WILD 5710  Forest Vegetation Disturbance Ecology and Management

Course Description
Examines causes, effects, and management options for selected biotic and abiotic agents of disturbance in wildland ecosystems. 3 credits. [From course catalog.]

Student Learning Expectations
IDEA Objective # 2: Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories.
1. Mechanisms and effects of disturbance, ecosystem responses, succession
2. Management as it relates to disturbance

IDEA Objective #8: Developing skills in expressing oneself orally or in writing.
1. Proposal on selected course topic
2. Presentation of the proposal
3. Written exams
4. Participation in discussion and other activities

IDEA Objective #9. Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems.
1. Research into topic of choice
2. Evaluation of quality of sources
3. Development of skills in pulling out key information from sources

Instructor
Dr. Larissa Yocom, with major contributions from Dr. Barbara Bentz
NR 236; larissa.yocom@usu.edu; (mailto:larissa.yocom@usu.edu;) 435-797-4155
Office hours: MW 9:30 – 10:30 am or by appointment

Course Resources
There is no required textbook for this course. Required readings will be posted to Canvas.

Course Fee
The course fee is used for transportation to field trips.

Course Work
Readings
The readings for the class have been selected to give you important background information on each topic, and will complement the material covered in lectures and in labs. The readings are not optional.

Quizzes (20%)
Students will take quizzes on the reading material each class day throughout the course. These quizzes must be completed prior to the beginning of the class. The purpose of these quizzes is to motivate you to do the reading so that you are prepared for class.

Exams (10% each)
Students will take two exams (10% each) during the semester. These will be open-book essay-style exams, each covering material from approximately half of the semester.

Research Proposal (40%)

Students will write a research proposal, in groups, on the topic of their choice. This will be an in-depth, semester-long project with multiple due dates and multiple opportunities to earn points throughout the semester.

Proposal Presentation (10%)

At the end of the semester, students will give presentations on their proposals, which will be evaluated by a panel of graduate students.

Participation

Students are expected to participate in class. Participation has three parts: attendance, being an active participant in class, and turning in field trip or lab products.

Attendance: If you cannot attend class or a field trip for some reason, please notify me ahead of time. If you miss class or a field trip, you are still responsible for knowing the material.

Participation: Research has shown that students learn more and develop critical thinking skills when they participate in discussion. I encourage you to ask questions, participate in discussions and other activities, make comments and answer questions in class.

Field trip or lab outputs: Field trips and labs will consist of field activities, labs, data analysis, and running computer models. There will be products from some of these labs that you are expected to complete.

iNaturalist collection (10%)

Students will collect observations of insects and other organisms found in forested environments, uploading photos of what is encountered.

Late Work Policy

All assignments are due on the designated dates. You may submit assignments up to 3 days past the due date, but you will lose 10% of the available points per day. If you have circumstances that prevent you from turning assignments in on time, please contact me.

Grade Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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</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>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90.0 % to 87.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87.0 % to 83.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 83.0 % to 80.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt; 80.0 % to 77.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt; 77.0 % to 73.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>&lt; 73.0 % to 70.0%</td>
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<td>Grade</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>&lt; 70.0 % to 67.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt; 67.0 % to 60.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 59.0 % to 0.0%</td>
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**Statement on plagiarism and cheating**

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Any instance will result in failure of the assignment and depending on the circumstances, failure in the course.

**Disability Statement**

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) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, 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.

**COVID-19 Classroom Safety Protocols**

While not mandated, USU encourages and welcomes the wearing of masks in all university buildings, especially within 6 feet of others. Furthermore, it is strongly encouraged to take measures to mitigate risk as recommended by federal and state public health officials. These measures include getting fully vaccinated, staying home if you are sick (even with mild symptoms), and maintaining good hygiene including frequent hand washing. Testing will be provided, without charge, throughout the semester and the USU COVID Webpage will provide up-to-date information. Please remember; COVID can have significant impact on the health and safety of those around you so remain vigilant and respectful.

**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.

**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 (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.