Living With Wildlife (ENVS 3600) – Fall 2021

What is this course about?

You’ll be introduced to important concepts of ecology, emphasizing how non-domesticated animals live and interact with their environment in the western United States. However, my goal isn’t just to teach you some science, but to help you learn science you may be able to apply in your lives. Wildlife is all around us. We’ll discuss how animals can make our lives more enriched and also more frustrating (or even dangerous), and how an understanding of wildlife ecology yields solutions that help us coexist with wildlife.

Who should take this course?

ENVS 3600 meets the University Studies requirement for a Depth Life and Physical Sciences (DSC) course. Also, it fulfills a requirement in the Environmental Studies and Recreation Resource Management majors. And I hope it can be a useful elective for anyone interested in how humans and wildlife can coexist in the modern world.

Are there additional costs beyond tuition?

There is no required textbook. Readings will be posted in Canvas and available for download if desired. There are assignments that will ask you to travel, but costs will be minimal because these can be completed within 10 miles of anyone’s home.

How can you get hold of me if you have a question or problem?

My office phone and email are provided above, as are Trish’s and Kiersten’s emails. You can also use the message feature in Canvas, although regular email might reach me sooner. If you want an in-person meeting, contact me and we’ll set up an office or Zoom appointment.

How will we teach the course?

As a “blended web broadcast” course, ENVS 3600 combines elements of an online course with one that’s taught over Zoom. Lectures, readings, videos, and assignments will be available on Canvas, and you’ll also use Canvas to turn in assigned work. In addition, I’ll ask you to “attend” one scheduled class hour per week, Wednesdays 10:30-11:20 am Mountain, when you can ask questions about the content of readings or lectures and take part in small-group discussions about the relationships between wildlife and people.

I’ll record one or two science lectures each week, each lasting no more than 30 minutes. It’s best if you listen to those before our Wednesday class period so you can ask questions if there’s anything you don’t understand. You also should check out the reading assignments before Wednesday, as most readings will introduce a wildlife topic that will be the focus of the small-group discussions. The second half of each week, the focus shifts to real-world application. You’ll be asked to listen to a third short lecture, a recorded interview with someone whose professional or personal activities involve interacting with wildlife, and/or a video clip about the topic of the week.

To assess your understanding of the scientific content, there will be two exams: one covering the first five weeks of class and one covering weeks 6-10. Also, there will be a final report where you will apply your scientific knowledge to a real-world wildlife management or conservation challenge (you can choose among several topics for that one). This report will take the place of a final exam and will be due on Wednesday of finals week.
What's great about online learning is flexibility. You can work whenever is most convenient. What's not so great is that when you don't have to show up for class, it's easy to fall behind. To help you avoid that, I'll ask you to turn in something for a grade almost every week. That sounds like a lot, but most assignments will be short (~1 page) papers that ask you to offer a science-based opinion on an issue or to report results of outdoor observations. Grading for the homework papers won't be harsh. I'll be more interested in seeing how you think about a course topic than I am in getting “right” answers about science.

Assignments are due Sunday evenings. There’s a 10% per day late penalty on homework assignments, but if a deadline will cause a problem let me know and we might be able to work out an exception (within reason).

More about the discussions

On Wednesdays, unless the Q&A session runs long, you’ll have time to discuss course concepts with classmates. We’ll break into groups of 4 to discuss a topic related to the course material. (E.g., for the week when we discuss pollination, I might ask you to brainstorm creative ways to promote the conservation of pollinators and their habitats.) There will be no right or wrong answers to these discussions – they’re designed to help you think about how wildlife ecology can affect you or your neighbors. The instructional team (professor, TA, UTF) will rotate to briefly sit in on discussions and serve as resources. Because I really want you to participate in these, we will track attendance. You will start to lose points if you do not show up for at least 10 of the 14 discussion sessions.

How will I assess your learning?

Your grade will be based on the following:

- Exams 40%
- Weekly assignments 30%
- Final report 20%
- Discussion participation 10%

Grade Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 % to 93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 93.0 % to 90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90.0 % to 87.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87.0 % to 83.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 83.0 % to 80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt; 80.0 % to 77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt; 77.0 % to 73.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>&lt; 73.0 % to 70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>&lt; 70.0 % to 67.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt; 67.0 % to 60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 59.0 % to 0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Schedule/Outline**

**Week 1 (Aug. 30-Sept. 5)**

Topics: Introduction to course topic, expectations, methods, and instructor.

Organizing concepts in wildlife ecology

Readings: “The real reason we’re seeing more wildlife during the pandemic”

Assignment: Brief bio focusing on your wildlife-related experiences

**Week 2 (Sept. 7-12)**

Topics: Habitat, niche, disturbance, succession

What’s happening to the world’s birds?

Readings: “Around the world, birds are in crisis”

Assignment: Identifying habitat features in your own backyard

**Week 3 (Sept. 13-19)**

Topic: Evolution, life history strategies

Effects of human activities on biological evolution

Readings: “10 animals evolution plucked straight out of a nightmare”

“When insects lost their homes, evolution clipped their wings”

“Rapid evolution changes species in real time”

Assignment: Adaptation exercise: Could suicide be good for lemmings?

**Week 4 (Sept. 20-26)**

Topic: Trophic levels, energy flows, food chains

Using wildlife feeding behaviors to achieve human ends
Readings: “A framework to evaluate wildlife feeding in research, wildlife management, tourism, and recreation”

Assignments: Opinion paper: Ethics of feeding wildlife

**Week 5 (Sept. 27-Oct. 3)**

**Topic:** Pollinators and pollination

Protecting pollinators and their habitat

**Reading:** “The perfect lawn: exploring neighborhood socio-cultural drivers for insect pollinator habitat”

**Assignment:** Crosstown walk

**Week 6 (Oct. 4-10)**

**Topic:** Predator-prey relationships, herbivory and carnivory

Protecting visitors and wildlife in national parks

**Reading:** “The deadly grizzly bear attacks that changed the national parks forever”

**Assignments:** Exam #1

**Week 7 (Oct. 11-17)**

**Topic:** Population dynamics & demographics; richness, abundance, and diversity

Counting and managing marine mammal populations

**Reading:** “Humpback whales have made a remarkable recovery, giving us hope for the planet”

“Whales face new and emerging threats”

**Assignments:** No assignment for Fall Break weekend

**Week 8 (Oct. 18-24)**

**Topic:** Courtship, breeding, territoriality, parental care

Noise pollution effects on mating and nesting success

**Reading:** “The code for cuteness”

“Noise pollution changes avian communities and species interactions”

**Assignments:** Soundscape monitoring exercise

**Week 9 (Oct. 25-31)**

**Topic:** Migration and dispersal
Wildlife mortality on highways, railways, and airways

Reading: “Wildlife vehicle collision reduction study: report to Congress (executive summary)”

Assignment: Opinion paper: Reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions opinion paper

Week 10 (Nov. 1-7)

Topic: Landscapes, corridors, patches, and barriers

Consequences of fences and walls

Reading: “Yellowstone to Uintas Connection”

“Border wall threatens national wildlife refuge that’s 40 years in the making”

Assignments: Opinion paper: Balancing conservation and homeland security

Week 11 (Nov. 8-14)

Topic: Conserving wildlife and habitat

Balancing wildlife and agriculture

Reading: “Sparing vs. sharing: the great debate about how to conserve nature”

Assignments: Exam #2

Week 12 (Nov. 15-21)

Topic: Urban wildlife

Should urban deer be managed? If so, how?

Reading: “Rewilding is a two-way street”

Assignment: Opinion paper with secondary data analysis: Managing Utah’s urban deer

Week 13 (Nov. 22-28)

Topic: Climate change effects

Adaptation strategies – is society ready and capable?

Reading: “Behavioral flexibility as a mechanism for coping with climate change”

Assignment: No assignment over Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (Nov. 29-Dec. 5)

Topic: Wildlife and recreation

Finding a balance between recreation and conservation
Reading: “Don’t hike so close to me”
Assignments: Opinion paper: Managing winter recreation for wildlife and people

**Week 15 (Dec 6-12)**

**Topic:** Review and synthesis

**Reading:** None

**Assignments:** None

**Final exam week (Dec. 13-17)**

**Assignment:** Final report due 10:30 am, Dec. 15

---

**Library Services**

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc. (http://libguides.usu.edu/rc)

**Classroom Civility**

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article5) for more information.

---

**University Policies & Procedures**

**COVID-19 Classroom Accommodations**

To ensure that you receive the appropriate accommodation for COVID-19 related challenges, the University requires you to fill out the COVID-19 Questionnaire (https://www.usu.edu/covid-19/questionnaire/index.php). Upon doing so, the University COVID CARE Team (https://www.usu.edu/covid-19/if-you-are-sick/care-team.php) will contact you to determine your needs and how to support you. The CARE Team will also contact your instructors and provide important direction on how best to accommodate your needs. For additional reference, please see USU's Attendance and Excused Absence (https://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=3160) policy and the COVID-19 Classroom Accommodations (https://www.usu.edu/covid-19/operations/accomodations) page.

**Reducing COVID-19 Risk**

You can help keep classes, events, and activities happening in person this semester by following these steps:
1. **Get vaccinated if you're able.** Vaccines are the best available tool to help stop the spread of COVID-19. They are safe, free, and easy to access.

2. **If you are vaccinated, let USU know.** Please upload your proof of full vaccination (http://aggiehealth.usu.edu/) to AggieHealth. If you are exposed to COVID-19, USU’s case containment will not require you to quarantine if they know you are vaccinated and you do not have symptoms.

3. **Stay home if you're sick** and get tested for COVID-19 if you have symptoms or have been exposed. It’s important to not bring any illness to campus.

4. **Wear a mask indoors.** Public health experts recommend that even vaccinated people wear masks indoors in high COVID-19 transmission areas, which includes most of Utah.

If USU’s COVID Case Containment team identifies an uncontained situation in the classroom, you will be notified of any temporary changes to your course delivery method through a Canvas announcement. Please make sure you are receiving immediate notifications of new Canvas announcements. The situation will be handled according to protocols on the COVID Classroom Exposure (https://www.usu.edu/covid-19/students/classroom-exposure) page.

**Class Seating Charts (For In-Person Classes)**

In classes with more than 10 students, a seating chart will be used to track where you are sitting. After the first week of classes, your instructor will tell you how to enter your seat number in Canvas. **You must sit in the same seat for the rest of the semester.** This is extremely important for tracking cases of COVID-19 and helping classes remain in person.

**Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities**

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (http://www.usu.edu/hr/files/uploads/Policies/403.pdf) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

**Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"**

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

**Academic Dishonesty**

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
  - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually;”
Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

- **Falsification**: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
- **Plagiarism**: 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 using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)

**Sexual Harassment/Title IX**
Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and USU Policy 339 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/339) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.

The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU's Office of Equity (https://equity.usu.edu/) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment (USU Policy 305 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/305/)), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy**
Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term ‘extenuating’ circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**
USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (http://www.usu.edu/drc/) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu (mailto:drc@usu.edu)). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

**Diversity Statement**
Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: https://studentaffairs.usu.edu, (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu (mailto:studentservices@usu.edu), TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services (https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
- Access and Diversity: http://accesscenter.usu.edu (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu (mailto:access@usu.edu); TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
- LGBTQA Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa/), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost’s Office Diversity Resources: https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity (https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity/), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/)

**Grievance Process**

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7).

**Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:**

- Student Conduct (http://www.usu.edu/studentconduct)
- Student Code (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/)
- Academic Integrity (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)

**Emergency Procedures**

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

**Mental Health**

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (https://counseling.usu.edu).

Students are also encouraged to download the “SafeUT App” (https://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/programs/safe-ut-smartphone-app) to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone
with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.