

**DISEASE AND WILDLIFE**  
**WIS4934/**  
*Course Syllabus*

**Instructor:** Thomas Waltzek MS, DVM, PhD; [tbwaltzek@ufl.edu](mailto:tbwaltzek@ufl.edu)

**Office hours:** Please contact the instructors via email. Emails will be responded to within 36 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends.

**Text (Recommended):**

Parasites and Disease of Wild Mammals in Florida, Don J. Forrester, 1992, University of Florida Press, ISBN: 9780813010724

**Course Description:**

This course will overview the importance of wildlife disease in the context of disease management using an ecological framework. Diseases will be discussed for each of the major terrestrial and aquatic groups of animals in the earlier and later portions of the class, respectively. Guest lectures will be provided by experts in their fields on spatial epidemiology of disease in wildlife and disease outbreak investigation, to name a few. Upon completion of this course, the student should have an understanding of how wildlife diseases impact management decisions, and identify and describe the major infectious and non-infectious causes of disease in various wildlife species in the southeastern United States and beyond.

**Topics:**

Week 1

8/21- Welcome and course overview: why we study wildlife diseases

8/23- The nature and cause of disease

8/25- The disease process

Week 2

8/28- Noninfectious disease agents

8/30- Infectious disease agents

9/1- Zoonoses

\*Friday 9/1- Exit quiz on material from Weeks 1 & 2

Week 3

9/4- No class. UF closed. Labor Day.

9/6- Disease management (Guest: Dr. Sam Wisely, UF WEC)

9/8- Disease management studies- HPAI and screwworm in Florida

Week 4

9/11- Field Investigations (Sayler & Guest: Dr. Mark Cunningham, FWC)

9/13- Methods for Diagnosing Disease

9/15- Epidemiology & Wildlife Diseases in a Changing World

\*Friday 9/15-Exit quiz on material from Weeks 3 & 4

#### Week 5

9/18- Diseases of waterfowl

9/20- Diseases of waterfowl cont.

9/22- Diseases of galliformes

#### Week 6

9/25- Diseases of cranes

9/27- Diseases of raptors

9/29- Using spatial tools to understand wildlife diseases (Guest: Dr. Jason Blackburn, UF Med Geo./EPI)

\*Friday 9/29- Exit quiz on material from Weeks 5 & 6 (guest lecture material from 9/29 on spatial epidemiology NOT included)

#### Week 7

10/2- Diseases of marsupials

10/4-Diseases of edentates

10/6- No class. UF Homecoming.

#### Week 8

10/9-Diseases of mustelids (Guest: Dr. Sam Wisely, UF WEC)

10/11- NO CLASS- Instructors at conference

10/13- NO CLASS-Instructors at conference

#### Week 9

10/16-Diseases of rodents

10/18- Diseases of rodents cont.

10/20- Diseases of lagomorphs

\*10/20- Exit quiz on material from Weeks 7, 8, & 9 (includes marsupials, edentates, mustelids, rodents and lagomorphs)

#### Week 10

10/23- Diseases of pigs

10/25- Diseases of deer

10/27- Diseases of carnivores

#### Week 11

10/30- Diseases of marine mammals

11/1- Diseases of marine mammals cont.

11/3- Diseases of reptiles

\*11/3- Exit quiz on material from Weeks 10 & 11

#### Week 12

11/6- Diseases of fish

11/8- Diseases of fish cont.  
11/10- No class. UF closed. Veteran's Day.

Week 13

11/13- Diseases of amphibians  
11/15- Toxicology  
11/17—Prepare for cases studies  
\*11/17- Exit quiz on material from Weeks 12 & 13 (material discussed in class 11/17, NOT included)

WEEK 14

11/20- Case study  
11/22- No class  
11/24- No class

WEEK 15

11/27-Case study  
11/29-Case study  
12/1-Case study

WEEK 16- Final presentations/exams

12/4- Exam prep  
12/6- Final exam

**Grading:**

Students will be graded bi-weekly quizzes, case studies (as team-based learning activities) and a final exam/assignment. All written answers must be completed in your own words. Copying from other sources is not acceptable and may be considered plagiarism. Failure to complete an assignment in your own words may result in you receiving a score of 0 (zero) for the assignment. Always include your name when communicating with the course instructor. Students will receive individual feedback on points lost on the assignments.

**Points breakdown:**

Students will participate in bi-weekly quizzes, taken in class on the students OWN PAPER. As 6 quizzes will be given, the lowest grade will be dropped. If a quiz is missed, this will automatically count as the lowest grade. Quizzes CAN NOT be made up for extra credit. **(50 pts)**

Case Study **(100 pts)**

Final assignment/exam **(100 pts)**—50 additional points will be earned by graduate students, as they are required to submit a final paper on a selected case study (their choice)

**Total Points: 250 undergrad/300 grad**

**Final Assignment:** Students will be given an in class written final exam. Exam questions will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. Questions will come from the course material and will be an extension of quiz questions and the case studies. Questions in the “extra credit” portion of the exam will come from the optional course readings. Graduate students will have an additional written assignment that will be an extension of the case study material, as mentioned previously.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

100-93% A  
92-90% A-  
89-87% B+  
86-83% B  
82-80% B-  
79-77% C+  
76-73% C  
72-70% C-  
69-67% D+  
66-63% D  
62-60% D-  
<60% and below = E

**Makeup Policy:**

Make up assignments are not usually given, but may be at the discretion of the course instructor after evaluation of the circumstances leading to the request. Make up exams will be typically 3-5 essay questions.

Additional information regarding make-ups can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

**Grade Changes:**

Grades will be changed only when a grading error has been made. If you think an error has been made, you should email the instructor as soon as possible.

**Additional information on the University of Florida Grades and Grading Policies may be found at:** <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

**Course Assignments and Attendance:**

This class consists of a large amount of material. You will not be required to remember everything, it is only an introductory course, but many topics will be introduced. After each lecture there will be “thought questions” on what the instructors feel are the most important aspects of that week’s lessons. These are reviewed in class and the answers WILL NOT appear on the final slide of each lecture’s material. At the end of each week, the materials for that week will be emailed to the class. These are not emailed prior to class because the ability to answer the quiz questions (based on the previous lecture) are based on attendance and participation in class, not simply reviewing power point presentations. Although there is not a formal grade for attendance, biweekly in-class quizzes will count towards your final grade (50 total points—see above).

**Class Participation:** Students are expected to class discussions with appropriate preparation and to interact professionally with their classmates.

**Communication:**

Email should always be used or contact the course instructors in the event you have a problem of a personal nature. When we email you we are usually contacting you because we want to help you. If you have a question about your grade, or assignment question, please email us and we'll be happy to help you.

**Campus Helping Resources:**

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/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/)  
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/)
- *Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/)*

**Student Complaints:**

- Residential Course: [https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF\\_Complaints\\_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf)
- Online Course: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

**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. case studies, presentations). 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>.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism includes any attempt to take credit for another person's work. This includes quoting directly from a book or web site, without crediting the source. Sources should always be referenced, a link to the website added, or quotation marks placed around the material.

**Assignments:** While we understand that our students have other work and personal commitments, we expect every effort to be made to meet these deadlines. If for some reason, because of circumstances beyond your control, you are unable to meet an assignment deadline, students should e-mail the professor and explain the situation **in advance**. If you have outstanding assignments at the end of the semester we will send you a follow up email as a reminder and as a means to determine your plans for completion. If you do not respond to us before the final day of classes you will be assigned a grade based on the completed assignments.

**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. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**Important Dates:**

For important dates consult this syllabus, consult the UF Calendar of Critical Dates and <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/>. In the event that a guest lecture needs to be rescheduled, every attempt to notify students in advance will be made, however, as working professionals in other occupations, this may not always be possible.

**Services for Students with Disabilities:**

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)