

Course Syllabus

Department: Environmental Conservation and Horticulture

Date: December 17, 2012

I. Course Prefix and Number: CON 215

Course Name: Unique Ecological Communities

Credit Hours and Contact Hours: 3 credit hours – 3 contact hours

Catalog Description including pre- and co-requisites: The purpose of this course shall be to provide students with field travel experiences relative to their course work in Natural Resources Conservation. This expedition course, to different areas of the world, will emphasize identification and natural history of birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, plants and a variety of ecological communities. Students will be provided with opportunities to observe employment options in Conservation, and gain experience in camping and group travel. Examples of travel experience include trips to: Florida Everglades and Keys, Wilderness Alaska, Costa Rica, Belize and various National Parks in the United States and Canada.

Relationship to Academic Programs and Curriculum including SUNY Gen Ed designation if applicable: This course serves as a Conservation elective for students in the AAS Natural Resources Conservation, the AS Environmental Studies, the AAS Natural Conservation: Law Enforcement, and the AAS Fisheries and Wildlife Technology degrees.

II. Course Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate identification skills for the biodiversity of organisms encountered during their travel course experience thereby broadening their knowledge and appreciation of the natural world.
2. Students will experience and evaluate environmental issues affecting management of natural communities and the unique species that these communities support.
3. Students will communicate their ecological understanding of plant and animal species, developed through the proper use of information resources, in giving oral presentations to the travel group.
4. Students will improve their employment skills through interaction with employees of non-profit, state and federal conservation agencies encountered during their travel course.

College Learning Outcomes Addressed by the Course: *(check each College Learning Outcome addressed by the Student Learning Outcomes)*

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> writing | <input type="checkbox"/> computer literacy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> oral communications | <input type="checkbox"/> ethics/values |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading | <input type="checkbox"/> citizenship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mathematics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> global concerns |
| <input type="checkbox"/> critical thinking | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> information resources |

III. Assessment Measures (Summarize how the college and student learning outcomes will be assessed): *For each identified outcome checked, please provide the specific assessment measure.*

List identified College Learning Outcomes(s)	Specific assessment measure(s)
Oral communications	Students will complete creative oral presentations on plant and animal species when relevant natural communities are visited.
Global concerns	Students will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the global natural world by successfully completing a travel journal, oral presentations, and a take-along exam.
Information resources	Students will locate, evaluate and use library/Internet resources as sources of ecological information for their oral presentations.

IV. Instructional Materials and Methods

Types of Course Materials: There is no required textbook but students will receive articles, handouts and an educational travelogue booklet pertaining to specific destinations for their Unique Ecological Communities travel experience course.

Methods of Instruction (e.g. Lecture, Lab, Seminar ...): A combination of lecture, discussions, laboratory, exhibit viewing and oral presentations are used in this course.

V. General Outline of Topics Covered:

(note: the most frequently taught CON 215 class, the Florida Travel Ecology course, is used here as an example of destinations and topics covered through educational experiences)

Destinations:

Shenandoah Caverns
Blue Ridge Mountains
Okefenokee Swamp
Payne's Prairie State Reserve
Crystal River Sanctuary
Highland Hammocks State Park
Archbold Biological Station
Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve
Everglades National Park
 Shark Valley
 Long Pine Key
 Flamingo
Fairchild Tropical Gardens
Newfound Harbor Marine Institute
Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge
Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary
Jekyll Island 4-H Center

Experiences:

subterranean geology walk, cave formations
forest practices, ecology of an Appalachian ridge
boardwalk and first glimpse of American alligators
freshwater marsh ecology, Florida sandhill cranes
West Indian manatee wintering area
scrub oak-pine community, rare reptiles
rare dwarf forest, Florida scrub jay
cypress forest, outstanding bird concentrations
premier east coast wildlife sightings
bike through the river of grass
fire ecology, Anhinga Trail, hardwood hammocks
canoe the mangroves, bird the Snake Bight Trail
tropical plants, formal landscapes, butterflies
sponge flats, beach ecology, tidal communities
endangered mammals, ecosystem restoration
snorkel over coral reef communities
salt marsh ecology, barrier beach, sea turtles