

## Course Syllabus

PCB 3044: Principles of Ecology

Department of Biology, College of Science

3 Credit Hours

### Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Melinda Donnelly

Office Location: Biological Sciences (BIO) Building, room 401A

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11 AM to 1 PM

Appointments outside of posted office hours are available and scheduled by email

Email: Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu

All emails will receive a response within 24-48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays

Email must include the following information...

### Salutation

Your name

Include that you are enrolled in Ecology

Before emailing me with a question about course policies, you must read the lecture syllabus to find the answer yourself.

Grades must be discussed with the instructor during office hours and can not be given over email.

All e-mail communications must be from your Knight's E-mail addresses, any other emails will not receive a response per UCF policy.

### Course Information

Term: Fall 2022

Course Number & Section: PCB 3044.0001

Course Name: Principles of Ecology

Credit Hours: 3

Class Meeting Days: Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00 AM to 10:20 AM

Class Location: HS1 112

Course Modality: Face-to-Face (P)

## Enrollment Requirements

Course Prerequisites: C or better in Biology II (BSC 2011C) and Chemistry Fundamentals 1 (CHM 2045C).

## Course Description

This 3-credit course will examine the structure and function of ecological systems, including populations, communities, and ecosystems. Objectives for students include: (a) master major concepts and basic terminology of ecology, (b) understand how evolution and ecology complement each other, and (c) understand approaches of ecological study, including theory, observations, and experiments.

## Course Materials and Resources

Textbook: Ecology 5th Edition by William D. Bowman; Sally D. Hacker; Publisher: Sinauer Associates, Sunderland, MA. Multiple versions and options for purchase and rent are available- purchasing the access code for the publisher site is recommended due to additional on-line content to support the virtual nature of this course.

eTextbook option: ISBN: 9781605359236, 1605359238

Print version ISBN: 9781605359212, 1605359211.

## Internet Access and Webcourses

Webcourses will be used for aspects of this class, including class related material and communication:

Course Syllabus

Weekly Modules

Lecture Slides

Exam review material

Weekly Quizzes, Participation Assignments

Announcements

To ensure that you receive important announcements, you are required to have your announcements setting turned on. You are responsible for information sent to students via Webcourses Announcements.

Grades for all course components

## Student Learning Outcomes

Understand the basic principles of ecology as a cornerstone of a broad background in biology.

Learn some of the basic ecological terminology.

Appreciate and apply the theoretical concepts of ecology and the experimental evidence supporting them.

Become familiar with the scientific method as applied to ecological studies.

Gain an appreciation of ecology as a science and its role in understanding the man-nature interaction.

## Assessment and Grading Procedures

Assessment      Percentage of Grade

Participation    6%

Weekly Quizzes 6%

4 lecture exams (22% each)      88%

Total      100%

### Final Course Grade Rounding Policy:

If your final total across all grading components is less than or equal to one percent below a higher grade, rounding up to the higher grade will occur only if you scored at the higher grade on 3 of the 4 exams. For example, if your overall course grade was an 89% and your exam scores were 84, 91, 92, and 93, your final grade will be rounded up to an A because three of the tests scored at 90 or above. If, however your exam grades were 85, 88, 92, and 94, the grade would remain a B+ because only 2 of your 4 exam grades were 90 or above. As there are many students in this class I strive for consistency and fairness. For this reason, there will be no exceptions to this policy and no other adjustments will be made. In other words, unless the above criteria are met, a 79.99 is still a 'C+' and no additional curving or extra credit will be offered.

### Grading Scale:

A	90-100%
B+	87-89%
B	80-86%

C+	77-79%
C	70-76%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%
F	<60%

\*In compliance with FERPA, no grades will be given via email or phone

Students wishing to discuss their grades must request an appointment with Dr. Donnelly by email.

Grades will not be discussed with any individual (even parents) other than the student

#### Course Activity Details

#### Attendance Verification for Financial Aid Students

Faculty are required to document student attendance/participation in this course so that financial aid monies are disbursed appropriately and in a timely manner.

To document your attendance and participation in this course you are required to complete the Academic Engagement Activity - Syllabus Quiz in Webcourses no later than Friday, August 26th.

Failure to complete this quiz will result in the delay of your financial aid funds

This quiz is related to the lecture syllabus. Your score on this quiz will count as 1 pt towards your general participation grade (described below).

#### General Participation Grade (6% of semester grade)

Your Participation grade will be evaluated based on completion of on-line activities related to weekly modules and in-class participation questions administered using quizzes in Webcourses. For in-class participation questions, a passcode will be given during in-class lectures to access the quiz. If you do not have access to electronic devices during lecture, please contact Dr. Donnelly for alternative arrangements.

Please note sharing the passcode with students not attending will be considered cheating and both students will be subjected to penalties as described in Academic Integrity section below.

At the end of the semester, the lowest two participation grades will be dropped. Contact Dr. Donnelly if additional participation activities are missed; documentation may be required at the discretion of instructor for additional excused participations.

Extra Credit: It is not necessary to respond correctly to participation questions to receive participation credit for a particular day, but correct responses will benefit your grade via extra credit added to your overall exam average. The maximum possible extra credit is 2%. Extra credit points missed for any reason cannot be made up under any circumstance.

#### Weekly Quizzes (6% of semester grade)

There will be eleven online quizzes given through Webcourses, one per week except for any week an exam is being given.

Each quiz will consist of multiple choice questions and short-answer questions based on module content.

These quizzes are intended to help you learn along the way. The quizzes are open-book and you will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz. Quizzes are open book but require prior preparation to successfully complete the quiz in the time allotted. If you are not satisfied with your grade on a quiz it may be taken a second time prior to the due date and the best score of the two will count.

Your lowest (1) quiz grade will be dropped from your final grade.

Quizzes will be open on Mondays and close at 11:59PM on Friday.

Important: There are NO makeups or excused absences for missed quizzes (unless a student can provide documentation affecting them longer than 1 week, e.g. extended hospitalization, sequestered jury duty, etc. that prevented computer access).

If you miss taking a quiz, you will receive a zero (0) for that quiz's grade. Therefore, do NOT wait until the last minute to take the quiz.

Technical or internet difficulties will NOT be accepted as an excuse for missing quizzes.

Students are responsible for knowing the quiz due dates which can be found on Webcourses

Final submission of the quiz must occur prior to the 30-minute deadline or Webcourses will not accept it.

#### Lecture Exams (88% of semester grade)

Four exams will be given throughout the semester in-class during class times on following dates:

Exam 1: Monday, Sept. 19th

Exam 2: Monday, October 10th

Exam 3: Monday, Nov. 7th

Exam 4: Wednesday, November 30th

Each exam is worth 22% of final grade- all exams count towards final grade.

Exam content is based on material covered in book chapters, lectures, and modules.

Any students arriving late to the exam must complete the exam in the time remaining.

Exams can be reviewed during office hours after make-up exams have been completed until the date of the following exam.

### Make-up Exams and Assignments

Per university policy, you are allowed to submit make-up work (or an equivalent, alternate assignment) for authorized university-sponsored activities, religious observances, or legal obligations (such as jury duty). If this participation conflicts with your course assignments, I will offer a reasonable opportunity for you to complete missed assignments and/or exams. The make-up assignment and grading scale will be equivalent to the missed assignment and its grading scale. In the case of an authorized university activity, it is your responsibility to show me a signed copy of the Program Verification Form for which you will be absent, prior to the class in which the absence occurs. Other absences may require documentation to be excused at the instructor's discretion. In any of these cases, please contact me ahead of time to notify me of upcoming needs.

For a missed excused exam, the make-up exam must be completed by the date of the next exam. All make-up and late assignments must be completed or submitted to Webcourses by the last day of the classes on Friday, December 2nd. No assignments or make-up exams will be accepted after the last class date.

Consult the latest Undergraduate or Graduate catalog [Links to an external site.](#) for regulations and procedures regarding grading such as Incomplete grades, grade changes, and grade forgiveness.

### Course Schedule

See the complete Course Schedule for dates and deadlines.

Weekly modules will open on Mondays and include lecture files and links to on-line resources associated with the topics included in the textbook chapters listed below. The modules are designed for you to complete at your own pace over the course of the week. On all weeks except exam weeks, quizzes will open on Monday with the module information and be due by 11:59 pm on the following Friday. Quizzes will test knowledge of material presented in the weekly module and associated textbook readings.

Any changes to the schedule will be announced to the class through Webcourses.

## Study suggestions:

This is a fast-paced class covering multiple chapters each week. To succeed it is essential that you stay caught up by reading, attending lectures, and studying the material. Students who prepare for the exams by simply attending lectures and reading their notes several times are unlikely to succeed on the exams. Although the final exam is not cumulative, concepts build on each other and understanding one chapter is essential to understanding later chapters in this course. To succeed it is best to make your learning more active and focused. Active learning involves practicing the same skills you must perform on exams. In other words, quick recall of the appropriate information and applying it. To do this you should:

Treat studying like it's a job. Set a schedule, show up for work, pay attention (i.e. no multitasking) while on the job. A general rule of thumb is 2-3 hours for every hour of class.

Practice by Self-Testing. Make your own study questions: If you are like most people, you do not remember what you read/hear in sufficient detail to then be tested. However, it may be unclear which details you remember/understand and which you do not. The point in study questions is to figure out prior to an exam what you don't understand or have trouble remembering and work on that material. You do not want to realize during an exam that you don't understand something as well as you thought you did as it is now too late!

## University Services and Resources

### Academic Services and Resources

A list of available academic support and learning services is available at UCF Student Services [Links to an external site.](#) Click on "Academic Support and Learning Services" on the right-hand side to filter.

### Non-Academic Services and Resources

A list of non-academic support and services is also available at UCF Student Services [Links to an external site.](#) Click on "Support" on the right-hand side to filter.

If you are a UCF Online student, please consult the UCF Online Student Guidelines [Links to an external site.](#) for more information about your access to non-academic services.

## Policy Statements

## Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

**Unauthorized assistance:** Using, attempting, or sharing unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating as does sharing the passcode for in-class assignments.

**Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means:** The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.

**Commercial Use of Academic Material:** Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.

**Falsifying or misrepresenting the student's own academic work.**

**Plagiarism:** Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.

**Multiple Submissions:** Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.

**Helping another violate academic behavior standards.**

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult The Center for Academic Integrity.

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices".

## Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, The Golden Rule. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education



and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade>.

### Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, [sas@ucf.edu](mailto:sas@ucf.edu), phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

### Campus Safety Statement

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.

Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at [http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency\\_guide.html](http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html) Links to an external site..

Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.

If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <https://ehs.ucf.edu/automated-external-defibrillator-aed-locations> Links to an external site..

To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> Links to an external site. and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."

Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.

To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<<https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk> (Links to an external site.)

#### Deployed Active Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

#### Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

#### Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

#### Schedule

Weekly modules will open on Mondays (with a few exceptions based on exam dates) and include lecture files and links to on-line resources associated with the topics included in the textbook chapters listed below. The modules are designed for you to complete at your own pace over the course of the week. On all weeks except exam weeks, weekly quizzes and participation activities will open on Monday with the module information and be due by 11:59 pm on Friday. Quizzes will test knowledge of material presented in the weekly module and associated textbook readings.

All exams will be given in-class this semester and the dates are listed in the schedule below.

Any changes to the schedule will be announced to the class through Webcourses.

Date	Module #	Lecture Topic	Book Chapter	Quizzes
8/22/2022	0, 1	Syllabus, Introduction to Ecology	1	Academic Activity Quiz and Quiz 1 Opens
8/24/2022		The Physical Environment	2	
8/29/2022	2	The Biosphere_Part 1	3	Quiz 2 opens
8/31/2022		The Biosphere_Part 2	3	
9/5/2022	3	No Classes: Labor Day		Quiz 3 opens
9/7/2022		Evolution and Ecology	6	
9/12/2022	4	Energy	5	Quiz 4 opens
9/14/2022		Water and Temperature	4	
9/19/2022		Exam 1	Chapters 1-6	No quiz this week
9/21/2022	5	Life History	7	
9/26/2022	6	Behavioral Ecology	8	Quiz 5 opens
9/28/2022		Population Distribution and Abundance	9	
10/3/2022	7	Population Growth, Regulation, Dynamics	10, 11	Quiz 6 opens
10/5/2022		Population Growth, Regulation, Dynamics	10, 11	
10/10/2022		Exam 2	Chapters 7-11	No quiz this week
10/12/2022	8	Predation and Parasitism	12, 13	
10/17/2022	8 Cont.	Competition	14	Quiz 7 opens
10/19/2022		Mutualism and Commensalism	15	
10/24/2022	9	The Nature of Communities	16	Quiz 8 opens
10/26/2022		Species Diversity in Communities	19	
10/31/2022	10	Change in Communities	17	Quiz 9 opens
11/2/2022		Biogeography	18	
11/7/2022		Exam 3	Chapters 12-19	No quiz this week
11/9/2022	11	Production and Trophic Structure	20, 21	

11/14/2022	11 cont.	Nutrient Cycling	22	Quiz 10 opens
11/16/2022	12	Landscape Ecology and Ecosystem Management	24	
11/21/2022		Global Ecology	25	Quiz 11 opens
11/23/2022		No Classes: Thanksgiving Break		
11/28/2022	13	Conservation Biology	23	
11/30/2022		Exam 4	Chapters 20-25	