ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY SYLLABUS FALL 2013
ESCI 4490.003 (W 4:20-6:50 pm) BH-104

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY –CORPUS CHRISTI (TAMUCC)

INSTRUCTOR:
Melissa Rohal
Office: HRI 210
Tel: No office phone
Email: melissa.rohal@tamucc.edu

OFFICE HOURS: TTR 1-3 (or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is described as the historical, contemporary and projected concerns of human activities on biological aspects of functioning ecosystems. The student learning outcomes of this course are to establish criteria determining the evolution of life on Earth with special emphasis on human interaction. This course covers topics of a diverse nature: origins of life on Earth, biogeochemistry, ecological principles, biodiversity, biological succession, human population dynamics, demographic transition, renewable resources, air/water pollution, global climate change, deforestation, environmental toxicology, and environmental politics. Students will be required to report views regarding important global, regional and local environmental issues. After taking this course, the student will be able to discuss concepts relevant to environmental biology, critically evaluate issues and present viewpoints associated with these issues.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES: The student will (1) Learn and be able to characterize the various types of environmental issues affecting society; (2) Be able to describe the common types of environmental systems, perturbations, and mitigating solutions that affect the environment; (3) Acquire sufficient knowledge to explain the effects of global warming, pollution, and resource management regarding the environment; and (4) Be competent to describe the interactions and impacts of humans on the environment.

MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS: BIOL 1407 or consent of the instructors.


COMPUTER ACCESS: Use of the computer is a major part of this course. This will include use of email, WWW, and various MS Office programs. In addition, you are required to subscribe to WebCT. Computers are available for student use in twelve computer labs around campus. The campus Computer Lab is located in Corpus Christi Hall – Room 200 – and contains 100 computers. This lab is staffed with help personnel and has very generous operating hours. Each student has a computer account set up by the university that is available from the first day of class. Call the computer help line at x2692 for more information.

DISABILITY AND VENERANS’ ACCOMMODATIONS: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to providing persons with disabilities an equal opportunity to access campus facilities, resources and programs. 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. Support and accommodations are also available for returning veterans who experience cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus. Our Office of Disability Services arranges such support and academic accommodations. To make a request, or for more information, call (361) 825-5816 or visit Driftwood 101. 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. It is important to contact the Office of Disability Services in a timely fashion as it will take time for them to review requests and prepare accommodations and accommodation letters.
STUDENT OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY EMAIL: TAMUCC provides each student with an email address. Students who use any other email address will be responsible for any missed lecture, exam, lab or other information pertaining to this class and/or university associated information.

GRADE COMPUTATION:
Participation - 10%
Test 1 – 25%
Test 2 – 25%
Homework Activities – 15%
Presentation and Paper (Final) – 25%

Instead of a comprehensive final there will be a 5 minute presentation and a paper covering a current issue in environmental biology.  No two students can present on the same topic.

GRADING SCALE: 90.0-100.0 = A; 80.0-89.9 = B; 70.0-79.9 = C; 60.0-69.9 = D; 0.0-59.9 = F

THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP GRADES*:

*Students with a university approved scheduled absence (athletics, military duty, etc.) MUST contact the professors well in advance of a scheduled absence (i.e. at least 72 hrs in advance – there are no exceptions). Exams may be taken early in those specific cases. Students who do not arrange to take exams ahead of time will not be eligible for this special consideration. A written excuse from the university department involved or the Office of the Dean of Students is required. Disrespectful behavior to the instructor(s) or other persons in the class, including comments made on class assignments, will NOT be tolerated and may result in expulsion from the class. All students are expected to conform to college level standards of ethics, academic integrity, grammar and spelling, plagiarism, cheating, etc. Review the appropriate pages of the TAMUCC catalog and TAMUCC student handbook. In choosing to take this course, you are agreeing to abide by the course rules, regulations, and standards as set forth in this syllabus. Should you have concerns or questions, you are to discuss them with the professor(s) as soon as possible. As a result of enrolling in this course, you are bound by these rules, regulations and standards from the first day of class throughout the duration of the course. Lastly, I reserve the right to change topics covered, syllabus schedule and exam dates as needed.

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 may result in a zero on the assignment or this course.

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 at attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please consult the university website or the undergraduate catalog to determine the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

GRADE APPEALS: As stated in the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi University Rules and Procedures (Section B [Academic Program], Part 13 [Students]: 13.02.99.C2 [Student Grade Appeals] and 13.02.99C2.01 [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 on 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, consult the University Rules and Procedures specified above (accessible through the University Rules and Procedures website at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.
**CLASS STANDARDS:** Since you are all adults, you will be treated as such. You are expected to be on time and attend every class. If absent, it is your responsibility to obtain missed information from a classmate. Missed information includes not only lecture notes, but also any possible information regarding syllabus changes. You are expected to arrive on time prepared to take notes, i.e., with pen, paper, and colored markers/pencils.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS** The schedule below is a preliminary semester outline. It is your responsibility to keep up with changes to this outline. Homework activity due dates will be announced as the semester progresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>Introduction and Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>Chapter 2 and Ecosystems Modeling (Blomberg)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/18</td>
<td>Chapter 2 continued and Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>Chapter 4 (Rhodes) and Chapter 5 (Hsiang)</td>
<td>Topic for Final Project</td>
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<td>10/2</td>
<td>Chapter 6 and Chapter 7</td>
<td>Test 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>Chapter 8 and Chapter 9</td>
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<td>10/16</td>
<td>Chapter 10 and Chapter 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/23</td>
<td>Chapter 12 and Chapter 13</td>
<td>Draft</td>
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<td>10/30</td>
<td>Chapter 14 (Rhodes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>Chapter 12 continued and Fish Banks (Blomberg)</td>
<td>Test 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/13</td>
<td>Chapter 15 and Chapter 16</td>
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<td>11/20</td>
<td>Chapter 17 and Chapter 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
<td>Final Project write up</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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**Important Dates for the Fall Semester of 2011:**

- September 11, Wednesday  
  Last day to register or add a class
- November 15, Friday  
  Last day to drop a class
- November 28-29, Thursday-Friday  
  Thanksgiving Holidays
- December 9, Monday  
  Last day to withdraw from the University
- December 10, Tuesday  
  Last day of classes
- December 11, Wednesday  
  Last day to apply for May 2014 graduation
- December 12-13, Thursday-Friday  
  Reading Day
- December 16-18, Monday-Wednesday  
  Final examinations
- December 21, Saturday  
  Fall Commencement