Instructor: Erik Sotka, Professor ([sotkae@cofc.edu](mailto:sotkae@cofc.edu)).
Office Hours: 1:00-2:00 PM Mondays and Wednesdays via Zoom ([https://cofc.zoom.us/j/3987124212](https://cofc.zoom.us/j/3987124212))

**Communication:** The best way to get a hold of me is through my email. I will respond to you within 24 hours during the weekdays, and on or before Monday if you email after 5pm Friday.

**Instructional Objectives:** Conservation biology is an integrated, multidisciplinary scientific field developed in response to the challenge of preserving species and ecosystems. This course will 1) explore the origin and maintenance of biodiversity at all levels: genetic, population, community, and ecosystem, 2) understand the human impact on biodiversity and 3) outline the solutions; that is, the ecological, genetic and evolutionary approaches that help to maintain biodiversity and their functioning within ecosystems. The 1st two of these goals require a relatively dispassionate search for scientific knowledge. At the center of the third of these goals is a core value: that the long-term preservation of species and ecosystems is an ultimate good. The course is designed to encourage peer-exchange through weekly topics, lectures, and group discussion.

**Course co-requisite or pre-requisite:** BIOL 111/BIOL 111L, BIOL 112/BIOL 112L, BIOL 211/BIOL 211D, and BIOL 305; BIOL 341 or permission of the instructor. MATH 250 or equivalent course in statistics

**Required materials:**
- Reading materials at OAKS
- A book (see Book Report)

**Book Report:** Each student will read a popular book on any subject broadly related to conservation and deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint summary and analysis to the class. A list of potential books will be provided on OAKS, but, as a general rule, the goal of this assignment is to read a moderate length (200 pages or more) book that amplifies our understanding of Conservation Biology and Ecology. Full instructions for the report will be provided on OAKS. Presentations will be carried out in late March and April, so it is recommended that you choose your book and complete the reading no later than March. Please email me with your choice (by February 1 2022) to prevent duplication with other students.

**Student Learning Outcomes.**
The mission of this course is to provide students with opportunities to learn more about the natural environment, the biology, ecology and evolution of biodiversity, while understanding the impact of human activities on the biodiversity. As part of this mission, this specific course will have at its core the following Student Learning Outcomes:

1. *Students will demonstrate an understanding of how conservation biology is interdisciplinary, and invokes scientific, social, economic, cultural, and/or ethical points of view through their exams, writing and leading discussion*
2. *Students will understand the threats to biodiversity at all levels through their exams, writing and leading discussion.*
3. Through their exams, writing and leading discussions, students will demonstrate an understanding of the interconnections between agriculture, energy, human carrying capacity, pollution, and consumption patterns and relate how these issues contribute to anthropogenic climate change.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory for all classes.

**Grading (350 points total)**
- Two exams (50 points each = 100 points)
- Book report (100 points)
- Weekly homework (10 points per week X 10 weeks = 100 points)
- Weekly discussion and DQs (5 points for 10 sets of DQs = 50 points)

**Computers:** Unless you are told otherwise, all assignments should be completed on a computer.

**OAKS:** OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.

**Academic Integrity Statement:** the College of Charleston expects that every student and community member has a responsibility to uphold the standards of the honor code, as outlined in the **Student Handbook**

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Any student eligible for and needing accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services so that reasonable accommodations can be arranged. The Center for Disability Services/SNAP is committed to assisting qualified students with disabilities achieve their academic goals by providing reasonable academic accommodations under appropriate circumstances **Center for Disability Services/SNAP website**.

**Inclement Weather, Pandemic or Substantial Interruption of Instruction:** If in-person classes are suspended, faculty will announce to their students a detailed plan for a change in modality to ensure the continuity of learning. All students must have access to a computer equipped with a web camera, microphone, and Internet access. Resources are available to provide students with these essential tools.

**Recording of Classes** (via ZOOM): Class sessions may be recorded via both voice and video recording. By attending and remaining in this class, the student consents to being recorded. Recorded class sessions are for instructional use only and may not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class.
Schedule (tentative) – see online for RealTime version