

# **FYSE 109: Natural History of the Low Country**

**Instructor:** Dr. Eric McElroy, mcelroye@cofc.edu

**Office and Office Hours:** Room 57 MRRI (Fort Johnson), By appointment

**Course Meeting Times:** TR 8:00-9:15

**Course Meeting Location:** SSMB 138

**Synthesis Seminar:** Friday 11-11:50am, Bell 308

**Synthesis Seminar Leader:** Joequise (Joe) Wright, wrightjk1@g.cofc.edu

## **1. Course Description**

During this course students will be introduced to the natural history of the diverse ecosystems found within coastal SC through in-class instruction and field trips. We will explore the impacts human settlement and development has had on the natural landscape and living resources. By the end of the course students will be able to identify many common animals and plants and understand how these organisms interact with their environments and with humans. There is no course pre-requisite.

## **2. Learning Outcomes**

- 2.1. Identify and use the appropriate academic resources and student support services at College of Charleston
- 2.2. Use appropriate tools and search strategies for identifying particular types of information specific to the discipline
- 2.3. Evaluate the relevance, quality, and appropriateness of different sources of information
- 2.4. Recognize and classify the information contained within a bibliographic citation
- 2.5. Access and use information ethically and legally
- 2.6. Use appropriate critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques in appropriate disciplinary contexts
- 2.7. Make connections across disciplines and/or relevant experiences
- 2.8. Demonstrate the ability to communicate information verbally, in writing and via technology

## **3. Assessment**

- 3.1. Semester Long Research Project: Organism
- 3.2. Literature Synthesis and Discussion
- 3.3. Natural History Observations
- 3.4. Presentation of 1-3
- 3.5. Website Authoring
- 3.6. Attendance
- 3.7. Participation
- 3.8. Quizzes, Midterm and Final Exams

### **3.1. Semester Long Research Project: Organism and Ecosystem**

- a. You will conduct a semester long research project that will require you to demonstrate your ability to search, comprehend and synthesize the literature on an organism from the Low Country. This will result in the generation of an annotated bibliography and a research paper. I will provide more information about this project with additional handouts.

### **3.2. Literature Synthesis and Discussion**

- a. We will regularly read and discuss the literature on the field of natural history and its relevance to local ecosystems. This will emphasize your ability to navigate

and think critically about the scientific literature and verbally articulate your understanding.

### 3.3. Natural History Observations

- a. A key part of natural history is carefully observation and note-taking and so you will observe an organism throughout the semester. You will need to generate a field notebook where you compile your records. This could be a physical notebook or a digital notebook. This will be your opportunity to learn how to be a good natural historian.

### 3.4. Presentation of 1-3

- a. You will present findings on 1-3 via a powerpoint-style presentation at the end of the semester to demonstrate your verbal communication skills.

### 3.5. Website Authoring

- a. You will generate a website based on 1-3 using google sites to further demonstrate your written and technologically-based communication skills.

### 3.6. Attendance

- a. Class will be interactive and intensive. Being there ensures that you are exposed to my methods of teaching about the learning outcomes.

### 3.7. Participation

- a. I regular use PollEverywhere to help guide the class and synthesize students knowledge or opinions. Your participation in these polls will earn you points. You will earn all points by responding to at least 70% of the polls.

### 3.8. Quizzes, Midterm and Final Exams

- a. These will test your knowledge of the learning outcomes and your ability to recognize local ecosystems, their organisms and the interaction between those organisms. Quizzes and exams will have written and identification components

## Attendance Policy

Attendance will be taken daily in lecture and weekly at the synthesis seminar. You will get all of the attendance points if attend all lecture except 2 (that is, you can miss 2 lectures for whatever reason). Each lecture missed beyond 2 (excused or not excused!) will result in a loss of 25 attendance points. This includes showing up late (I'll take attendance by ~ 0805 each day). Missing more than 4 lecture or more than 1 synthesis seminar will result in your receiving a WA (equivalent to an 'F') for the course. I am serious about you being in lecture and the seminar, as I think students get the most out of all courses when they attend!

## Points Distribution

<u>Component</u>	<u>Points</u>
Semester Long Research Project: Organism	300
Literature Synthesis and Discussion	100
Natural History Observations	75
Presentation of 1-3	100
Attendance	50
Participation	25
Website Authoring	100
Quizzes	50
Midterm Exam	75
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>125</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1000</b>

## Grading Scale

A ( $\geq 925$  points), A- (924-895), B+ (894-865), B (864-825), B- (824-795), C+ (794-765), C (764-725), C- (724-695), D+ (694-665), D (664-625), D- (624-595), F ( $\leq 594$ )

## Center for Student Learning

I encourage you to utilize the Center for Student Learning's (CSL) academic support services for assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and the services are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843)953-5635.

## Disability Services

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply at the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed.

## College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

NOTE: Syllabus is subject to change with notice. This includes the layout of assignments and points distribution.