



# STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

**Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture**  
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## FOR 463.201

# Field Ecology Appalachian Trip

## Summer II 2018

### Course Details

#### Instructors:

**Dr. Jeremy Stovall**  
[stovalljp@sfasu.edu](mailto:stovalljp@sfasu.edu)  
 (936) 468-2127 (office)

**Office Hours:** Office hours for the two week course will be whenever you can find me.

**Class Times:** Five scheduled classes during Spring 2018;  
 Sunday August 5, 2018 – Saturday August 14, 2018

**Class Location:** Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the surrounding area. We'll be based out of the Big Creek Group Campsite.

### Course Description

**FOR 463: Field Ecology Appalachian Trip** – Three semester hours, primarily during a two week field trip to the Southern Appalachian region. Principles of synecology and population ecology as they affect vegetative and animal communities. Ecological impacts anthropogenic activities on communities. Required field trips. Prerequisite: instructor permission. Course fee required. Summer II only.

### Program Learning Outcomes

Forestry 463 is an elective course. The course is designed to address the following Program Learning Outcomes, per the BSF Program Matrix:

1. Demonstrate understanding and competency of forest ecology and biology;
2. Demonstrate understanding and competency in the measurement of forest resources;
3. Demonstrate understanding and competency in managing forest resources;
4. Demonstrate understanding and competency of forest resource policy, economics, and administration.
5. Demonstrate understanding and competency in oral and written communication skills.

B.S. Forestry Program Learning Outcomes: Proficiency Levels					
Course	PLO 1 Forest Ecology & Biology	PLO 2 Forest Resource Measurement	PLO 3 Forest Resource Management	PLO 4 Forest Resource Policy, Economics, Administration	PLO 5 Oral & Written Communication Skills
FOR 463	A	I	I	I	I

*A – Advanced* – course supports Program Learning Outcome by providing students with transitional, high level topic-specific information, activities, and opportunities that enable the students to apply their critical thinking and tactical skills to resolved increasingly challenging strategic situations.

*I – Intermediate* – course supports Program Learning Outcome by providing students with topic-specific information, concepts, applications, and lab activities that increase the students' skills in making tactical implementation decisions relative to the expected outcomes.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Identify common woody and herbaceous plants of the southern Appalachians and describe their wildlife uses.
2. Identify common mammals, herptiles, and birds of the southern Appalachians and describe their basic ecology.
3. Explain how the flora and fauna of the southern Appalachians form distinct forest communities.
4. Categorize forest communities of the southern Appalachians and evaluate the causal factors for their pattern on the landscape.
5. Connect the history of the southern Appalachian Mountains to economic, ecological, environmental, and societal factors that have contributed to their current condition.

## Text and Materials

- Wildflowers and Plant Communities of the Southern Appalachian Mountains and Piedmont: A Naturalists Guide to the Carolinas, Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia. Timothy Spira, 2011, 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. ISBN: 0807871729, ~\$17
- National Geographic Trails Illustrated Map: #229 Great Smoky Mountains National Park. ~\$11
- National Geographic Trails Illustrated Map: #780 Pisgah Ranger District, Pisgah Nat. Forest. ~\$11
- A Rite in the Rain 8 ½ x 11 inch (or similar size) Journal. ~\$15
- A compass, preferably with declination adjustment.

## Course Requirements

Pre-Trip Presentation: This assignment will be explained in detail during the second lecture.

Field ID Quizzes: These will be conducted during the trip, and will be similar to those conducted in dendrology and vertebrate natural history. Quizzes may be over woody or herbaceous plants, or over birds, herptiles, or mammals. A total of 10 points will be possible per specimen: 7 points for the common name, 3 points for the family, and one bonus point each for the genus and specific epithet for plants. Wildlife point systems may vary, and will be described prior to the quiz. Spelling will not be penalized provided the correct answer is discernible by the grader. The total number of specimens and quizzes given will be determined based on logistics in the field. The cumulative points earned divided by the cumulative points possible for each student will determine this portion of the grade. Example specimens will be collected according to a permit obtained from the NPS by the instructors, and will be available for study. Specimens will remain in the park at the end of the course as required by the NPS permit.

Trip Journal: A daily journal describing activities, observations, and the forest communities we visit is due upon our return on Monday, August 20 by 5:00 PM CDT. The journal may be submitted in hardcopy or by email to the instructor. Requirements for the journal will be described in a separate handout.

Participation: This portion of your grade is a subjective estimation of your attendance and attention during all course activities. You will do well if you show up, respect guest speakers, and pay attention.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance in all course activities with the exception of the informational meeting is mandatory and expected. Participation is a portion of your grade. It is university policy to excuse students from

attendance for certain reasons. Among these are absences related to health, family emergencies and student participation in university-sponsored events. Students are responsible for providing documentation satisfactory to the instructor for each class activity missed *PRIOR* to the absence.

### Grading Policy

Item	Percentage	Percent Grade	Letter Grade
Pre-Trip Presentation	20%	>89.5%	A
Field ID Quizzes	20%	79.5 – 89.4%	B
Trip Journal	20%	69.5 – 79.4%	C
Participation	40%	59.5 – 69.4%	D
<b>COURSE GRADE</b>	<b>100%</b>	<59.5%	F

Course grades may be curved up if deemed necessary by the instructors, but will not be lowered. Thus if you earn an 'A' based on the point system, you are guaranteed an 'A'.

### Tentative Schedule\*

Date	Location	Course Content	
25-Jan-17, 5:00 – 6:00 PM	FOR 222	Course Informational Meeting / Intro (1 hr)	
22-Feb-17, 5:00 – 7:00 PM	FOR 205	Appalachian Forest Communities (2 hr)	
19-Apr-17, 5:00 – 7:00 PM	FOR 225	Student Presentations (2 hr)	
3-May-17, 5:00 – 7:00 PM	FOR 225	Trip Logistics Meeting (2 hr)	
Date	Day	Location	Course Content
5-Aug-18	Sun	Nacogdoches to GSMNP	Travel Day, Set Up Camp
6-Aug-18	Mon	Big Creek	New Trees, Salamanders, Amphibians, Reptiles
7-Aug-18	Tues	Pisgah NF – Shining Rock	Cradle of Forestry, Heath Bald, Blueberries
8-Aug-18	Wed	Albright Nature Grove	Old Growth Northern Hardwoods, Adelgid
9-Aug-18	Thurs	Clingman's Dome, Andrews Bald	Spruce – Fir, High Elevation Grassy Balds
10-Aug-18	Fri	Qualla Boundary	Herptiles, focus on Salamanders
11-Aug-18	Sat	Logistics / Free Day	Groceries, Laundry
12-Aug-18	Sun	Free Day	Hiking, Fishing, Tubing, Gatlinburg, etc.
13-Aug-18	Mon	Cades Cove	Wildfire, Bears, Cave Habitats, Newts, Xeric Ridges
14-Aug-18	Tues	Max Patch / WNC Nat. Center	Birding, Red Wolves, Hellbenders, Bats
15-Aug-18	Wed	Cataloochee Valley	Elk, Bear, and Boar Management, Free Time
16-Aug-18	Thurs	Look Rock	Prescribed Fire, Wildfire, Wildland-Urban Interface
17-Aug-18	Fri	Mount Sterling	Hike to 5800 feet through all communities
18-Aug-18	Sat	GSMNP to Nacogdoches	Pack Up Camp, Travel Day
20-Aug-17	Mon	Trip journal due (print or email) by 5:00 PM CDT	

\* Schedule is tentative and will be modified as necessary by the instructor. Notice will be given of changes in assignment due dates.

### **Academic Integrity (A-9.1)**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

### **Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

### **Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to <http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/>

### **Responsible Use of Technology**

It is expected that all students will only use cell phones, PDAs, laptop computers, MP3 players and other technology outside of class time or when appropriate in class. Answering a cell phone, texting, listening to music or using a laptop computer for matters unrelated to the course may be grounds for dismissal from class or other penalties.

### **Acceptable Student Behavior**

Classroom (defined as wherever instructional activities are occurring) behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.