



# STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture

P. O. Box 6109 SFA Station • Nacogdoches, TX 75962-6109

Phone (936) 468-3301 • Fax (936) 468-2489

FOR 464-201 and 564-201

## Field Ecology Appalachian Field Trip

Summer 2014

### Course Details

#### Instructors:

Dr. Chris Comer

[comerce@sfasu.edu](mailto:comerce@sfasu.edu)

(936) 468-2317 (office)

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 us.

**Class Times:** Five scheduled classes during Spring 2014 TBD;

Sunday July 27, 2014 – Saturday August 9, 2014

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

### Course Description

**FOR 464/564: Field Ecology Appalachian Field 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 of Prerequisite: instructor permission. Course fee required. Summer II only.

### Program Learning Outcomes

Forestry 464 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 310	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 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.
6. Lead others in the conservation of natural resources.

## 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
- A Rite in the Rain 8 ½ x 11 in 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. Quizzes may be over woody or herbaceous plants. 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. 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 11 by 5:00 PM CDT. The journal may be submitted in hardcopy or by email to both instructors.

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	
21-Jan-14, 6:00 – 7:00 PM	FOR 221	Course Informational Meeting / Intro (1 hr)	
25-Feb-14, 7:00 – 9:00 PM	FOR 221	Appalachian Forest Communities (2 hr)	
07-Apr-14, 7:00 – 9:00 PM	FOR 221	Student Presentations (2 hr)	
15-Apr-14, 6:00 – 8:00 PM	FOR 221	Student Presentations (2 hr)	
02-May-14, 2:00 – 3:00 PM	FOR 102	Trip Logistics Meeting (1 hr)	
Date	Day	Location	Course Content
27-Jul-14	Sun	Nacogdoches to GSMNP	Travel Day, Set Up Camp
28-Jul-14	Mon	Big Creek / Cataloochee	Intro Morning / Bats Afternoon & Evening
29-Jul-14	Tues	Albright Nature Grove	Old Growth
30-Jul-14	Wed	Clingman's Dome, Forney Bald	Spruce / Fir; High Elevation Balds
31-Jul-14	Thurs	Cataloochee Valley	Elk
1-Aug-14	Fri	Carvers Gap (Roan Highlands)	Flying Squirrels
2-Aug-14	Sat	Free Day	Laundry, etc. in Newport TN
3-Aug-14	Sun	Free Day	Fishing / Hiking / Tubing / etc.
4-Aug-14	Mon	Cades Cove	Bears / Recreation Wildlife Conflict
5-Aug-14	Tues	Chattahoochee NF	Disturbances (Tornado)
6-Aug-14	Wed	Appalachian Trail / WO Blowhole Cave	Cove Forests Morning / Bats Afternoon & Evening
7-Aug-14	Thurs	Coweeta	Forest Management, Watersheds, Salamanders
8-Aug-14	Fri	Mount Sterling	Elevational Gradient
9-Aug-14	Sat	GSMNP to Nacogdoches	Pack Up Camp, Travel Day
11-Aug-14	Mon	Trip journal due (print or email) by 5:00 PM CDT	

\* Schedule is tentative and will be modified as necessary by the instructors. 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.