PBL 355/ZOL 355  ECOLOGY  Fall 2003

Tuesday and Thursday 3:00-4:20 in Wells Hall b108

Instructors

Dr. Carolyn Malmstrom  
Department of Plant Biology  
162 Plant Biology Lab  
malmstr1@msu.edu  
355-4690

Office hours:  T 9-10 am or by appt.

Dr. Mary Bremigan  
Department of Fisheries and Wildlife  
2D Natural Resources  
bremigan@msu.edu  
432-3831

Office hours:  Th 1-2 pm or by appt.

Teaching Assistants

Patrick Forsythe  
28 Natural Resources  
Forsyt29@msu.edu  
432-4935

Office hours: T & Th 4:30 – 5:30

Aaron Jubar  
24 Natural Resources  
jubaraar@msu.edu  
353-2267

Office hours:  T 10-12 am

Course Description:  Plant and animal ecology.  Interrelationships of plants and animals with the environment.  Principles of population, community, and ecosystem ecology.  Application of ecological principles to global sustainability.

Prerequisites:  BS110 or LBS 144 or equivalent.  Experience with basic organismic biology is necessary for this course.


Course Objectives:  This course will introduce you to some of the most important and fun ideas in ecology and show you how to apply those ideas to ecological problems.  The first half of the course will emphasize relationships between organisms and the physical environment, at large and small scales.  The second half will emphasize the ways in which organisms interact with each other.

Study Materials:  You will be provided with study materials in class throughout the course.  It is your responsibility to obtain these and use them appropriately.  If you miss class, contact your TA for assistance.  The syllabus and selected materials, as announced in class, will be available online with the Blackboard program (http://blackboard.msu.edu).  Login and select this class.
**Contacting the Instructors:** We are looking forward to talking with you. The best times to reach us are right after lecture or during our office hours. You may also call or email either of us to make an appointment. Note that Dr. Malmstrom is best reached by phone, Dr. Bremigan by email.

**Grading:** Your semester grade will be based on the number of points you earn out of 400 total possible. You will be expected to complete the following: a) two midterm exams (Sept. 30 & Nov. 4), each worth 100 points; b) a final exam (Dec. 10), which will include 100 points worth of material from the last section of the course and 60 points worth of cumulative material; and c) a two-page review of a scientific article, worth 40 points. A preliminary portion of the review paper is due October 7, and the final paper is due November 11. You must turn in both parts of the paper assignment, on time, to receive any credit for your work.

Semester grades will be determined using the MSU scale below. If the class mean falls below 75%, the grades will be adjusted upwards so that the mean score falls approximately between the 2.0 and 2.5 boundary.

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**Make-up exams will not be given unless you have a written medical excuse or have made prior arrangements with the instructors.** Make-up exams are likely to be essay format.

- Olin Health Center will provide documentation of ill health when conditions warrant.
- If you must attend a memorial service for a family member, please notify us *in advance* and bring us a copy of the service notice.
- If you must be absent from class to observe a religious holiday, please make arrangements with us *in advance*.
- To be excused from this class to participate in a required activity for another course or university-sanctioned event, you must provide us with *adequate advance notice* and a *written authorization* from the faculty member of the other course or from a university administrator.

**How to do well in this course:** Engage your mind. Review the assigned material before lecture. Take notes in class, and think about them afterwards. Review the study guides.
If you cannot complete the study guides after attending lecture and completing the reading, contact your TA immediately for assistance.

**Cell phones:** Please keep your cell phone off during class.

**Academic Honesty:** Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that “the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” The College of Natural Sciences adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the All-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide.

**We have a zero-tolerance policy for cheating.** Cheating is not fair to yourself or to your colleagues. Cheating includes attempting to pass off someone else’s work as your own, using crib sheets, and providing exam answers to others. If you are not sure which activities would constitute cheating, please ask us. Students who cheat will receive a 0.0 on the assignment in question and will most likely fail the course.

We know that most of you are honest citizens. To protect you from the actions of a few individuals who mistakenly believe that cheating is OK, we will take precautionary measures during exams, which may include requiring special seating and inspections of calculators. If your calculator is selected for inspection, you will be provided with an alternative one.

**Accommodations for Disabilities.** If you have a disability or special need that requires accommodations, please inform us IMMEDIATELY, so we can develop a plan to work with you. If you have not yet contacted the Resource Center for People with Disabilities, please call 353-9642 (voice) or 355-1293 (TTY) to make an appointment with a counselor.

**Dropping this course:** The last day to drop this course with a 100% refund and no grade reported is September 18th. The last day to drop this course with NO refund and no grade reported is October 14th. You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have dropped this course.

**Commercialized Lecture Notes:** Commercialization of lecture notes and university-provided course materials is NOT permitted in this course.