

## **BSC 1050: Biology and Environment**

**College of Science, Department of Biology, University of Central Florida**

### **BSC 1050 Syllabus- Fall 2015**

Instructor: Dr. Melinda Donnelly  
Time: MWF: 10:30 am-11:20 am

E-mail: Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu  
Class Location: BA1 119

#### **Course Description**

Biology and Environment: Biological implications of the interaction among human society, population, and technology in relation to the environment and natural systems. Designed for non-majors.

#### **Course Goals**

This course presents an introduction into the basic concepts and complex problems concerning natural systems and the global environment, with a focus on the effect of humans and society on the environment.

By the end of the semester, students who complete all necessary assignments will be able to:

1. Define biotic and abiotic factors of natural systems and the effects on structure and function of the system.
2. Understand the scientific method and its applications to today's environmental problems.
3. Identify reputable sources for information.
4. Learn basic biological concepts and apply to decisions on environmental policy in today's society.

#### **Office Hours**

Location: Biological Sciences Building (BL), room TBD

Monday- 12 pm-3pm

Wednesday- 9 am -10 am

Friday- 9 am -10 am

If you are unable to attend scheduled office hours, alternate times may be arranged with instructor by email [Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu](mailto:Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu)

#### **Course Credit Hours**

3 credits

## **Course Prerequisites**

None

## **Course Requirements**

Internet Access: This is a web enhanced course and all class announcements, lectures, supplementary reading material/websites, quizzes, and assignments will be posted on UCF Webcourses. All assignments will be submitted electronically through UCF Webcourses.

Textbook (\*recommended, not required to purchase for the class\*): *Environmental Science For A Changing World* (1<sup>st</sup> or 2nd edition) by Anne Houtman, Susan Karr, and Jeneen Interlandi, Publishers: W.H. Freeman and Scientific American (1<sup>st</sup> edition: ISBN-13: 978-1-4292-1972-3; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition: ISBN-13: 978-1-4641-6220-6).

Available on-line from publisher:

<http://www.macmillanhighered.com/Catalog/product/scientificamericanenvironmentalscienceforachangingworld-secondedition-karr>

Paper and electronic versions available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

## **Grade Scale**

- A+ 100%+
- A 90%-99%
- B 80%-89%
- C 70%-79%
- D 60%-69%
- F less than 60%

## **Grade Policies**

For final letter grades in this course, grade percentages will be rounded to the nearest whole number (less than 0.5 will be rounded down, 0.5 and greater will be rounded up). All grades will be posted on UCF Webcourses. No grades will be given by e-mail. Questions about grades should be addressed during office hours or by appointment to maintain confidentiality. Anyone requiring grade forms signed during the semester must bring form to office hours. No grade forms will be signed before/after lecture or by e-mail. Final grades will be calculated using the grading scale described in the syllabus and posted on UCF Webcourses after final exams.

**Please note, Webcourses often calculates grades incorrectly and the “final grade” and “current grade” values shown on Webcourses may be inaccurate.**

Your final grade will be based on the following assessments.

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>
Exams (3 exams during semester, drop lowest grade)	200
Final Exam (required)	100
Pre-Test	10
Syllabus Quiz	10
Weekly Quizzes (drop lowest grade)	45
On-Line Activities (drop lowest grade)	50
In-Class Participation (drop lowest 2 weekly grades)	50
On-Line Modules	35
<b>Total Points for Semester</b>	<b>500</b>

## **Grade Assessments**

### **1. Exams**

Three exams will be given during the semester. The lowest regular exam grade will be dropped at the end of the semester and final grade will be calculated with 2 highest exam grades.

### **2. Final Exam**

The final exam will be on **December 14, 2015, 10:00 am – 12:50 pm in BA1 119**. The final exam will be cumulative and have a total of 80 questions, with 40 questions from the last unit of the semester and 40 questions from earlier units. **The final exam is required and will not be dropped.** Final exams will not be given early.

### **3. Pre-Test**

The pre-test will be open on Webcourses during the first week of classes (August 24, 2015 to August 31, 2015). Completion of the pre-test during the designated time is required and will count as 10 points towards final grade (there are no wrong answers- as long as you complete it, you get full credit).

### **4. Syllabus Quiz**

A syllabus quiz will be open on Webcourses during the first week of classes (August 24, 2015 to August 31, 2015). Completion of the syllabus quiz is worth 10 points and you have unlimited time per attempt and unlimited number of attempts.

## 5. Weekly Quizzes

All quizzes will be given through Webcourses (5 pts/quiz). You will have a total of 10 quizzes throughout the semester. Quizzes will be given on a weekly basis during the semester and the lowest quiz score will be dropped at the end of the semester prior to final grade calculation. Quizzes will open on Mondays and close at midnight on the following Sunday and will cover the previous week's material. Due dates for each quiz are listed in the class schedule below. For each of the weekly quizzes, you will have two attempts and your highest grade out of the two attempts will be recorded. These quizzes are open book/notes and unlimited time. All quizzes must be completed during scheduled time and no make-up quizzes will be given.

## 6. On-Line Activities

On-line activities will be posted on Webcourses and submitted electronically through Webcourses for a total of 50 points (10 pts per assignment). Instructions and due dates will be posted on Webcourses throughout the semester at the instructor's discretion. The lowest on-line activity grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.

## 7. In-Class Participation

In-class participation points will be based on responses submitted on paper or electronically through Webcourses during the class period for each day with participation activities (calculated weekly, 5 pts/week). Participation will be given at the discretion of the instructor and will not be announced in advance. Your 2 lowest weekly participation grades will be dropped at the end of the semester and participation will be worth a total of 50 points toward your final grade. There will be no make-ups for missed class participation.

## 8. On-Line Modules

**Lecture class will be cancelled on Friday, September 4 through Friday, September 11.** In place of lecture, there will be three on-line modules posted on Webcourses. Completion of these modules and associated quizzes and discussion posts is required and will be worth 35 pts total.

## Extra Credit

Each student has the chance for 30 total bonus points throughout the semester.

**1. Volunteer Extra Credit-** Earn a total of 10 points by attending up to 2 volunteer days (5 points/day; ~2 hours each day) at the UCF campus, Biology Field Research Center (Bldg. # 92, UCF campus map). **Students must sign-in on class record sheet at events to receive extra credit. No exceptions!**

Activities will include, weeding, watering, and planting saltmarsh plants for restoration, repair and creation of oyster restoration mats, preparation of other restoration materials, and data collection for experiments. Dates and times will be announced in class and posted on Webcourses site throughout the semester.

2. Extra credit video project- 15 points possible. Due Date: 11:59 pm; December 2nd, 2015. Create a Public Service Announcement on an environmental problem found in the area where you live. Video must be between 2-3 minutes and can be an individual submission or group submission (group of 4 students max). Videos should be uploaded to you-tube and video link must be submitted electronically to the class Webcourses site. Videos must be original and plagiarism will result in 0 extra credit points.

3. Bonus Points- 5 points possible. Bonus points will be given out during the semester at the discretion of the instructor.

**If you have a legitimate reason (as determined by the instructor) for not being able to complete any of the above extra credit assignments, alternate assignments can be arranged on a case by case basis.**

### **Exam Policies**

All students will need to provide scantrons (raspberry from UCF Bookstore) for each exam and bring photo ID. Exams will not be accepted without photo ID. Late students may enter classroom after the exam has begun, however, no extra time will be given and exams must be turned in by the posted finish time. Calculators may be used on exams as needed, however, cell phones cannot be used as a calculator and calculators cannot be shared among students. Anyone observed talking, using a cell phone, or sharing calculators during an exam period will receive an automatic zero on the exam.

### **Make-Up Exams**

For unexcused absences on exam days, there will be no make-up exams. A missed exam will count as your lowest exam score and dropped. For excused absences on mid-term exam days (i.e. official UCF school and sports-related events, court appearance, etc.), official documentation must be given to the instructor within one week of absence and make-up exams will be given during office hours or during the final exam period. All excused make-up exams not completed by December 4th, 2015 will be given during the final exam period. Illnesses will only be excused when accompanied by documentation of doctor's visit. No exams will be given early.

## Late Policy

Assignments are due to UCF Webcourses by 11:59 pm on due dates posted in class schedule. Assignments turned in late will be penalized using the following scale: midnight to 24 hrs past deadline: -25% of points, 24-48 hrs past deadline: -50% of points, 48-72 hrs past deadline: -75% of points, after 72 hrs past deadline: no credit given. It is the student's responsibility to make sure assignments are uploaded correctly and submitted to UCF Webcourses by the due date. I strongly recommend double-checking your submission to be sure it was uploaded correctly and is visible on UCF Webcourses before the due date.

## Incomplete Grades

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. The instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

## Classroom Policies

E-mails to instructor must be made from your official UCF address (name@knights.ucf.edu) and will not receive a reply if sent from other e-mail addresses. All e-mails from instructor will also be sent to your UCF address, so please check regularly throughout the semester. I will respond to e-mails as soon as possible, however, please expect at least 24 hrs for a response.

Attendance of class regularly is necessary for successful completion of this course. Lectures will be posted on-line, however, additional material covered in class such as examples, practice problems and current event topics will be included on exams and may not be included in on-line lectures.

Please arrive on time for all class meetings and refrain from disturbing the class, including talking, arriving late or using electronic devices. Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. **must be silenced** during all class lectures and exams. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment.

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules

will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. A “Z Designation”, meaning the letter Z will precede student’s final grade for this course, will be placed on student’s official UCF transcripts to indicate academic dishonesty (for more information on Z designation see <http://z.ucf.edu>). At the instructor’s discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course and confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

### **Disability Access**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

## Class Schedule

\*Schedule subject to change and all changes will be given in class and posted on-line. All quizzes are due by 11:59 pm on the Sunday after the quiz opens.

Units	Week	Date	Lecture	Assignments, Quizzes, Tests	Book Chapters
Environment and Society	1	8/24/2015	Introduction	Syllabus Quiz, Pre-Test, On-Line Participation #1 Opens	
	1	8/26/2015	History of Environmental Science		1
	1	8/28/2015	Sustainability		26
	2	8/31/2015	Good Science vs. Bad Science	Quiz 1 Opens	3
	2	9/2/2015	Scientific Method and Gathering Information		2
	2	9/4/2015	No Class		
	3	9/7/2015	No Class- Labor Day	Quiz 2 Opens	
	3	9/9/2015	No Class		
	3	9/11/2015	No Class		
	4	9/14/2015	Environmental Ethics	Quiz 3 Opens	5
	4	9/16/2015	Social Traps		1,5
	4	9/18/2015	Threats to Biodiversity		
	5	9/21/2015	Climate Change	Quiz 4 Opens	22
	5	9/23/2015	Conservation Biology		
	5	9/25/2015	Unit 1 Wrap-Up		
	6	9/28/2015	Exam 1		
Basics of Environmental Science	6	9/30/2015	Biodiversity		9
	6	10/2/2015	Population Ecology		7
	7	10/5/2015	Human Populations	Quiz 5 Opens	4,7
	7	10/7/2015	Evolution and Extinction		10
	7	10/9/2015	Evolution and Extinction		10
	8	10/12/2015	Community Ecology	Quiz 6 Opens	8



	8	10/14/2015	Community Ecology		8
	8	10/16/2015	Ecosystems		6
	9	10/19/2015	Ecosystems	Quiz 7 Opens	6
	9	10/21/2015	Restoration Ecology		
	9	10/23/2015	Unit 2 Wrap-Up		
	10	10/26/2015	Exam 2		
Sustainability of Earth's Resources	10	10/28/2015	Forests		11
	10	10/30/2015	Grasslands		12
	11	11/2/2015	Sustainability and Agriculture	Quiz 8 Opens	18
	11	11/4/2015	Freshwater Systems		15
	11	11/6/2015	Marine Ecosystems		13
	12	11/9/2015	Fisheries and Aquaculture	Quiz 9 Opens	14
	12	11/11/2015	No Class- Veteran's Day		
	12	11/13/2015	Polluting Our Environment		16,21
	13	11/16/2015	Polluting Our Environment	Quiz 10 Opens	16,21
	13	11/18/2015	Humans and Trash		17
	13	11/20/2015	Unit 3 Wrap-Up		
	14	11/23/2015	Exam 3		
Sustainability and Energy	14	11/25/2015	Environmental Science: Fact or Fiction		
	14	11/27/2015	No Class- Thanksgiving Holiday		
	15	11/30/2015	Fossil Fuels		19,20,21
	15	12/2/2015	Alternative Energy	You-Tube Video Due by 11:59 pm	23,24, 25
	15	12/4/2015	Sustainability and Society		26
	16	12/7/2015	Semester Wrap-Up, Last Day of Classes		
	17	12/14/2012	Final Exam (10:00 am - 12:50 pm)		Cumulative

