Course name and number: BIOL 442 ADVANCED HERPETOLOGY
Credit Hours: 4 (3:3)
Instructor: Dr. G.C. Hickman
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Prerequisite: BIOL 3414 Vertebrate Biology or permission of instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed for graduate students in biology wanting to acquire a more detailed working knowledge and appreciation of the anatomy, physiology, behavior, distribution, and systematics of reptiles and amphibians.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: At the completion of the course, students will be able to:
1. Recognize characteristics of amphibians and reptiles, and major groups of classification.
2. Correlate diet and digestion with anatomy in herptiles.
4. Discuss Sociobiology, reproduction, and predation within the group.
5. Understand locomotory adaptations and zoogeography of ectothermic tetrapods.
6. Cite major references in Herpetology and be able to utilize primary journal articles.
7. Utilize techniques for herpetological study.

LECTURES AND TEXTS:
Lectures provide major guidelines for study, reading, and co-ordinating theory with practical experience in the laboratories. Text and outside readings are assigned to broaden perspective, provide examples when lecture time is insufficient, and to encourage a working familiarity with the basic herpetological literature. The texts are:


In addition, other books and current references available at the library or on the web will be recommended in lecture, and presentation topics will be assigned.

COURSE OUTLINE: Please refer to page three schedule.

LABORATORIES
A field notebook will be required and field attire (a small field pack, field shoes, hat, insect repellent and sun screen) are recommended. Non-required field guides that are available will be noted in class. Some field studies may be conducted on weekends and/or evenings. A field and/or laboratory project will also be required. Additional responsibilities assisting undergraduates will be assigned.
CLASS POLICIES
1. Failure to meet submission deadlines or examinations without provision will result in an “F” for the work in question. Work submitted late or a missed examination requires a written explanation from your physician.
2. Any student involved in providing false or misleading information, plagiarism, classroom misdemeanor, or academic dishonesty will be assigned an “F” for the work in question.
3. According to university policy, an “F” will be assigned if a student withdraws from the course without completing the proper forms for dropping a course.

COURSE GRADE AND REQUIREMENTS:

The final mark for the course will be computed as an average of the following grades:

1. Lecture Exams: Three one-hour exams each worth 100 marks will emphasize lecture material, but may also include relevant laboratory and field exercises, and discussion. An comprehensive essay question will be on each exam. Marks: 300
2. Laboratory Exams: One three hour laboratory exam worth 100 marks each will emphasize laboratory material, but may also include conceptual material from lectures. Marks: 100
3. Dissection projects graded for content and presentation. Marks: 100
4. Research project or Essay Marks: 100
5. A specimen collection is required Marks: 100

TOTAL MARKS POSSIBLE: 700

ADDITIONAL GRADUATE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Graduate students have different lecture and lab exams than undergraduate students.
2. Extra readings with regard to primary journal articles will be required.
3. Discussion topics will be more provocative and argumentative, and the level of presentation concurrent with that of scientific meetings.
4. The quality and quantity of the project will be expected to be at a higher level.
5. Additional work in assisting undergraduates will be assigned.
Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero for the assignment.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. July 25 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom/professional behavior

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Statement of Civility (can be in place of classroom/professional behavior)

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.
Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering Version)

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at http://www.tamu.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html, and the College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage (http://sci.tamu.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the chair or director of the appropriate department or school, the Office of the College of Science and Engineering Dean, or the Office of the Provost.

Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Statement of Academic Continuity

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing.
This schedule is meant to give a general indication of the topics covered and their approximate sequence. Changes in the schedule may occur depending on circumstances such as weather.

**July**
- 7  Introduction: references, nomenclature, geologic time, history
- 8  Origin and evolution of the Amphibia
- 9  Extant amphibians
- 10 The structure of amphibians
- 11  **LABS:** Field techniques, Presentation and Dissection Assignments
- 14 Origin and evolution of the Reptilia
- 15 Adaptive lines in reptiles: dinosaurs, marine reptiles, birds, and mammals
- 16 The surviving primitives; lizards and snakes
- 17 The structure of reptiles
- 18  **LABS:** Keying; Organizing a teaching/research collection
- 21  **LECTURE EXAM I**
- 22 Reproduction and development
- 23 Homeostasis (Temperature, Moisture Relations)
- 24 Relations to the abiotic environment
- 25  **LABS:** Field trip
- 28 Speciation and distribution; Biogeography
- 29  **LECTURE EXAM II**
- 30 Special topics
- 31 Special topics; Collections due

**Aug**
- 01  **LABS:** Presentations of Dissections
- 04 Special topics
- 05  **LABORATORY EXAM (Dissection Write-ups Due)**
- 06  **LECTURE EXAM III**
- 07  **FINAL MEETING**

HAVE AN ENJOYABLE AND REWARDING SEMESTER!