Course Objectives
After taking this course, students should be able to enter a forest ecosystem in the American West and identify the principal tree and shrub species, as well as herbaceous species important to understanding community type. The class goal is to provide students with the knowledge and skills to understand the species and indicators important in forests and woodlands.

Students learn the principal forest types of the West, their climatic correlates, and the woody species within them. They also learn woody plant anatomy, common ecological properties of forest plants, plant traits, and receive an introduction to plant communities and indicator species. Students learn to identify approximately 150 species.

Required Text

Schedule
Each week is comprised of a lecture and a lab. Every other lab, starting with the second, begins with a short, ten-minute quiz of the concepts and species covered in the previous week. Actual species covered in each lab will vary depending on sample availability.

Week 1
Biogeography of the West: climate and vegetation – Kuchler’s forest types
Tree species that define western forests – 20 species

Week 2
Anatomy of woody plants
Pacific Northwest forests I – 20 species

Week 3
Ecological syndromes of forest plants
Rocky Mountain forests I – 20 species

Week 4
Frequent fire systems – adaptations
Sierra Nevada forests I – 20 species

Week 5
High elevation systems – adaptations
California forests I – 20 species
Week 6
Forest community composition – trees, shrubs, and herbs
Great Basin/ Southwest forests I – 20 species

Week 7
Pacific Northwest forest communities
Pacific Northwest forests II – 20 species

Week 8
Rocky Mountain forest communities
Rocky Mountain forests II – 20 species

Week 9
Sierra Nevada forest communities
Sierra Nevada forests II – 20 species

Week 10
California and western riparian forest communities
California forests II / Riparian floodplains – 20 species

Week 11
Great basin forest and woodland communities
Great Basin / Southwest forests II – 20 species

Week 12
Sierra Nevada forest and woodland communities
Sierra Nevada forests III – 20 species

Week 13
Rocky Mountain forest and woodland communities
Rocky Mountain forests III – 20 species

Week 14
Great Basin / Southwest forest and woodland communities
Great Basin / Southwest forests III – 20 species

Week 15
Review lecture
Lab final – identification from specimens and photos

Final exam – scheduled during regular exam period
Grading
The course has 100 total points. Each of the 13 lab quizzes is worth 4 points (52 points total). The lab final is worth 30 points. The written final is worth 18 points. Your overall numerical score for the course is the sum of those components. Your grade for the class will be no lower than the following conversion. Note: This class is curved – in 2014 actual grades assigned were higher than raw quiz and exam scores.

A  93-100
A- 90-92
B+ 87-89
B  84-86
B- 80-83
C+ 77-79
C  74-76
C- 70-73
D  64-69
F  <63

Course Fee
The course fee ($16) covers lab supplies for preparing fresh specimens (mounting paper and protective sleeves) as well as an annual charge to replace/augment lab reference books.

Students with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program. If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center, at least two weeks before the start of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Enter, course materials can be provided in alternative format--larger print, audio, diskette, or Braille."

Plagiarism
"Plagiarism includes knowingly representing by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials” (Student Code page 10). I expect that all the work you do in this class will be your own.

Attendance
I expect students to attend all lectures, labs, and field trips. Cell phones must be turned off during lab quizzes and exams.