Course Name: Biodiversity: Causes, Conservation and Consequences
Course Number: Z349
Credits: 3
Instructor: Philip Pepe
email: pepep@onid.oregonstate.edu  phone: (541) 737-3786 skype:philipjohn.pepe

Course Description
The earth’s biodiversity is a precious inheritance that is threatened by an unprecedented extinction crisis. This course examines the evolutionary and ecological processes that have created this unique diversity of life, the importance of biodiversity in maintaining the earth’s ecosystems, and methods used to conserve biodiversity for future generations. (Bacc Core Synthesis, Global Issues Course)

Prerequisites
None

Teaching Philosophy
Biodiversity is a field of study that covers topics affecting our daily lives. I’m fascinated by what we as humans can learn from the rich biological history of our planet, and how we can put those lessons to good use. This course uses a number of different tools to facilitate our learning at multiple levels. My goal is for you to walk away with a deep understanding of biodiversity and to be able to share this knowledge with others.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:
1. Identify and connect basic ideas and terminology found in the study of biodiversity and conservation biology.  
4. Assess the roles of scientific and social values in decision making pertaining to biodiversity, conservation, and protected areas.  
5. Examine the ways scientists measure biodiversity.  
6. Describe how the continued evolution of life affects biodiversity.  
7. Assess the effects of biodiversity on the structure and function of ecosystems.  
8. Explain how scientific advances and methods have increased our understanding of biodiversity and conservation.  
9. Examine the processes of extinction and how extinction rates have changed over time.  
10. Compare and contrast various threats to biodiversity.  
11. Examine the biological processes of populations and evaluate their importance in the conservation of species.  
12. Analyze and illustrate human impacts on biodiversity and how they are or might be mitigated.

Baccalaureate Core
Successful completion of this course partially fulfills OSU’s Baccalaureate Core course requirements (Synthesis: Global Issues.

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:
1. Analyze the origins, historical contexts, and implications of contemporary global issues.  
2. Explain the complex nature and interdependence of contemporary global issues using a multi-disciplinary approach.  
3. Articulate in writing a critical perspective on contemporary global issues using evidence as support.

This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information, contact:
Web: ecampus.oregonstate.edu   Email: ecampus@oregonstate.edu   Tel: 800-667-1465
Communication
Please post all course-related questions in the General Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Please email your instructor for matters of a personal nature (ex. you are considering dropping the class). The instructor will reply to course-related questions and email within 24-48 hours.

I am dedicated to providing a quick response to all graded assignments. A typical turn-around time for grading will be 7 days (or sooner). If you have a more immediate question or would like to discuss something by phone you can call my office: (541) 737-3786. You are encouraged to call during the following hours: Mondays through Fridays 10:00 am – 11:00 am PT.

Canvas
This course will be delivered via Canvas where you will interact with your classmates and with your instructor. Within the course Canvas site you will access the learning materials, such as the syllabus, class discussions, assignments, projects, and quizzes. To preview how an online course works, visit the Ecampus Course Demo. For technical assistance, please visit Ecampus Technical Help.

Technical Assistance
If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email: osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

Learning Resources

The textbook is an essential learning tool. You will be assigned and quizzed on readings each week.

Publisher: Sinauer Associates, Copyright 2014

Availability:
The Beaver Store [Textbook Selling and Buyback](http://www.hhmi.org/biointeractive)
CourseSmart [eTextbooks](http://www.hhmi.org/biointeractive)
Yuzu [Textbook Rental](http://www.hhmi.org/biointeractive)

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**Evaluation of Student Performance**

Throughout this course you will be learning by using the guided weekly modules I’ve provided. Each module includes a series of interrelated foundational and assessment activities. Each week you will read and view online materials that will help you prepare for and transition into the assessment portion of your learning.

The learning outcomes will be measured using the following assessments:

There are three important elements for successful learning in this course: formative assessments (which help you form and measure your learning as it develops), summary assessments (which evaluate how you are summarizing and synthesizing the concepts), and a final assessment (which is a capstone assignment to test what you’ve learned in the class).

**Formative Assignments:**
*Concepts Quizzes: Self-tests to gauge understanding of readings and mini-lectures* - Using online resources, you will be exposed to the basic concepts and vocabulary of conservation biology and genetics. You will gauge your understanding by answering a variety of questions and getting immediate feedback.

*Discussions: Sequential discussion postings* - We are an online community, and to interact with each other, each week there will be a discussion prompted by a textbook reading. You are required to participate in our discussions on at least two different days each week, with your first thread due no later than Tuesday by 11:59 PM PT, and your second, a reply to your instructor, due by Sunday 11:59 PM PT of each week.

*Skills Trainings: Developmental activities to acquire skills and use tools* — In this class you will practice a number of skills that will not only help you in this course, but in your academic and professional endeavors. These include using the library’s resources, peer reviewing, citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, and essay writing.

**Summary Assignments:**
*Rhetorical Precis: Article evaluation* - In this class, in the field of evolution, and in many other disciplines, you will need to critically evaluate articles as sources, which you will demonstrate in this assignment.

*Peer Review Assignments: Prepare Peer Review Pages* — The Peer Review Assignments provide a way for you to make a visual scrapbook of your learning about a specific topic. During the term you will construct Peer Review Pages about biodiversity hotspots, ecosystem services, invasive species, endangered species, metapopulations, planetary boundaries, reintroductions and protected areas, and sustainable conservation.

**Midterm Assignments:**

*Midterm Outline: Outlining a 5 paragraph essay.* You will first organize your thoughts in an outline before writing an essay. — Good writing skills are critical across professions. This includes outlining a 5 paragraph essay.

*Midterm Essay: Write a 5 paragraph essay with citations* - Your essay will demonstrate your understanding of topics we’ve learned in class as well as use proper citations, which we practice in our skills training.

**Final Assignments:**

*Final Outline: Outlining a 5 paragraph essay.* You will first organize your thoughts in an outline before writing an essay. — Good writing skills are critical across professions. This includes outlining a 5 paragraph essay.

*Final Essay: Write a 5 paragraph essay with citations* - Your essay will demonstrate your understanding of topics we’ve learned in class as well as use proper citations, which we practice in our skills training.
Grading Scale

Total – 1,000 points

1. Concepts Quizzes – 200 points (10@20)
2. Discussions – 200 points (10@20)
3. Skills Trainings – 100 points (5@20)
4. Summary Assignments – 200 points (10@20)
5. Midterm Outline – 50 points (1@50)
6. Midterm Essay – 100 points (1@100)
7. Final Outline – 50 points (1@50)
8. Final Essay – 100 points (1@100)

Letter | Points
--- | ---
A | 1000 - 930
A- | 929 - 900
B+ | 899 - 870
B | 869 - 830
B- | 829 - 800
C+ | 799 - 770
C | 769 - 730
C- | 729 - 700
D+ | 699 - 670
D | 669 - 630
D- | 629 - 600
F | Below 600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Global Conservation Biology</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 1</td>
<td>Orientation Quiz Concepts Quiz Discussion Skills Training Summary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 2 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Skills Training Summary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Valuing Biodiversity</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Skills Training Summary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Extinction</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Skills Training Summary Assignment Midterm Essay Outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Habitat Destruction</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 9</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Skills Training Summary Assignment Midterm Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Overexploitation and Invasive Species</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 10</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Summary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Populations and Conservation</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Summary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Establishing New Populations</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 13 &amp; 14</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Summary Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Protected Areas</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 15, 16 &amp; 17</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Summary Assignment Final Essay Outline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Conservation and Restoration</td>
<td><em>Essentials of Conservation Biology</em>: Chapter 18, 19, &amp; 20</td>
<td>Concepts Quiz Discussion Summary Assignment Final Essay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Guidelines for a productive and effective online classroom

- The discussion board is your space to interact with your colleagues and discuss course topics or respond to your colleague’s statements. It is expected that each student will participate in a mature and respectful fashion.
- Posting of personal contact information is discouraged (e.g. telephone numbers, address, and personal website address).
- Participate actively in the discussions after you have watched the weekly lectures and thought carefully about the issues.
- Pay close attention to what your classmates write in their online comments. Ask clarifying questions when appropriate. These questions are meant to probe and shed new light, not to minimize or devalue comments.
- Think through and reread your comments before you post them.
- Assume the best of others in the class and expect the best from them.
- Value the diversity of the class. Recognize and value the experiences, abilities, and knowledge that each person brings to class.

Course Policies

Course Check-in
Your original attendance in this course will be verified during the Week 1 course check-in, which involves your completion of the following activities: reading the course syllabus and schedule, completion of the Orientation Quiz, Introductory E-mail to your professor, self-introduction on the course Discussion Board, and posting your perceptions in the Week 1 Discussion.

Attendance Policies
You must log-in to the course on a weekly basis throughout the term and respond to messages sent by your instructor. You must complete all the assignments in the course by their assigned due dates.

Discussion Participation
Students are expected to participate in all graded discussions. While there is great flexibility in online courses, this is not a self-paced course. You will need to participate in our discussions on at least three different days each week, with your first post due no later than Tuesday at 11:59 PM Pacific Time, your second no later than Thursday at 11:59 PM Pacific Time, and third posts due by Sunday at 11:59 PM Pacific Time.

Assignment Due Dates
Students are expected to keep up with the weekly schedule (see “Class Schedule” in “Start Here”). To stay current, students should complete all formative assignments early in the week (by Thursday at 11:59 PM Pacific Time) and summary assignments by the end of each week (by Sunday at 11:59 PM Pacific Time). Late assignments, posted after Sunday, will lose 15% of the possible points for each day they are late.

Missed Assignments
I do not give make-up points and/or extra credit for missed assignments unless 1) you are excused in advance by me, your instructor, or 2) you provide proof of a medical or family emergency.

Incompletes
Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 80% of the points possible (in other words, usually everything but the final paper). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don’t wait until the end of the term—let me know right away.
University and Departmental Policies

**Students with disabilities:** Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

**Conduct in this online classroom:** Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility (listed below). Students will be expected to treat all others with the same respect as they would want afforded to themselves. Disrespectful behavior to others (such as harassing behavior, personal insults, inappropriate language) or disruptive behaviors in the course (such as persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention both in and out of the classroom) is unacceptable and can result in sanctions as defined by Oregon Administrative Rules Division 015 Student Conduct Regulations.

**Please note:** This course follows the university rules on civility and honesty. These can be found at: http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses#acdis. Cheating or plagiarism by students is subject to the disciplinary process outlined in the Student Conduct Regulations. Students are expected to be Honest and ethical in their academic work.

At Oregon State University academic dishonesty is defined by the Oregon Administrative Rules 576-015-0020.1.a-c as: An intentional act of deception in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work. Academic dishonesty includes:

- **CHEATING** - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids or an act of deceit by which a student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information.
- **FABRICATION** - falsification or invention of any information (including inventing or exaggerating data)
- **ASSISTING** - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, or taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else (or allowing someone to do these things for you).
- **TAMPERING** - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents.
- **PLAGIARISM** - representing the word or ideas of another person as one's own OR presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own. This includes copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project, then submitting it as one's own.”

Behaviors disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action.

**Academic dishonesty policies at OSU:** http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/academic-misconduct

“The goal of Oregon State University is to provide students with the knowledge, skill and wisdom they need to contribute to society. Our rules are formulated to guarantee each student's freedom to learn and to protect the fundamental rights of others. People must treat each other with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive. Behaviors that are disruptive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated, and will be referred to the Student Conduct Program for disciplinary action. Behaviors that create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office.”
**Tutoring:** NetTutor is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any computer that has Internet access.

NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the Tools button in your course menu.

**OSU Student Evaluation of Teaching:** Course evaluation results are extremely important and are used to help me improve this course and the learning experience of future students. Results from the 19 multiple choice questions are tabulated anonymously and go directly to instructors and department heads. Student comments on the open-ended questions are compiled and confidentially forwarded to each instructor, per OSU procedures. The online Student Evaluation of Teaching form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions via ONID. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.

The course schedule and student evaluation assignments are subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.