained some small bit of evidence to support a hypothesis, or you provided some evidence which contradicts a hypothesis.

In next paragraph(s) expand your discussion of these results. You should compare them to results from other studies, which you should cite properly.

As the discussion continues it is important to offer some original ideas and interpretations. For example, discuss the implications or your results for the biology of the organism(s). For example, why did the behaviors you observe evolve? You may wish to suggest new experiments which would shed further light on the questions raised by your results.

You may discuss sources of error in the experiment, but your BEST guess is that the results reflect reality. Students often feel that their discussion should consist mainly of an analysis of all the things that went wrong with the experiment. I strongly discourage this approach. Naturally all experiments have some weaknesses, but for the purposes of this exercise assume that your results are reasonable. It is OK to get negative results. You should, however, suggest additional experiments using better or different methods.

Always conclude by relating your experiment and results to larger theory and/or applications. Provide context to why your study is important and how your study can be used to further knowledge in that area.

**The Literature Cited section:**

This section should list all references mentioned in the text. Unlike English papers and other term papers, we do not use footnotes and we don’t include factual material from an encyclopedia without crediting it in the appropriate place. You should not have any books or journals listed in this section unless you have cited the author and year in the text of the paper.

1. Citing within the text of the paper:
   a. One author: *Smith (2017) reported ...*
   b. Two authors: *Smith and Jones (2005) observed ...*
   c. More than 2 authors: *Smith et al. (2010) examined...*
   d. Stating a fact: *Trees have leaves (Jones 1997).*

2. In Literature Cited section: all citations used will be listed in alphabetical order
   1. **Books:** Author (s). Year. Title. Publisher.
   2. **Internet:** Author. Year. Title. HTTP address.
The following hints will improve your writing:
1. Use the first person (I or we) to write more concisely.
2. Avoid long run-on sentences. We are trying to write concisely and clearly. Don't use twelve letter words when simpler ones will do just fine.
3. Use the active voice: “I counted”. Not “The number of animals was counted”.
4. Be positive about your results. Say “the data show” instead of “the data suggest”.
5. Genus and species names in Latin are always italicized or underlined. Only the first letter of the genus is capitalized. ex. Homo sapiens, Danaus plexippus, etc...
6. Number all pages and use the metric system. Write numbers as numerals when they are associated with measurement units (2 km), spell them out for numbers < 10 (five hamsters).
7. In general, DON'T use quotes. Instead, paraphrase the author and cite him/her. Quotes interrupt the flow of your text.
8. Scientific writing is formal communication. Don't use conversational language, colloquialisms or slang.
9. Some frequently misused/misspelled words:
   a. affect/effect "Effect" is a noun (usually). "Affect" is always a verb. “The effect of their misuse will be that your grade will be affected by subtracting five points”.
   b. it's/its "It's" is the conjunction "it is". "Its" is the possessive form
   c. their/there I assume this is just carelessness, proofread your paper.
   d. between/among Between refers to two things, while among refers to more than two.
   e. fewer/less Use "fewer" if you can count the items, "less" if you can't. (less water, but fewer boats)
   f. amount/number Use 'amount" if you can't count them, "number" if you can. (The amount of sand and the number of rocks)
   g. oftentimes Drop the "times"; it's redundant.
   h. different from / different than Different from is correct; different than is not.
   i. than/then “than” refers to a comparison – proofread your paper for mix-ups
   j. Always put a zero in front of a naked decimal point (0.12, not .12).
   k. The word data is plural and the word datum singular (i.e. write “data are ...”, not “data is...”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Exceeds expectations</th>
<th>Meets expectations</th>
<th>Below expectations</th>
<th>Does not meet expectations</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Clearly and concisely states paper’s purpose and main results. Includes at least one sentence from each main section. Engaging and thought provoking.</td>
<td>Clearly and concisely states the paper’s purpose and main results.</td>
<td>States the paper’s purpose and main results. Missing 2 or more sections.</td>
<td>Absent, incomplete, or confusing.</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Thoroughly addresses the topic. Engages reader. Logical progression from broad to narrow topic. Clearly states main hypothesis.</td>
<td>The introduction states the main topic and states main hypothesis.</td>
<td>The introduction states the main topic but does not adequately state main hypothesis.</td>
<td>There is no clear introduction of main topic and hypothesis is missing.</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials &amp; Methods</td>
<td>Clear and detailed narrative of methods so reader can replicate study. Materials are included within text (not listed separately). Only essential information included. Mathematical analysis clearly stated.</td>
<td>Clear and detailed narrative of methods so reader can replicate study. Materials are included within text (not listed separately). Mathematical analysis stated.</td>
<td>Narrative of methods not adequately clear so reader can replicate study. Materials are listed separately. Mathematical analysis stated.</td>
<td>Vague narrative of methods. Materials are listed separately or no materials are indicated. No mathematical analysis stated.</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Clearly and concisely states the results of the study including statistical analysis. Includes appropriate tables/figures to supplement statements. &quot;Just the facts&quot;, no interpretation or discussion of data.</td>
<td>Clearly and concisely states the results of the study including statistical analysis. Includes some tables/figures to supplement statements (may not be appropriate). May have little interpretation or discussion.</td>
<td>States some of the results of the study; missing some statistical analysis. Includes some tables/figures to supplement statements (may not be appropriate). May include interpretation or discussion of data.</td>
<td>Missing some results of the study; missing all statistical analysis. Tables/figures not included or no text included. May include interpretation or discussion of data.</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>The conclusion is engaging and restates the main results and thesis. In-depth discussion and elaboration of all sections of the paper. Relates topic back to 'real world' applications.</td>
<td>The conclusion restates the results. Cursory discussion and elaboration of all sections of the paper. Vaguely relates topic back to 'real world' applications.</td>
<td>The conclusion does not adequately restate results or the thesis. Brief discussion of the paper. May not relate topic back to 'real world' applications.</td>
<td>The conclusion does not adequately restate results or the thesis. Incomplete or confusing discussion of the paper. Does not relate topic back to 'real world' applications.</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization/Structural Development of Topic</td>
<td>Writer demonstrates logical and subtle sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs; transitions are used to enhance organization.</td>
<td>Paragraph development present but not perfected.</td>
<td>Logical organization; organization of ideas not fully developed.</td>
<td>No evidence of structure or organization.</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling/Punctuation</td>
<td>No errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.</td>
<td>Almost no errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.</td>
<td>Many errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.</td>
<td>Numerous and distracting errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>No errors sentence structure and word usage.</td>
<td>Almost no errors in sentence structure and word usage.</td>
<td>Many errors in sentence structure and word usage.</td>
<td>Numerous and distracting errors in sentence structure and word usage.</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citations</td>
<td>All facts are cited using primary literature or peer sources. Correct format with no errors.</td>
<td>Some facts are cited. Correct format, very few errors.</td>
<td>Few facts are cited. Correct format, few errors.</td>
<td>No in-text citations.</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature cited</td>
<td>Correct format with no errors. Includes more than 10 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than two professional internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).</td>
<td>Correct format with few errors. Includes more than 5 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than two professional internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).</td>
<td>Correct format with some errors. Includes more than 3 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than two professional internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).</td>
<td>Not correct format and/or with many errors. Includes more than 0-3 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than two professional internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figures and tables</td>
<td>Tables/figures numbered consecutively in separate series. Title is complete enough to be understood without referring to text. Legend, headings, and units of measure are included. Footnotes used as necessary to provide clarity with respect to: units of measure that do not fit in the heading, explanations of abbreviations and symbols, statistical significance of entries.</td>
<td>Tables/figures numbered consecutively in separate series. Title is complete. Legend, headings, and units of measure are included. Footnotes used to provide clarity.</td>
<td>Tables/figures numbered, but not sequentially. Title is incomplete. Legend, headings, and units of measure are not fully included. Footnotes used but do not provide enough clarity</td>
<td>Tables/figures not numbered. No title. Legend, headings, and units of measure are not included. Footnotes are not used but are needed.</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion

Grading scheme

A 4.00 (90 +) Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B 3.00 (80-89%) Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C 2.00 (70–79%) Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D 1.00 (60–69%) Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully course requirements.

F 0.00 (<60%) Represents failure and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an “I” (incomplete).

I (Incomplete) The “I” shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an “I” requires a written agreement between the instructor and student specifying the time and manner in which the student will complete the course requirements. In no event may any such written agreement allow a period of longer than one year to complete the course requirements. For graduate and professional students, an “I” is to remain on the transcript until changed by the instructor or department. For all other students, work to make up an I must be submitted within one year of the last day of final examinations of the term in which the “I” was given; if not submitted by that time, then the “I” will automatically change to an F. To obtain an incomplete you must have been doing passing work in the course.

Posting of Grades

- Grades will be posted on CANVAS as I am finished with my evaluation of your work.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

Complete Course Calendar

1. Week of August 26
   a. Lecture Topic: Introduction and Life on land
      i. Chapters 1 and 2 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Laboratory check in

2. Week of September 2
   a. Lecture Topic: Life on land
      i. Chapter 2 A, B Molles
   b. Laboratory: Soils (outside)
      i. Chapter 15 Kingsolver

3. Week of September 9
   a. Lecture Topic: Life in water
      i. Chapter 3 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Describing a population
      i. Chapter 1 A Kingsolver

4. Week of September 16
a. Lecture Topic: Population genetics (Monday) and Exam I (Wednesday)
   i. Chapter 4 Molles
b. Laboratory: Aquatic environments (outside)
   i. Chapter 16 A, B Kingsolver

5. Week of September 23
   a. Lecture Topic: Temperature Relations and Water Relations
      i. Chapters 5 and 6 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Population Genetics
      i. Chapter 6 A, B Kingsolver

6. Week of September 30
   a. Lecture Topic: Energy and Nutrient relations and Social relations
      i. Chapters 7 and 8 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Succession
      i. Lab Handout on CANVAS

7. Week of October 7
      i. Chapters 9 and 10 Molles
   b. Laboratory: The Niche (outside)
      i. Chapter 8 C Kingsolver
      1. Field trip to local park – will need to carpool

8. Week of October 14
   a. Lecture Topic: Population Growth (Monday) and Exam II (Wednesday)
      i. Chapters 11 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Demography
      i. Chapter 5 Kingsolver (outside)
      1. Field trip to Killeen Cemetery – will need to carpool

9. Week of October 21
   a. Lecture Topic: Life Histories and Competition
      i. Chapters 12 and 13 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Population Growth
      i. Chapter 4 C Kingsolver

10. Week of October 28
    a. Lecture Topic: Exploitative interactions and Mutualism
       i. Chapters 14 and 15 Molles
    b. Laboratory: Ecological Interactions
       i. Chapter 10 Handout on CANVAS

11. Week of November 4
    a. Lecture Topic: Species abundance and Species interactions
       i. Chapters 16 and 17 Molles
    b. Laboratory: Predator Prey and Mutualism (set up for next week)
       i. Chapters 11 A and 12 C Kingsolver
12. Week of November 11
   a. Lecture Topic: Primary and Secondary Production (Monday) and Exam III (Wednesday)
      i. Chapter 18 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Community Concept and Biodiversity
      i. Chapters 9 C and 13 C Kingsolver
13. Week of November 18 – Post lectures on CANVAS
   a. Lecture Topic: Nutrient recycling and Succession
      i. Chapters 19 and 20 Molles
   b. Laboratory: No laboratory this week
14. Week of November 25
   a. Lecture Topic: Landscape and Geographic ecology
      i. Chapters 21 and 22 Molles
   b. Laboratory: No laboratory this week – Thanksgiving
15. Week of December 2
   a. Lecture Topic: Global Ecology and Review
      i. Chapters 23 Molles
   b. Laboratory: Island Biogeography and Check out
      i. Chapter 18 A Kingsolver
16. Week of December 9
   a. Comprehensive Final Exam (Monday)

**Important University Dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 26, 2019</td>
<td>Classes Begin for Fall Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 26, 2019</td>
<td>Add, Drop, and Late Registration Begins for 16- and First 8-week Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 28, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline for Add, Drop, and Late Registration for 16- and First 8-week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2, 2019</td>
<td>Labor Day (University Closed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 3, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline to Drop First 8-week Classes with No Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 11, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline to drop 16-week Classes with No Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline for Teacher Education and Professional Certification Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline to Drop First 8-week Classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline for Graduation Application for Ceremony Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 18, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline to Withdraw from University for First 8-Week Classes (WF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 21, 2019</td>
<td>Class Schedule Published for Spring Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 4, 2019</td>
<td>Registration Opens for Spring Semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 8, 2019</td>
<td>Deadline to Drop 16-Week Classes with a Quit (Q) or Withdraw (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 11, 2019</td>
<td>Veteran’s Day (University Closed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

#### Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [https://tamuct.instructure.com/] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [https://tamuct.onecampus.com/]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

#### Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

#### Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu
Phone: (254) 519-5466
Web Chat: [http://hdc.tamu.edu](http://hdc.tamu.edu)

*Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.*

### UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

#### Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf).

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar’s Office
will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar’s Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar’s Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity
Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. **Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course.** Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student’s academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student’s work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university’s Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university’s standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more information regarding the Student Conduct process, [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html).
If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may submit a report, [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0).

Academic Accommodations
At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Office of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university’s programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our Access & Inclusion Canvas page (log-in required) [https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717)

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students
Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs’ Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek
out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit Student Affairs [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html]. Students may also contact the institution’s Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these requirements and guidelines online, please visit the website [http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

**Tutoring**

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111. Tutor.com tutoring will not offer writing support beginning August 1, 2019.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at deeadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

**University Writing Center**

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students’ ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students’ texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the
UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via WCOnline [https://tamuct.mywconline.com/]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

University Library
The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our Library website [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

OPTIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas
Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don’t agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don’t be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the Title IX webpage [https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/compliance/titleix.php].

Behavioral Intervention
Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, who are
exhibiting behaviors that pose a threat to safety, or individuals causing a significant disruption to our community, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. You can complete the referral online [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2]. Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the Behavioral Intervention Team website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html]. If a person’s behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5800.

INSTRUCTOR POLICIES.
Read these carefully as I am strict with my policies.

Grading Policy and Point Breakdown. Grades in this course will be criteria-based on a number of activities including exams, discussion, and projects. This means that grades will not be curved and anyone achieving a 90% or above will receive an A in this course.

Grade Dispute Policy. Grading disputes must be put in writing (with justification such as supporting statements from the text or another credible source) and given to me no earlier than 24 hours after the assignment has been returned. I will consider your request carefully, but reserve the right to adjust your grade up or down.

Assignments. These will be varied in nature, but will consist of activities that cause the students to reflect upon the state of knowledge of the topic of the week, how that topic is perceived in the media, and/or analysis of specific research projects relevant to the subject. All assignments are to be turned in, on time (i.e. at class time on due date), to the CANVAS website. I will distribute instructions on how to do this. I will not accept e-mailed assignments of any kind.

Late Assignments. I expect all assignments to be turned in on time. Late assignments interfere with my ability to provide timely, detailed feedback, as well as with your ability to learn and process new material. Accordingly, any unauthorized late assignment will receive a 5% reduction in grade for each day it is late. No assignments will be accepted after it has been graded and returned.

Exams. The exams will be a mixture of matching, multiple choice and short answer, designed to provoke reflection, critical thought, and application of knowledge. You will receive a list of several sample or real exam questions ahead of time. You are encouraged to prepare for the exam by reviewing reading materials, outlining a draft of a response, and discussing these thoughts with your peers. You will then demonstrate your individual, integrated thoughts on the topic in a closed-book exam during the class period.

- There will be no bathroom breaks allowed during any exam. Be sure that you address this issue before beginning an exam.
- Any student needing to take an exam at a different time as rest of students due to sickness or other accommodations will receive a different version of exam. This includes sickness, special accommodations, etc....
- Accommodated exams. All students needing special accommodations must submit an accommodation form from the Office of Access and Inclusion listing the specific accommodations needed. Students are responsible for scheduling their own exam times with the TAMUCT Testing Center.
- Missed exams. If you know you will miss an exam, please contact me BEFORE the exam. I will gladly give make-up exams if the student has an unavoidable reason for missing the exam (i.e. death in the family, severe illness). Keep in mind that I will expect documentation of your reason for missing the exam (e.g. doctor’s note, obituary notice). Exams must be made up within a week of the original
scheduled date, no exceptions regardless of excuse.

**Labs.** A maximum of 3 absences will be allowed; additional absences in lab will result in an “F” for the entire course, regardless of excuse.

**What I expect of you.** To get the most out of this class, you are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner, which includes contributing to class discussions, being punctual, and notifying me of absences in advance. Any inappropriate or offensive behavior of any kind (in class/lab/office or on assignments/exams) will be subject to a penalty commensurate with behavior.

**Class Attendance.** I expect that you attend each class session and arrive on time. If an unavoidable situation arises that prevents you from attending class, I expect that you also promptly contact me to discuss the missed material and get the notes from a classmate. I will not distribute my notes to students as they are often abbreviated and do not contain the detail needed to sufficiently understand the material.

**What you can expect of me.** You can expect me to start and end class on time, be available through office hours, e-mail, and by appointment, be responsive to student suggestions for course improvement, answer questions to the fullest extent possible and/or direct you to appropriate resources, return graded assignments and exams within a reasonable time frame, and treat you with respect as future colleagues.

**Discussion.** The topics in this class may encompass a diversity of issues that merit in-depth thought and discussion. Since individuals will be expressing their opinions, I expect that you will respect others’ contributions, as you would want them to do for you.

**Credits and Workload expectations.** For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of two hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to receive an average grade for the course. A student taking a four-credit class that meets for four hours a week should expect to spend an additional eight hours a week outside the classroom in order to earn an average grade.

**Class Structure.** Classes will involve a balance of active lecture and engaging learning activities (either in lab or in class). I believe that students learn the theories and concepts much better when they have an active role. I know that this may be new to some of you, but please keep an open mind and I know that you will get more out of this class because of it.

**Copyright Notice.**
Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas’ Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

Copyright. 2019 by Dr. Laura Weiser Erlandson at Texas A&M University-Central Texas, College of Arts and Sciences; 1001 Leadership Place, Killeen, TX 76549; 254-519-5723; Fax 254-519-5781; laura.erlandson@tamuct.edu
BIO 3401 – Ecology

Syllabus Contract

Directions:
• First, read the syllabus.
• Second, read the statement below to confirm your personal reading and understanding of the contents of the syllabus.
• Third, provide confirmation by printing the document and providing your signature and date of completion in the space provided below.
• Last, submit this contract to me. Note that your grade for the first assignment will not be calculated until this contract is received.

I have received a copy of the syllabus. I have read and understand the policies of this course as stated in the syllabus.

Print Name_________________________________________

Signature____________________________________________

Date_________________________________________