

PCB 3354 - Tropical Ecology and Conservation

Fall 2020, 3 credits

The course calendar can be found at the end of the syllabus

Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 pm -1:45 pm on Zoom
(Link available on Webcourses on the "Zoom" page)

Instructor: Dr. Gregg Klowden (pronounced "Cloud - in")

Office Hours: Tue 10:30-11:30a, Wed 2-3p, Thur 10:30-11:30a, or by appointment

Office Hour location: On Zoom. The link is available on Webcourses on the "Office Hours" page.

E-mail: You may contact me via (A) the email inside Webcourses or (B) your Knights email at gklowden@ucf.edu

I receive a large volume of emails from several courses. To help me help you, you must include:

- + A subject with (A) the course name (FL Ecology) and (B) a brief description of your question (e.g. FL Ecology – Question about swamp lecture)
- + Your first and last names in the message body
- * If your message does not conform to the above guidelines it may go unanswered or be delayed
- * Due to confidentiality, I will only reply to questions emailed within Webcourses or from your Knights email.
- * I will try to respond to emails within 48 hours however, response time may be greater.
- * Please plan accordingly by not waiting to the last minute to contact me with questions or concerns.
- * Questions about grades must be discussed during office hours or using the Webcourses email.

Course Prerequisite: Principals of Ecology (PCB 3044C) with a grade of C or better

Intended Audience: Advanced Biological Science majors & minors.

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the geography, ecology, and environmental problems encountered in various tropical ecosystems with particular emphasis towards terrestrial systems in tropical rainforests. You will study species diversity, community structure and biogeographic patterns of tropical flora and fauna in various ecosystems and the main abiotic and biotic characteristics that contribute to their distribution, abundance and dynamics including climate, hydrology, soils, nutrient cycles, species interactions and coevolution. In the last part of the course you will study the effects of human activities on species, biological communities and ecosystems and consider various conservation issues and strategies from both theoretical and practical standpoints.

Course Goals: I want you to take away several things from this course. I want to move beyond the "Discovery Channel" approach to the tropics and, while keeping a sense of the wonder of tropical diversity, help you develop a sound background in modern tropical ecology and conservation, and the tools to continue learning about and acting on behalf of tropical ecosystems.

Specifically, by the end of the course:

1. You should understand modern ecological and evolutionary theory that applies to "how the tropics work", and why tropical ecosystems are different (if they are) from temperate systems. For example, why are there are so many species in the tropics? How is species diversity maintained? How do physiological and behavioral adaptations shape interactions among organisms?
2. "The Tropics" are not monolithic – there are high diversity rain forests, low diversity dry forests, coastal mangroves, alpine páramo, seasonally flooded forests, and many kinds of agro-ecosystems - these systems vary widely in what makes them work. I want you to have a working knowledge of ecosystem diversity in the tropics, and its biogeographic distribution.
3. You should come away from the course with a better understanding of some of the threats to tropical ecosystems

Required Resources:

- Text: There is not a text for this course.

+ Hardware: Desktop or laptop computer, stable internet connection, web camera, microphone

+ Software: Webcourses@UCF supported web browser, Zoom*, Microsoft 365*, Adobe Acrobat*
(*free download available for all students at <https://ucfapps.cloud.com>)

+ Webcourses: Zoom, announcements, assignments, grades, etc. will be made available at this site.

+ Zoom: Due to the continued remote instruction requirement because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this course will use Zoom for synchronous ("real time") class meetings. In other words, this class will meet at the scheduled times, and lectures and activities will occur on Zoom. Meetings should appear on your Webcourses calendar. While Zoom can be accessed via your mobile phone or tablet, a desktop or laptop computer is preferred as other class activities require a desktop or laptop computer.

A few things you should know about Zoom:

- Find the scheduled meeting invitation on the Zoom tab on the class Webcourses page.
- You must sign into Zoom within Webcourses and using your UCF NID and password.
- Be on time. Upon joining the meeting, you will be placed in a waiting room and permitted entry only during the first few minutes of class to prevent unauthorized participants from joining.
- The Zoom sessions are recorded. You can rewatch a session by going to the Zoom page in Webcourses and clicking on the 'Cloud Recordings' tab.
- Please be respectful and kind to one another during remote learning, the same way you would during a face-to-face class. Help each other and be patient when technical difficulties arise.
- Improper behavior will not be tolerated during class and may result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct.
- It is likely that there will be occasional internet glitches. If I lose internet, I will resume the lecture as soon as possible.

For information and tips for online learning see: <https://digitallearning.ucf.edu/newsroom/keeplearning/>

For technical support see: <https://www.ucf.edu/online/student-resources/ucf-it-support/>
or: <https://cdl.ucf.edu/support/webcourses/>

Performance Evaluation:

	Proportion of grade
Academic Activity Verification	2 %
Midterm Exam (x1)	33 %
Rainforest journal article presentation	7 %
Rainforest presentation quizzes (1.5% x 9)	13.5%
Tropical Biome Website	20 %
Website Oral Presentation	7 %
Website quizzes (1.5% x 7)	10.5%
Website critiques (Peer review)	<u>7 %</u>
	100 %

Grading Scale:

A	93.0 - 100%	B+	87.0 - 89.9%	C+	77.0 - 79.9%	D+	67.0 - 69.9%	F	0 - 59.9%
A-	90.0 - 92.9%	B	83.0 - 86.9%	C	73.0 - 76.9%	D	63.0 - 66.9%		
		B-	80.0 - 82.9%	C-	70.0 - 72.9%	D-	60.0 - 62.9%		

***Note, Webcourses often calculates grades incorrectly and the "final grade" and "current grade" values shown may be inaccurate.

Grade Rounding Policy: The overall semester grade will not be rounded. In other words, either you have the grade or you don't. In other words, a 79.99 is still a 'C'. 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 (i.e. No additional curving or extra credit will be offered).

Attendance and Participation Policies:

1. All lectures will be via Zoom beginning promptly at the designated start time. Please be on time. Zoom meeting participants will initially be placed in a waiting room until admitted at the start of the lecture. If you are late you will have to sit in the waiting room and will only be admitted at a natural break in the lecture.
2. Attendance on presentation days is required. You must be on time. If you are late you may not be admitted and may miss the presentations and associated quiz. Absences on presentation days will result in a 5% course grade reduction for each absence plus a zero on the quiz.
3. Attendance on lecture days is not mandatory but is strongly recommended. On many lecture days there will be brief in-class activities and/or polls. If you participate in all in-class activities and polls you will receive a 5% bonus on the exam. For each day

you miss an activity or poll, this will be reduced by 1%. So, if you miss 5 days, you will not receive any bonus on the exam. If you choose not to attend live lecture, you are still responsible for all material covered in class.

There are many benefits to attending live lectures vs. watching videos including:

- (A) Being able to ask questions and receive an answer right away and an overall savings of time;
 - (B) Increasing your efficiency of time use. Attending live lectures and taking notes live is the most efficient use of your limited time. Many students believe that substituting live lecture with recorded lectures will improve their grades since they can stop and start and rewatch portions of the lecture. However, studies have shown that students who only use recordings do not do better on the exams than those who only attend live lectures. And using recordings can be very time consuming. Live lectures require you to pay close attention, improving your understanding, and push you to take notes without stopping and starting the video. This decreases the amount of time you spend on each lecture. And let's face it, anything that saves you time is a good thing. Also, watching the lecture and taking notes is not studying. So save some time to actually study and learn the material.
 - (C) Watching the videos at a later time requires self-discipline that many people do not have. Often time you intend to watch the video but don't and then suddenly you have 5 videos to watch. Attending live lecture increases the chance you actually will watch the videos and that you won't have to suddenly cram to catch up.
4. If you have a valid, documented reason for missing a required class, you must provide Dr. Klowden with appropriate documentation from a competent authority (physician, coach, counselor, etc.). Falsified documentation will be dealt with according to university academic honesty policies. Acceptable absences include major illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular or professional requirements (e.g. attending a scientific meeting), court-imposed legal obligations, military obligations, certain religious holidays, and participation in official university-sponsored activities (e.g. intercollegiate athletics). For unforeseeable absences, documentation must be received within 3 days of your absence. When foreseeable, you must contact Dr. Klowden prior to the absence to make arrangements for completion of assignments. Excuses from relatives (including relatives who are doctors, dentists, attorneys, etc.) will NOT be accepted. Work-related absences will NOT be considered a valid excuse.
5. Excused absences do not excuse you from assignments. Discuss assignment make-up options with Dr. Klowden. While a make-up assignment or exam will be similar in difficulty to that assigned to the class, its content will differ.

Lectures

Engage your brain - take notes and ask questions! You are responsible for all material covered in class. Though recordings of lectures will be available on Webcourses (in the Zoom page on the 'Cloud Recordings' tab), it is not a very good use of your time to have to rewatch lectures. Taking notes the 1st time will allow you more time for other things like studying for the exam.

On many lecture days there will be brief in-class activities and/or polls. If you participate in all in-class activities and polls you will receive a 5% bonus on the exam. For each day you miss an activity or poll, this will be reduced by 1%. So, if you miss 5 days, you will not receive any bonus on the exam.

Academic Activity Verification

To meet the registrar's requirement for documentation of your participation in this course, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. Completion of the following assignments will serve to document that you began this course and will also aid in the 2 major assignments. Be sure to complete these by 5pm on the deadline. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

- A. How to Avoid Plagiarism
- B. Searching for Scientific Journal Articles
- C. UCF Creed Based Academic Integrity Commitment

Exam

There will be one midterm exam which will be held during the scheduled class time and will only be available during this time. There will not be a final exam. The amount of time given to complete the midterm exam will reflect the amount of time Dr. Klowden believes to be needed for a well-studied student to complete the exam. If you do not know the material well, you may have trouble finishing the exam in the allotted time. If you are late, you will be allowed to take the exam but will not be given additional time.

Questions will pertain to material covered in lectures but not student presentations. The questions will primarily be essay so a good understanding of the material is necessary to do well. During the exam, you will see 1 question at a time and will not be able to change your answer once you move to the next question and will not be permitted to view the previous question. Exam questions and their order will vary among students but will be similar in difficulty.

The exam is closed book. You may not receive assistance from anyone or give assistance to anyone. You may not chat with others, even if your chat is not directly related to the exam content as you may be tempted to discuss the exam. Exams questions may not be duplicated by any means and may not be distributed. If you are aware of academic dishonesty it is important to report it as quickly as possible. Otherwise you risk devaluation of your degree and hard work. Non-reporting is also considered academic dishonesty.

Grades will be posted on Webcourses. The exam can be reviewed individually during my office hours. You must have an active video camera to review exams. Only 1 person at a time will be able to review the exam. If multiple people have joined the same office hours to review the exam you will need to be patient and I will get to you as soon as possible.

Makeup Exam Policy

Unexcused absence from an exam will result in a failing grade for the missed exam. If you miss an exam, you will not automatically be granted a make-up: these will be given only in exceptional circumstances, and with a valid, documented reason (see attendance policy above). Make-up exams, IF permitted, will be similar in difficulty to that assigned to the class but will have different questions.

Rainforest journal article presentation

Summary:

- You will present a scientific journal article from a peer reviewed journal on Zoom during class.
- The focus of the article must be related to the natural history, ecology, conservation (population/species or ecosystem), or management (habitat, populations, human-dimensions) of any TROPICAL RAINFOREST organism (plant, animal, fungus, microbe, etc.) or ecosystem.
- 7-9 minutes in length, no more no less.
- Date and topic reservation due by 9/3
- Questions and PDF copy of article due by 11:59 pm the night before your presentation.

Article criteria:

- Must be related to the natural history, ecology, conservation (population/species or ecosystem), or management (habitat, populations, human-dimensions) of any TROPICAL RAINFOREST organism (plant, animal, fungus, microbe, etc.) or ecosystem.
- Must be from a peer reviewed scientific journal (i.e. no popular press)
- Must be from the last 15 years.
- May be an observational or hypothesis based studied. May not be a summary or opinion paper.
- Must be at least 5 pages of text (without citations) in length. But make sure you do not pick an article that is too long (e.g. 20 pages) or too varied or complex as this would be hard to summarize in such a limited time.
- If the paper does not meet the given criteria, Dr. Klowden will remove you from the schedule and you will need to find a new paper and time slot.

Finding an article:

- To find an article, I suggest searching in Google Scholar or other scientific journal databases in the library (e.g. Web of Science) using specific search terms (e.g. Keywords: New Guinea, bowerbird, conservation) or if you prefer you can browse tropical focused journals (e.g. Tropical Ecology, Journal of Tropical Ecology, Revista de Biología Tropical (Spanish and English), or Tropical Conservation Science) but that could take a while.

Presentation Expectations:

- 7-9 minutes. Maximum 9 minutes, including questions or comments. Actual presentation must be at least 7 minutes.
 - As there are many presentations on each day it is essential that you do not exceed the allotted time to assure that there is enough time for all scheduled presentations. You will be abruptly cutoff at 9 minutes.
- Presentations may be live (PowerPoint, Prezi, WPS Presentation, Google Slides, Canva, etc.) or may be prerecorded using the already mentioned presentation software or software for slideshows (Photostage, Icecream slideshow maker, Bolide Slideshow Creator, etc.) or movie-making software (Lightworks, Windows Live Movie Maker, iMovie, Shotcut, etc.)
- Discuss the entire article: When, where, research question, methods (brief), important results (including important graphs or figures), important conclusions.
- Include a title slide with prominent article title/authors & your name and smaller complete citation

- I suggest using graphics to help in your description of methods. Makes it clearer and will use less time.
- Presentations will be graded by Dr. Klowden based on (A) content, (B) appearance (search web for tips), and (C) presentation style (volume, enunciation, rate, etc.). It is essential that you practice, practice, practice to not only improve your presentation but to assure that it falls within the 7-9 minute time frame.
- I suggest that you perform or play the presentation for others before going live in class. That way you can receive feedback and improve it prior to 'game day'.
- The top 2 presentations from each day receive a 2% and 1% bonus on the midterm exam. So make your presentation interesting and dynamic. Use pictures, maps, diagrams, etc.
- On the night BEFORE your presentation – You must submit 3 multiple choice quiz style questions about your presentation by 11:59 pm on the night before your presentation. The correct answer must be preceded with a * (e.g. *C.). Strive for questions which would be relatively easy if someone was paying attention but not obvious if not paying attention. Be sure they have been edited for clarity and spelling. These will factor into your presentation grade. It is a violation of academic integrity to share your quiz questions with others prior to the quiz.
- The order of the presentations on each day will be picked randomly and announced at the start of class. So be prepared, as it is possible you may be first, last, or somewhere in between.

Date/ topic Reservations

- Look at the dates and topic locations in the table below. Check on Webcourses (see below) to make sure a date is still available. There are 6 slots available on all days except 10/8 where there are only 2. Depending on the status of enrollment, Dr. Klowden may have to make adjustments to the schedule, which means your date could change (but not topic).
- Search for a paper that conforms to the location and above criteria and go to Webcourses to reserve your date.
- You must reserve your date/ region/ article, no later than Thursday 9/3.
 - Late reservations will lose 5% per day on the presentation grade.
- To reserve a date/ topic, go to the "Discussions" page on Webcourses and click on the Journal Article Presentation reservation link. This will take you to Signup Genius where you can enter your citation on your chosen date.
 - Citations should be in APA style (Author, A. (Publication Year). Article title. *Periodical Title*, Volume(Issue), pp.-pp.).
For example: Kershaw, F. et al. (2013). Informing conservation units: barriers to dispersal for the yellow anaconda. *Diversity and Distributions*, 19(9), 1164-1174.
 - Look at other articles already reserved for your region and be sure not to reserve the same or similar organism or topic.
 - This process is 1st come, 1st served, so the sooner you act the more likely you will get your preferred date, region, & topic.
 - DO NOT simply enter a placeholder to reserve a spot. I will consider this cheating and give you a zero on this assignment. Only enter a citation when you are relatively confident of your journal article selection.

• Dates/ regions

9/15 - Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean

9/22 - Mexico, Central America, and Caribbean

9/29 - South America

10/6 - South America

10/8 – Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Sulawesi, Papua, etc.), Philippines, New Guinea, Australia

10/13 – Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Sulawesi, Papua, etc.), Philippines, New Guinea, Australia

10/15 – Southeast Asia

10/22 - Africa

10/27 - Africa

Rainforest Presentation Quizzes:

- Following the last presentation on each day you will need to complete a brief quiz on Webcourses on the day's presentations. You may not take the quiz if you were not present for all of the presentations. Quizzes are open note but should only be based on notes you have taken during the presentations. The point in this is to encourage you to pay attention to and learn from other's presentations and you should easily earn full credit if you do. It is a violation of academic integrity to share quiz questions with others prior to the quiz.

Tropical Biome Website

For this assignment you will construct a website discussing the flora, fauna, and conservation of a tropical biome and particular ecosystem.

There are 14 possible tropical biomes:

Terrestrial Biomes:

1. Tropical dry forest
2. Tropical savannah
3. Tropical grassland
4. Tropical hot desert
5. Tropical island

Mountain Biomes:

6. Tropical cloud forest
7. Paramo
8. Puna grassland
9. Polylepis forest

Aquatic Biomes:

10. Tropical river OR Floodplains
11. Tropical lake
12. Tropical mangrove
13. Tropical seagrass
14. Tropical coral reef

- This project will be done in a group of 3 to 4 students, so will require coordination outside of class, but also entails individual contributions by each member:
 - Each group is responsible for constructing a webpage that includes general information about your biome, general information about your specific ecosystem(s), 3-4 conservation case studies (1 per group member)
 - Each group member is individually responsible for obtaining the information for 1 detailed conservation case study.
- Websites can be built and made publically available using freely available site building websites such as Wix or Weebly or by other means as long as it is made publically available on the internet for class review. Wix and Weebly are very easy to use, even for those of you that may be somewhat technologically challenged.
- Complete details regarding the expectations for this project will be made available on Webcourses shortly.
- Biome Reservations:

To reserve a biome, go to the "Discussions" page on Webcourses and click on the Biome Website reservation link. This will take you to Signup Genius where you can select your preferred biome. This process is 1st come 1st served so don't delay. I encourage you to pick a biome which you know very little about to really increase your knowledge of the tropics.
- Once groups have been finalized, I will create individual Webcourses pages for each group. Within these pages you can have discussions, cowrite/ edit using Google Docs, store documents, etc.
- ❖ **A note on groups*** - While the dynamics of group work can be challenging, it offers many advantages including reduced work load and more effective partitioning of individual interests and abilities. Working well in a group is a skill that will benefit you in your professional life. Please try to act professionally and work out your issues amongst yourselves. If this is not possible then please come see me early and do not wait for the issue to fester. I expect that you will partition the work equally and no one will do more or less than his/her/their share. You will have the opportunity to anonymously evaluate your group member's adherence to this guideline in the individual contribution statements you will submit for each portion of the project. If it is clear that an individual is not pulling his/her/their weight, is unnecessarily dominating, or is not playing nicely, his/her/their grade may be reduced.
- Contribution Statements

There will be 3 "Statements of Contribution" due: (A) Mid-project; (B) After website submission; (C) After oral presentation. These will give you the opportunity to anonymously (except for Dr. Klowden) describe your contribution to the project and to evaluate your group members. These will only be read by Dr. Klowden. If it is clear that an individual is not pulling his/her/their weight, is unnecessarily dominating, or is not playing nicely, his/her/their grade may be reduced. It is important for you to be honest and reflective. Are you fairly and clearly seeing the situation? Might the group member have done more than you realize? Might YOU have been part of the communication problem?
- Final website submission should include:
 - A. High quality screenshots of all pages
 - B. A single MS Word document (*.docx) with all of the text (sentences and paragraphs) from all web pages
- Grading:
 - Websites will be graded on (A) content and (B) appearance. As there are both group and individual portions of each website, group members may not receive the same grades.
 - The top 3 ranked sites by Dr. Klowden will receive a 5% bonus on the website grade and the next 2 will receive a 3% bonus.

Website Presentations:

- Each group will present its website to the class followed by audience comments and questions. Details on the expectations for this assignment will be distributed shortly.
- As with the journal article presentations, they may be live or pre-recorded.
- The top 3 ranked presentations ranked by Dr. Klowden will receive a 2% bonus on their overall course grade.
- On the night BEFORE your presentation by 11:59 pm, you must submit 6 (as a group) multiple choice quiz style questions about your presentation. There must be at least 1 question pertaining to each person's conservation portion and the other questions can pertain to any portion of the presentation. The correct answer must be preceded with a * (e.g. *C). Strive for questions which would be relatively easy if someone was paying attention but not obvious if not paying attention. Be sure they have been edited for clarity and spelling. These will factor into your presentation grade. It is a violation of academic integrity to share your quiz questions with others prior to the quiz.
- The date on which each presentation will occur will be picked randomly and announced shortly after groups have been formed.

Website Presentation Quizzes:

- Following the last presentation on each day you will need to complete a brief quiz on Webcourses on the day's presentations. You may not take the quiz if you were not present for all of the presentations. Quizzes are open note but should only be based on notes you have taken during the presentations. The point in this is to encourage you to pay attention to and learn from other's presentations and you should easily earn full credit if you do. It is a violation of academic integrity to share quiz questions with others prior to the quiz.

Website Peer Review:

Following submission of the websites, each student will be assigned 5 websites to anonymously critically review (details forthcoming).

Resources used in the preparation of this course:

In addition to a great many peer-reviewed scientific journal articles, I consulted the following books to prepare the materials for this course. If you desire a deeper understanding of the concepts presented it is recommended that you read associated journal articles and books and discuss the concepts with your peers and/or with me.

- Kricher, John. 2011. Tropical Ecology. Princeton University Press. Available at Book Store.
- Osborne, P. L. 2000. Tropical Ecosystems and Ecological Concepts. Cambridge University Press.
- Sodhi, N. S., B. W. Brook, and C. J. A. Bradshaw. 2007. Tropical Conservation Biology. Blackwell Publishing
- Kellman, M. and R. Tackaberry. 1997. Tropical Environments. Routledge.
- Ghazoul, J. and D. Sheil. 2010. Tropical Rain Forest Ecology, Diversity, and Conservation. Oxford U. Press.

Academic Integrity:

Why should I care?

Beyond moral considerations, academic dishonesty diminishes the quality and value of a UCF education. If prospective employers, graduate schools, etc. have a poor perception of UCF, it undermines the value of your education and decreases your likelihood of advancement. If you are aware of academic dishonesty it is important to report it as quickly as possible. Otherwise you risk devaluation of your degree and hard work. Non-reporting is also considered academic dishonesty.

What should you do if you are aware of another student cheating?

You should contact Dr. Klowden <gklowden@ucf.edu> in private as soon as possible after the incident has occurred. Your reporting will remain confidential.

What is considered academic dishonesty?

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc>.

According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- Unauthorized assistance: Using or attempting to use 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.

- 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.
 - Turning in someone else's work as your own.
 - Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit.
 - Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.
 - Giving incorrect information about the source of the information.
 - Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source.
 - Copying so many phrases from a source that it makes up a substantial part of your work, even if you give credit.

Plagiarized work is easily detected and university regulations on academic misconduct will be strictly enforced.

- Multiple Submissions: Submitting the same academic work more than once without written permission of the instructor.
- Helping another violate academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, consult the International Center for Academic Integrity <http://academicintegrity.org>

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices" <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>

Unauthorized Use of Websites and Internet Resources

There are many websites claiming to offer study aids to students, but in using such websites, students could find themselves in violation of academic conduct guidelines. These websites include (but are not limited to) Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, and Clutch Prep. UCF does not endorse the use of these products in an unethical manner, which could lead to a violation of our University's Rules of Conduct. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and could face course and/or University penalties. Please let me know if you are uncertain about the use of a website so I can determine its legitimacy.

If you need assistance, I recommend you visit me during my office hours and make use of the Student Academic Resource Center (SARC), the University Writing Center (UWC), the Math Lab, etc.

If you are aware of others engaging in such activity or find materials from my classes posted on these sites, I would appreciate your bringing this to my attention. We all play a part in creating a course climate of integrity.

Unauthorized Use of Technology for Graded Work

If you were in a classroom setting taking a quiz, would you ask the student sitting next to you for an answer to a quiz or test question? The answer should be no. This also applies to graded homework, quizzes, tests, etc. Students are not allowed to use GroupMe, WhatsApp, or any other form of technology to exchange course material associated with a graded assignment, quiz, test, etc. when opened on Webcourses. The completion of graded work in an online course should be considered a formal process: Just because you are not in a formal classroom setting being proctored while taking a quiz or test does not mean that the completion of graded work in an online course should not be treated with integrity.

The following are some examples of what is considered academic misconduct. This is certainly not an all-inclusive list and there are many other possible ways to be in violation.

- Taking a screen shot of an online assignment, posting it to GroupMe or WhatsApp, and asking for assistance.
- Answering, giving advice, assistance, or suggestions on how to complete an online assignment or assessment that is posted to GroupMe or WhatsApp.

- The use of outside assistance from another student or by searching the internet, Googling for answers, use of websites such as Quizlet, Course Hero, Chegg Study, etc.
- Gathering to take an online quiz or test with others and sharing answers in the process.

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 <<http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/docs/goldenrule.pdf>>. 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. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> (Ferrell Commons 185, 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. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

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.

UCF Cares:

During your UCF career, you may experience challenges including struggles with academics, finances, or your personal well-being. UCF has a multitude of resources available to all students. Please visit UCFCares.com if you are seeking resources and support, or if you are worried about a friend or classmate. Free services and information are included for a variety of student concerns, including but not limited to alcohol use, bias incidents, mental health concerns, and financial challenges. You can also e-mail ucfcares@ucf.edu with questions or for additional assistance. You can reach a UCF Cares staff member between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. by calling 407-823-5607. If you are in immediate distress, call 407-823-2811 to speak with a counselor at Counseling and Psychological Services 24/7 or call 911.

Knights Pantry

The Knights Helping Knights Pantry is committed to serving UCF students by providing basic needs including food, clothing, and personal hygiene items to foster continued academic success and increase retention for students in need. Access to the Knights Pantry is reserved for UCF Students who present a valid Student ID upon entry. Students are limited to 5 food items per day. There is currently no limit for toiletries or clothing.

Location: Ferrell Commons, Room 7H - 101 // Phone: 407-823-3663 // Hours: Mon-Fri: 10am-6pm, Sat. 12pm-5pm

The Knights Pantry relies on the support of students, faculty, and staff. Donations of food, toiletries, or clothing (business professional or casual) can be dropped off at the Pantry in Ferrell Commons or to one of our many donation boxes around campus. Campus donation boxes can be found on the UCF Mobile app maps. In addition to tangible donations, the Knights Pantry accepts monetary donations to ensure food is available when demand is high. Also, the Pantry would not be able to keep its doors open without the help of student volunteers, so consider volunteering.

University-Wide Face Covering Policy for Common Spaces and Face-to-Face Classes

To protect members of our community, everyone is required to wear a facial covering inside all common spaces including classrooms (<https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/PolicyEmergencyCOVIDReturnPolicy.pdf>). Students who choose not to wear facial coverings will be asked to leave the classroom by the instructor. If they refuse to leave the classroom or put on a facial covering, they may be considered disruptive (please see the [Golden Rule](#) for student behavior expectations). Faculty have the right to cancel class if the safety and well-being of class members are in jeopardy. Students will be responsible for the material that would have been covered in class as provided by the instructor.

Notifications in Case of Changes to Course Modality

Depending on the course of the pandemic during the semester, the university may make changes to the way classes are offered. If that happens, please look for announcements or messages in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email about changes specific to this course.

COVID-19 and Illness Notification

Students who believe they may have COVID-19 should contact UCF Student Health Services (407-823-2509) so proper contact tracing procedures can take place. Students should not come to campus if they are ill, are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID, or if anyone living in their residence has tested positive or is sick with COVID-19 symptoms. CDC guidance for COVID-19 symptoms can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Students should contact their instructor(s) as soon as possible if they miss class for any illness reason to discuss reasonable adjustments that might need to be made. When possible, students should contact their instructor(s) before missing class.

In Case of Faculty Illness

If the instructor falls ill during the semester, there may be changes to this course, including having a backup instructor take over the course. Please look for announcements or mail in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email for any alterations to this course.

Final Note:

The professor(s) reserve the right to change the syllabus and management of the class at any time during the semester. These changes will be announced in lecture and/or on [Webcourses](mailto:Webcourses@UCF).

Course Calendar – See next page

**"Unless someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.
It's not."
- Dr. Seuss**

TENTATIVE Course Calendar (subject to change)

*** Required attendance. Absences on these days will result in a 5% course grade reduction for each absence plus a zero on the quiz.

^^^ Presentation questions are due 1 day before your presentation by 11:59p

+++ Contribution 3 is due 1 day after your presentation by 11:59p

Week	Date	Topic/ Reading	Important dates
1	Tu 8/25	Syllabus	
	Th 8/27	Lecture 1 - What and where are the tropics? - Tropical Biomes introduction Intro to library Resources	Library Resources Modules (due 8/28)
2	Tu 9/1	Lecture 2 - Tropical rainforest – location and general structure	
	Th 9/3	Lecture 3 - Tropical biodiversity intro	Article Reservation Deadline
3	Tu 9/8	Lecture 4 - Nutrient cycling and tropical soils	Website Reservation Deadline
	Th 9/10	Lecture 5 - Lowland tropical rainforest development & dynamics	[Quiz questions^^^]
4	Tu 9/15***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 1-6	
	Th 9/17	Lecture 6 - Biotic interactions and coevolution in rainforests	
5	Tu 9/22***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 7-12	
	Th 9/24	Lecture 7 - Trophic dynamics in evolutionary context	
6	Tu 9/29***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 13-18	
	Th 10/1	Lecture 8 - Why do the topics have such high biodiversity?	
7	Tu 10/6***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 19-24	
	Th 10/8***	Lecture 9 - Lowland tropical rainforest tree species richness Rainforest journal article presentations – 25-26	Contribution Statement 1
8	Tu 10/13***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 27-32	
	Th 10/15***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 33-38	
9	Tu 10/20	Lecture 10 - Forest fragmentation and biodiversity	
	Th 10/22***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 39-44	
10	Tu 10/27***	Rainforest journal article presentations – 45-50	
	Th 10/29***	Midterm Exam (Lectures 1-10)	
11	Tu 11/3	No class – Election Day	
	Th 11/5	Groups – Finalize websites and work on presentations	Website Submissions & Contribution 2
12	Tu 11/10***	Tropical Biome Website Presentations – 1-2	[Quiz questions^^^] Contribution 3+++
	Th 11/12***	Tropical biome website presentations – 3-4	
13	Tu 11/17***	Tropical biome website presentations – 5-6	
	Th 11/19***	Tropical biome website presentations – 7-8	
14	Tu 11/24***	Tropical biome website presentations – 9-10	
	Th 11/26	No class – Thanksgiving	
15	Tu 12/1***	Tropical biome website presentations – 11-12	
	Th 12/3***	Tropical biome website presentations – 13-14	
Finals	Tu 12/8	No Final Exam	Website critiques