



## **Conservation Biology (WIS 4554)**

**Fall 2023**

**3 credits**

Instructor: Vanessa Hull

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Office hours: by appointment in 310 Newins-Ziegler or zoom  
she/her/hers

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### **Course Description:**

Welcome to Conservation biology! Conservation biology is an interdisciplinary science designed to address the causes and consequences of the global biodiversity crisis. This mission-driven field also seeks to provide effective tools to protect biodiversity against mounting threats in the current human-dominated era. Conservation biology is an exciting field because it is constantly evolving and is relevant to current events happening all around us. This course should be enjoyable and it should enrich your passion for contributing to a conservation-related field.

### **This course seeks to:**

1. Explore key concepts that have shaped the evolving field of conservation biology
2. Outline the historical and current threats to biodiversity around the globe
3. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of conservation strategies currently being implemented to reverse biodiversity loss

## Course Learning Objectives

**By the end of this course, students should be able to:**

1. Articulate sources of variation in biodiversity at species, community, and ecosystem levels
2. Explain intrinsic and extrinsic factors contributing to extinction risk
3. Construct and interpret concept maps of key biodiversity concepts
4. Understand and communicate how biodiversity values vary across different cultures and places
5. Articulate and provide examples of the variety of human threats to biodiversity at local and global scales
6. Evaluate the efficacy of real-world conservation strategies in different socio-ecological contexts
7. Use multimedia tools to effectively explain conservation issues to others

*\*\*\*International Scholars Program:* This course fulfills one of the curriculum requirements of the International Scholars Program. Learn more about how you can obtain a graduation medallion and diploma [here](#).

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This course has an online section and an in-person section. The in-person section will take place 8:30-10:25 am Tues and 9:35-10:25 am Thurs in CHE 237. The online section is 100% asynchronous online.

You can follow along in the course by using the **Modules** tab where you will find all materials organized by week.

There are suggested times for completion of the major assignments that will allow for optimum pacing of the course, but there are no deductions for 'lateness'.

You do not need any special computing power or specialized software for this course. You should be fine with basic internet and a word processor. That said, please let me know if you need any special accommodations. I am more than happy to accommodate you.

I really want students to succeed and enjoy the course. **Please email me anytime** if you have questions or just want to chat. It is my priority to reply to student emails

within 24 hours (barring a family emergency). I can jump on zoom almost any day and am frequently in my office in 310 Newins-Ziegler.

**Student mental health and wellness** are important to me. Please let me know how I can better meet your needs in this course. We now have an embedded mental health counselor in CALS who is very reachable. [Philip Daniels-pdaniels@ufl.edu](mailto:pdaniels@ufl.edu). He said he responds to student emails within 24 hours.

**Diversity and inclusion** are also important to me. I seek to maintain an environment that is inclusive for all, including racial and ethnic minorities, first-generation students, international students, the LGBTQ+ community, people of all religious faiths, and those with disabilities. I want to maintain a course environment where everyone feels safe to express their views and be themselves. Did you know you can add pronouns to your Canvas profile? You can go to "Account" then "Settings" and then "Edit Settings".

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## Participation

This course relies heavily on active student participation. You earn participation points by either appearing for in-person class activities (in-person section) OR by completing the online "participation activities" (online section).

**Online people** need to do 25 [participation activities](#) by the end of the semester for full credit (see activities listed in the Modules). The online options for these activities will be varied (e.g., a quiz, a discussion board, an online padlet). You can choose activities based on your interest. It is just like a "Choose your own adventure!" You can do them in any order and timing. Please keep a running list of the activities you have chosen to do for yourself and turn that list in on Canvas by **December 15**.

**In-person people** are not required to do any of the online participation activities but need to appear in class a minimum of 20 times for full credit in addition to giving one 20-minute presentation/activity in class at some point in the semester.

## Lectures

There are short lectures on the course materials each week posted online. They will usually be 15-20 minutes in duration each.

## Readings

Readings will be assigned and made available on the web page each week. You do not need to purchase a textbook for this course. The readings will help you to succeed in the various other course components.

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**There are 3 main assignments for this course:**

### **Concept Map Assignment (full description)**

Students will choose any key concept discussed in the first section of the course and create a concept map to illustrate how the concept can be applied in a specific example (e.g., species or ecosystem). The map can be either digital (e.g., powerpoint, bubble.us) or hand-drawn. **Suggested Due Date- September 28.**

### **Wakelet Assignment (full description)**

Students will create a Wakelet on a chosen “hot topic” in conservation biology. Wakelets are online information portals that summarize content on a given issue. They include embedded links to a wide variety of online content including articles, blogs, images, twitter, and youtube. **Suggested Due Date: October 26.**

### **Success Stories Assignment (full description)**

Students will contribute to a class Padlet map showing conservation success stories around the globe. Students will explain how and why conservation efforts can work in different social and ecological settings. **Suggested Due Date: December 1.**

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### **Take-home Essays (full description)**

A take-home (open book/open notes/un-timed) essays will take place at the end of the course. The essays should be completed individually (not in groups). There are two open-ended essay questions. The essays are designed to synthesize information learned during the semester. **Suggested Due Date: December 15.**

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## Schedule at a Glance

Content	Assignments	
<b>Course Introduction</b>		
<b>KEY CONCEPTS</b>		
Week 1	<a href="#">What is Conservation Biology?</a>	
Week 2	<a href="#">Extinctions</a>	
Week 3	<a href="#">Sources and Sinks/Communities</a>	
Week 4	<a href="#">Valuing Biodiversity</a>	
<b>THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY</b>		
Week 5	<a href="#">Habitat destruction/fragmentation</a>	<a href="#">Concept Maps</a>
Week 6	<a href="#">Climate change</a>	
Week 7	<a href="#">Wildlife harvesting/trade</a>	
Week 8	<a href="#">Chasing Coral</a>	
Week 9	<a href="#">Invasive species</a>	<a href="#">Wakelets</a>
<b>CONSERVATION STRATEGIES</b>		
Week 10	<a href="#">Protected areas</a>	
Week 11	<a href="#">Restoration/Reintroduction</a>	
Week 12	<a href="#">Diversity/Inclusion in Conservation</a>	<a href="#">Success Stories</a>
Week 13	<a href="#">Science Communication</a>	
Week 14	<a href="#">Week 14- Wrap Up</a>	<a href="#">Take home essays</a>

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**Grades will be calculated as follows:**

A (90% or greater), B+ (87%-89.99%), B (83%-86.99%), B- (80%-82.99%), C+ (77%-79.99%), C (73%-76.99%), C- (70%-72.99%), D+ (67%-69.99%), D (63%-66.99%), D- (60%-62.99%), E (<60%)

Grades will be available [here](#) on Canvas and will be frequently updated throughout the course.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Points</b>
<a href="#">Online Participation</a> (25 activities x 5 pts each) OR In-Person Attendance (20 days x 4 pts each + one 45 pt presentation)	125
<a href="#">Concept Map</a>	100
<a href="#">Wakelet</a>	100
<a href="#">Success Stories</a>	100
<a href="#">Take-home Essays</a>	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>525</b>

Note: I do not deduct points for late assignments.

**Grades and Grade Points**

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

## **Attendance and Make-Up Work**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

## **Online Course Evaluation Process**

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

## **Disability Resource Center**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center.](#)

## **Privacy**

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades. For more information, please see:

<https://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

## **Academic Honesty**

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior

consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

### **Software Use:**

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

### **Campus Helping Resources**

#### *Academic Resources*

- E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services [career.ufl.edu/](http://career.ufl.edu/).
- Library Support: [cms.uflib.ufl.edu/](http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/) ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. [teachingcenter.ufl.edu/](http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/)
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. [writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/](http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/)



## *Health*

- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit [shcc.ufl.edu/](http://shcc.ufl.edu/).
- University Police Department: Visit [police.ufl.edu/](http://police.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center](http://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center).

## *Wellness*

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, [www.counseling.ufl.edu](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu)(Counseling Services, Groups and Workshops, Outreach and Consultation, Self-Help Library, Wellness Coaching)
- U Matter We Care, [www.umatter.ufl.edu/](http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/)

## **Student Complaints:**

- Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>
- Online Course: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>