

ANTHP401.79/791.53
Primate Conservation Biology
Spring 2014

Tuesdays, 3:10 – 5:00pm

Hunter North Room #730

Instructor: Prof. Andrea Baden

Office: Hunter North, Office 758

E-mail: andrea.baden@hunter.cuny.edu

Telephone: TBA

Office hours: Tuesdays, 2-3pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:

You read about it everywhere these days – the loss of biodiversity, climate change, and extinction – gloom and doom. Human behaviors are dramatically and quickly altering the nature world. A relatively new discipline, conservation biology, has arisen in response to these changes. The major goal of conservation biology is to preserve biodiversity and biological processes by preventing population extinction. It is a multidisciplinary field that ultimately informs and guides conservation action.

The goal of this course is to provide you with an understanding of the science and ethical debates behind conserving biodiversity. The focus will be on primate conservation. Humans are primates and, yet, our actions threaten the survival of many of our closest living relatives, nearly 50% of which are threatened with extinction. The threats to wild primates and the strategies used to protect primates will be investigated. As other animal and plant species face similar threats, we will also rely on examples from beyond the primate world.

This is a discussion-based course. It is a mix of traditional lecture, student presentations, and class discussion. This course is less about memorization of facts than it is about discussion of current issues in biodiversity conservation. You are expected to come to class each week prepared to discuss the information presented in your readings.

This course is also designed to help you learn through oral communication. Presenting in front of your peers is an important part of being a scientist, especially a conservation biologist. You must be able to coherently and succinctly convey your ideas to a wider audience. This course will help you to improve your oral presentation skills.

REQUIREMENTS, GRADING, AND POLICIES:

REQUIREMENTS

(1) Readings

Required books:

- Principles of Conservation Biology, 3rd Edition. MJ Groom, GK Meffe, Carroll CR, editors. Sunderland, MA: Sinauer Associates, Inc.

For each class, there will be a core reading (usually from the textbook but sometimes from other documents) that provides you with an overview of the topic. Quiz questions will be taken from the core reading. In addition to the core reading, there may also be supporting articles for each class. You are required to also read these articles prior to class. All readings will be posted on Blackboard at least one week in advance.

(2) Group presentation

On the first day of the course, you will be assigned to a group. This will be your group for the rest of the semester. Your group will choose one topic (from a list I provide, based on the main class topics listed in the schedule below) on which you and two or three of your classmates will give a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation. I will provide you with a group of articles that you will **synthesize** for your classmates. The purpose of this presentation is not just to lecture to other students, but to engage the class in discussion. To ensure fairness in grading, I will create a rubric by which each group will be graded. To guide presentation preparation, rubrics will be provided to students before their scheduled presentation date. *I strongly encourage you to meet with me prior to giving your topic presentation.* Students who are not presenting are expected to ask questions **during and after** presentations. (This will be reflected in your final grade.)

(3) Quizzes

For each topic covered in the syllabus, there will be an in-class quiz. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of each class period and will be based on the core readings for the day's topic. Quizzes are not intended to be difficult. Rather, the quizzes are designed to make sure that complete the readings prior to class. **There are no make-ups for the quizzes.** Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

(4) Paper

You will be expected to write a research paper on a primate conservation topic of your choosing. It can include any of the topics discussed in class or an entirely new topic that we were unable to cover. In your paper, I would like you to summarize an important conservation issue. Present the consequences or impacts of the issue and describe the current conservation initiatives underway (if any) to ameliorate that problem. Papers should be a minimum of 5 pages for undergraduate students/8 pages for graduate students. Please use 1" margins, 1.5 line-spacing and a standard 12 point font (Times New Roman). You are required to use at least 5 primary resources and cite all references

in-text. Papers are due at the final exam.

(5) Final exam

You will be given a *cumulative* final exam at the end of the semester. This exam will be comprised primarily of short answer and essay questions and will make-up 25% of your overall grade. This exam is not intended to trick you. As the overarching goal of this course is discussion-based, I will expect you to synthesize issues discussed in class and then argue your position regarding particular conservation issues using examples from class discussions, your readings, and, if relevant, your paper.

GRADING

Grade Structure

- Group presentation: 20%
- Quizzes: 20%
- Paper: 25%
- Final Exam: 25%
- Participation and attendance 10%

This course depends on active, interested students. It is not my goal to lecture *at* you. Conservation can play an important role in your daily life, and I hope that this course can help encourage you to all be responsible consumers and stewards of your local environments. I expect you to keep up with the readings and participate in the conversation when you have something to say. You need not talk at length or on every topic just to earn “extra participation points”. Simply attend class, come prepared, and contribute to class discussions. But, if I see a trend of non-participation from you throughout the semester, it will be reflected in your final course grade.

I will take attendance at the beginning of each class and will incorporate attendance in the calculation of your final course grade. Not counting the first week of the course, there are 14 class days. You each get one “Get out of class free” card. In other words, you can miss one class, no excuse needed, and you will not be penalized (as long as it’s not the day you are supposed to present). For every additional day you miss (unless under extraordinary circumstances), I will reduce your attendance/participation grade.

There will be NO extra credit assignments.

POLICIES

HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the Hunter Honor Code. Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to

enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

When you make references to the ideas of others, it is essential to provide proper attribution and citation. Failing to do so is considered academically dishonest, as is copying or paraphrasing someone else's work. The consequences of such behavior range from failure on an assignment to failure in the course to dismissal from the university.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

The best way to contact me is through email. Although I have official office hours, you are welcome to meet with me whenever you need to. Please send me an email to arrange a time that works for both of us. *Do not hesitate to contact me if you are feeling overwhelmed or you are not understanding something in class. If you have questions about your presentations, come see me!*

ACCESSIBILITY

Hunter College offers a range of services to students. Contact the Office of Student Services for more information <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/student-services>.

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/ or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1214B to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212-772-4857) or email: AccessABILITY@hunter.cuny.edu.

POLICY FOR ADDING OR WITHDRAWING FROM COURSES

Students are responsible for registering for classes and for verifying their class schedules. The add/drop/withdrawal deadlines can be found at: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/onestop/calendars>. As per the Office of the Registrar, after the course adjustment deadline has passed (Feb. 19), the student may request a W from the instructor until late April.

RELIGIONS ACCOMMODATIONS

Please let me know during the first week of the semester of any scheduled absences for religious observance. We will discuss mutually acceptable methods for completing the missed classroom time and coursework.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Date	Topic	Readings
Foundations of conservation biology		
Jan. 28	Intro to Conservation Biology	PCB, Ch. 1
Feb. 4	Global biodiversity	PCB, Ch. 2
Feb. 11	Primate biology: Diversity, systematics & status	PCB, Pg. 76-77
Feb. 18	Conservation value & ethics	PCB, Ch. 4
Feb. 25	Value of biodiversity	PCB, Ch. 5
Primary threats to biodiversity		
Mar. 4	Habitat loss & fragmentation (subsistence)	PCB, Ch. 3, 6 & 7
Mar. 11	Habitat loss & fragmentation (commercial)	TBA
Mar. 18	Hunting & trade	PCB, Ch. 8
Mar. 25	Human-primate conflict, overpopulation & disease	TBA
Apr. 1	Climate change	PCB, Ch. 10
Approaches to solving conservation problems		
Apr. 8	Conservation genetics	PCB, Ch.11
Apr. 14-22	SPRING BREAK	-
Apr. 29	Species, landscape & ecosystem approaches	PCB, Ch. 12 & 13
May 6	<i>In situ</i> conservation: Habitat restoration, community involvement, translocations	PCB, Ch. 15
May 13	<i>Ex situ</i> conservation: Captive breeding, genetic banks	TBA
May 20	FINAL EXAM (PAPER DUE)	3:10 – 5pm

**Please check Blackboard regularly for supplemental readings and changes to the syllabus*