A. COURSE INFORMATION
Course number/section: BIOL 4425.001; BIOL 4425.101 (lab)
Class meeting time: Lecture – TR 8-9:15 am; Lab – F 8-10:50
Class location: Lecture – OCNR 225; Lab – ECMS TBA

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
Instructor: Kim Withers
Office location: NRC 3205
Office Hours: 10-12 MW, 9:30-11 TR
Telephone: 825-5907
Email: Kim.Withers@tamucc.edu
Appointments: Call to set up an appointment outside of office hours

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION
Catalog Course Description
Systematics, anatomy, physiology, ecology, behavior, and field identification of birds. SMTE 0091 is a co-
requisite for this course. Documented completion of this safety training is required early in the semester for
continued participation in this course. Safety training given during a laboratory meeting early in the semester is
required for continued participation in the course.

Extended Course Description
Students in this course will investigate the natural history, biology, ecology, evolution, and conservation of birds
around the world. The lab will be focused on bird identification in the field including visual, auditory, habitat,
and behavioral traits and methods for studying birds in the field.

D. PREREQUISITES AND CO-REQUISITES
Prerequisites
None

Corequisite
SMTE 0091 Biological Laboratory Safety Seminar

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS, READINGS, & SUPPLIES
Required Textbooks

A bird field guide—pick one of the following:
Alfred A. Knopf.

Other Required References
Additional readings from the primary literature and other sources will be assigned throughout the semester.
Required Supplies

Field Notebook—MUST be a Rite in the Rain notebook.

Best page format choices (from Amazon):

Rite in the Rain Spiral Notebook – Journal #393
Rite in the Rain Birders Journal #195

Binoculars—MUST be 8X42 or 8X50

Recommendation
Eagle Optics “Shrike” 8X42 binocular (~$99.99) - http://www.eagleoptics.com/binoculars/eagle-optics/eagle-optics-shrike-8x42-binocular. This is a very good, inexpensive, entry-level binocular. Eagle Optics has a great replace/repair/clean policy as well – if an Eagle Optics brand binocular breaks, they will repair or replace forever, and you can get them cleaned and maintained free, just have to pay to the postage.

Recommended Supplies

Binocular harness system to replace standard binocular neck strap. You can get one from Eagle Optics - http://www.eagleoptics.com/binocular-accessories/eagle-optics/eagle-optics-bino-system-harness-strap and they are also available from Academy and other outdoor stores. Prices range from $18-$50. These harnesses (and there are several styles, just search on “binocular harness strap”) take the strain off your neck and make it much easier to spend long days in the field.

Large fanny pack, multi-pocketed field vest, or something like a belted game bag or shell pouch (http://www.flushandpoint.com/products.asp?id=36) so that you can quickly and easily get your field guide, field notebook and water etc. in hand.

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the varied roles of birds in ecosystems, how the environment has shaped their biology and ecology, and the issues and challenges of conserving birds.

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

1. DEMONSTRATE knowledge of biology and ecology of birds
2. UNDERSTAND the biotic and abiotic interactions that shape bird communities
3. UNDERSTAND the challenges to and opportunities for bird conservation
4. DEMONSTRATE the ability to identify birds by sight and sound.
5. COMPARE a literature review & PROPOSE a field study on some aspect of bird ecology or behavior
6. CARRY OUT a field study on some aspect of bird ecology or behavior, PREPARE a journal-style article on the study, and PRESENT the results of the study to the class

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS & ACTIVITIES

Lecture, readings with discussion, case studies, and student presentations will be the bulk of the “lecture” portion of the course. For the lab, most of our time will be spent in the field observing birds, learning to identify birds, learning how to make behavioral and other research-oriented observations on birds in natural settings. There will be some in-lab activities associated with bird anatomy and physiology late in the semester or during bad weather days.
H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2)</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies (2)</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead a Case Study (1)</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review &amp; Study Proposal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Study Paper</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification Practicals (3)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Lab Exercises (3)</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>900</td>
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Grades will be assigned as follows:
A = 90% or greater
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D =60-69%
F = <70%

I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

See separate schedule document

J. COURSE POLICIES

Attendance/Tardiness
You are expected to attend every lecture and lab. Courtesy dictates that you will be on time for lecture. For case studies and associated discussion activities you will not get credit for the in-class portion if you do not attend class that day.

When we are working outside during lab, please arrive at the assembly point 5 to 10 minutes early. For activities on campus you may be able to catch up, but for field trips off campus you WILL BE LEFT BEHIND IF YOU ARE NOT ON TIME.

Late Work and Make-up Exams

Late work is not accepted.

For case studies and associated discussion activities you will not get credit for the in-class portion of the activity if you do not attend class that day.

Make-up lecture exams are only given in the case of extreme circumstances, such as hospitalization or death. Documentation of the circumstances through the appropriate on-campus division will be expected and arrangements must be made PRIOR to the exam for a make-up exam to be given.

There are NO make-ups given for lab exams

Extra Credit

There is no such thing as “extra credit” in this class. In the words of Spongebob Squarepants and Mrs. Puff:

Spongebob: “Mrs. Puff, I don’t feel like I really did anything.”
Mrs. Puff: “That’s how extra credit is supposed to feel.”

For more about my attitude toward extra credit, see this article by Jack Slay Jr. http://chronicle.com/article/No-Extra-Credit-For-You/44956
Cell Phone Use

Please turn off and stow your cell phone when you come to class.

Laptop Use

I think you are generally better off to take notes by hand and transcribing them later. I will tolerate laptop use in class as long as you limit yourself to taking notes. If I see you are doing other things, like surfing the web, I will ask you to turn the laptop off.

Food in Class

Food or drinks are allowed in the lecture classroom, but cannot be taken into the lab. You should bring water with you on days that we are in the field.

Missed Exam

See “Late Work and Make-up Exam” policies above.

K. COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity (University)

It is expected that university students will demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction, and ability to manage their own affairs. Students are viewed as individuals who possess the qualities of worth, dignity, and the capacity for self-direction in personal behavior. See Full University Policy at http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=313#Academic_Integrity

Deadline for Dropping a Course with a Grade of W (University)

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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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. Please consult the Academic Calendar (http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/) for the last day to drop a course.

Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)

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.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html, and the College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage at http://sci.tamucc.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.

Disability Services

Disability Services (DS) is the hub for coordinating services and accommodations to ensure accessibility and utilization of all programs for all Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi students with disabilities. Our services are designed to meet the unique educational needs of enrolled students with documented permanent or temporary disabilities. DS provides intake and consultation services to students seeking to register with our office. DS reviews an individual’s documentation of disability and assesses eligibility for services and the determination of reasonable accommodations. For more information visit the Disability Services Office at 116 Corpus Christi Hall or go to http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/.

GENERAL DISCLAIMER

I reserve the right to modify the information, schedule, assignments, deadlines, and course policies in this syllabus if and when necessary. I will announce such changes in a timely manner during regularly scheduled lecture periods.