

**FW 469:
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF LARGE MAMMALS**

Fall 2019

TR 12:30-1:45 Wagar 107 3 credits

Instructor:

George Wittemyer
Office: 101Wagar

Synopsis:

This applied ecology course will utilize principles of behavior, ecology, population dynamics, and conservation as they relate to large mammals. Primary emphasis will be on North American fauna, but time will also be devoted to international wildlife.

Readings:

We will not have a mandatory textbook for the class. Additional course material will be taken from the primary literature and other relevant readings. For access to course materials on Canvas you will need an eID user name and password. Visit: <http://info.canvas.colostate.edu/login.aspx> and find the “student resources” tab to learn more about Canvas.

Course Structure

Lecture will be presented Tuesdays and/or Thursdays. A handout of the Powerpoint slides will typically be posted on Canvas prior to class. You are expected to keep up on readings associated with lectures.

Reading Discussions

Throughout the semester, we will have Reading Discussions focused on papers from the scientific literature. Typically, 2-3 students will be assigned to lead each discussion section. The lead students are expected to submit 3-5 discussion questions on the reading for posting on Canvas no later than the class period before the discussion. Each student in the course must come to each discussion section with brief, typed answers to these discussion questions and be prepared to discuss and critique the paper.

At the start of the discussion section, the lead student is expected to provide a thorough yet concise overview of the paper via a 10 minute Powerpoint presentation. In the summary, you should: 1) review the major points of the paper, 2) raise topics of interest (i.e., highlight novel results and conclusions), 3) raise any questions or objections you have with the methods, results, and/or conclusions, 4) tie the material covered into related literature and your own experiences (e.g., does it reinforce or contradict results or conclusions from other publications?), and 5) cite parts of the paper that you don't understand and request clarification for the group discussion. Following the summary, the lead student should then be prepared to actively generate and facilitate discussion for the rest of the discussion section. You will be assigned a grade for leading the discussion. A grading rubric will be posted on Canvas and reviewed in class at the beginning of the semester.

Individual Species Presentation

Each student will pick one North American large mammal species, and deliver to the class a 10 minute Powerpoint presentation in the style of a scientific conference (8 minute lecture, 2 minute question section) reviewing the basic life history and recent research for their species. Topics to be discussed should include distribution, development and reproduction, ecology, behavior, habitat requirements, conservation or management status, and at least one interesting research studies recently published (since 2007) in the scientific literature. Prior to the classroom presentation, each student will provide the Powerpoint presentation to be posted on Canvas.

Research Paper and Presentation

Each student will use the primary literature to research and prepare a term paper covering an important, current conservation issue involving a large mammal species or group of large mammal species. The large mammal conservation topic will be the student's choice. The term paper should consolidate what is known about the large mammal conservation issue, identify the major management problems contributing to the conservation concern, critically evaluate how proposed or ongoing programs are dealing with these factors, and synthesize the information into a relatively concise research paper.

Papers should be less than 2000 words (not including Literature Cited), with 12 point font and 2.0 line spacing. Format for references cited in the text and listed in the Literature Cited section should follow guidelines for the journal *The Journal of Wildlife Management*:

http://joomla.wildlife.org/documents/Manuscript_Guidelines_2008.pdf

You will not necessarily need the traditional sections of a scientific research paper (Intro, Methods, Results, Discussion, etc.); your paper may be divided into sections as you see fit. However, you must include an Abstract and Literature Cited section. In order to assess the current state of knowledge on your topic you must utilize the primary scientific literature. You should cite at least 15 primary sources from the scientific literature, including at least 5 recent (year 2005+) references (this does not include "gray literature", book chapters, agency reports, or web sites); note that 15 primary references is the minimum but more are expected to achieve a high grade.

The research paper will be submitted mid-semester, at which point it will be graded and receive a formal peer review by another student and the instructor. Peer reviews will be returned to the author, who will then be expected to revise the paper according to the reviews and submit a final revision toward the end of the semester.

After submission of final papers, each student will prepare and present their paper before the class in a 12 minute Powerpoint presentation, in the style of a scientific conference (10 minute lecture, 2 minute question section). Each student will provide the Powerpoint presentation to be posted on Canvas. Each student will also provide a set of 3 questions relevant to the large mammal issue to be considered for use for the final.

Assignments

Assignment may include take-home problem sets and preparation and position statements for in-class debates. Assignments are due at the start of the class on the due date, and will be penalized 50% if received in the afternoon or evening of the due date. No problem sets will be accepted after the due date, unless I accept a catastrophic reason in advance.

Field Trips

There is a field trip to Yellowstone National Park/Teton National Park/Jackson Elk Refuge. All students are expected to participate in field trips. Details of the field trips will be discussed in class.

Conservation Activity

Each student will be required to conduct an activity relating to conservation **during the semester**. Possibilities include, but are not limited to: (1) work at resource agencies, conservation groups, or zoos, (2) assisting ongoing scientific research programs (e.g., working with faculty or graduate students), (3) participation in conservation education programs, (4) delivering a public talk or seminar, (5) involvement in a conservation activity with a student club, including The Wildlife Society, The Society for Conservation Biology, or American Fisheries Society, (6) writing to politicians regarding conservation issues, and (7) writing articles regarding conservation issues for the popular press. In the final week of class, students will deliver brief presentations of their volunteer activity. Examples of activities that do not live up to the spirit of the assignment, and hence **do not count**, include (1) activities associated with another class, (2) simply joining a student club without participating in an activity, (3) attending a seminar (including those sponsored by a student club), (4) donating money, (5) purchasing a

hunting/fishing license, or (6) any recreational activity (e.g., hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, etc). If you have any questions about what will count, please ask well in advance!

Exams

There will be two examination periods – a Midterm and a Final. Exams may include multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer, and essay questions. Exam questions will be taken from lectures, guest lectures, lecture readings, discussion readings, and field trips. Make-up or early exams are seldom given; rare exceptions are made for catastrophes truly beyond your control. In these cases, I must be notified before the exam and I must have written verification. If I do not have a valid excuse from you before the exam, you will receive a 0. Once I have returned an exam you have 24 hours to identify any arithmetic errors on my part and I will correct them. If you did not detect arithmetic errors, but want question(s) re-graded, you must submit the exam with a written explanation of your arguments within one week after it was returned in class. Beware! If you submit an exam for re-grading I will re-grade the entire exam to ensure no other mistakes were made (this may or may not benefit you).

Grading

TENTATIVE point allocation for evaluation of students:

| | TOTAL POINTS | APPROXIMATE % |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Midterm | 100 points | 23% |
| Final | 100 points | 23% |
| Research Term Paper | | 23% |
| 1 st Submission | 70 points | |
| Revision/Improvement | 30 points | |
| Research Presentation | 20 points | 5% |
| Term Paper Peer Review | 20 points | 5% |
| Individual Species Presentation | 20 points | 5% |
| Problem Sets/Assignments | ca. 20 points | 5% |
| Discussion Lead | 20 points | 5% |
| Participation/Attendance | 20 points | 5% |
| Conservation Activity | 10 points | 2% |
| TOTAL | 430 points | |

Cutoffs for grades typically will be based on the following percentages: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; ≤ 59 = F; in some instances grades might be based on the performance of the entire class.

Academic Dishonesty and Disruptive Behaviors:

The course will adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in class. Distractive behaviors such as talking to neighbors, using cell phone, reading newspapers, chewing tobacco, regularly coming to class late (unless prior authorization has been given), or leaving class early are also not acceptable; students engaged in such activities may be asked to leave the class. Instances of academic dishonesty and disruption also may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, which can result in University disciplinary action (see Student Rights & Responsibilities section of the CSU General Catalog for more information). As an instructor it is my responsibility to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to learn the material without disruption or distraction. I take that responsibility seriously and will not tolerate such disturbances.

Attendance and Participation:

You are expected to attend all classes, but I will not always take roll. As adults I leave it in your responsible hands to get notes and do the required reading. Your participation in class may benefit you when I assign grades. Those students who have actively contributed in class will find that such participation may teeter their grade higher.

Special Needs:

Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any special needs. If any student has a learning disability please contact the Resources for Disabled Students. That way we can work to accommodate you as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to work with RDS and bring necessary paper work to me.