

Syllabus BIOL 4330 – Herpetology

Spring 2024

Professor:

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Office Hours: M 1:00-3:00 p.m., T 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., or by appointment.

Catalog Description: The study of the diversity of amphibians and reptiles including their evolution and distributions. Also covered will be their physiology, ecology, behavior, and conservation.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcomes

- 1) Describe the evolution and diversity of amphibians and reptiles.
- 2) Describe the reproductive physiology and behavioral ecology of amphibians and reptiles.
- 3) Understand the ecology and conservation of amphibians and reptiles.
- 4) Critically read, analyze, and interpret research findings in scientific literature.

Required Texts:

Pough, F.H., R.M. Andrews, M.L. Crump, A.H. Savitzky, K.D. Wells, and M.C. Bradley. 2018. Herpetology, 4th Edition. Oxford University Press, New York, NY.

I will assign primary literature for you to read throughout the semester. I will provide the readings on Canvas.

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated based on the following work:

Examinations. Two midterms and a final exam will be given. The lowest exam score will be dropped. Each remaining exam will be worth 35% of the final grade. If you decide to drop the final exam, I will not round anything less than an 89.5 up to an A. I also reserve the right to make you take the final exam if you stop coming to class and participating after the 2nd exam. Two group presentations will be 20% of the final grade (10% each). Attendance and participation will be 10% of your final grade (I take attendance every class period). In the event you wish to dispute an exam question, an essay outlining your argument must be submitted within one week of the exam being handed back to you. No make-up exams will be given. If you miss an exam, it will count as your dropped exam.

We will follow a 10-point scale for grading:

90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79 = C, 60-69% = D, 0-59% = F

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE (MWF 10:10 – 11:05, HPR 251)

<u>Week</u>	<u>Lecture Topics</u>
Jan 15	No class on Monday (MLK, Jr Day) Why study Herpetology and Origin of Amphibians (Ch. 1 and 2)
Jan 22	Diversity of Amphibians; Video ‘Great Transitions: The Origin of Tetrapods (Ch. 3)
Jan 29	Diversity of Reptiles (Ch. 4)

Feb 5	Diversity of Reptiles and Biogeography (Ch. 4 and 5),
Feb 12	Biogeography (Ch. 5) and Group Presentations
Feb 19	Group Presentation 1; Midterm 1- Feb 23
Feb 26	Physiological Ecology—Water and Temperature Relations and Gas Exchange (Ch. 6 and 7)
Mar 4	Reproduction and Life Histories of Amphibians (Ch. 8)
Mar 11	Spring Break -- No Classes
Mar 18	Reproduction and Life Histories of Reptiles (Ch. 9)
Mar 25	Support, Locomotion and Feeding (Ch. 10 and 11); Group Presentations
Apr 1	Group Presentation 2; Midterm 2 – Apr 5
Apr 8	Spatial Ecology and Communication (Ch. 12 and 13)
Apr 15	Mating Systems and Sexual Selection (Ch. 14); Diets, Foraging, and Interactions with Parasites (Ch. 15)
Apr 22	Populations and Species Assemblages and Conservation (Ch. 16 and 17)
Apr 29	Final Exam Week, Final Exam – May 1st (10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.)

Important Dates:

Jan 29th: Census Date

Feb 23rd: Exam 1

Mar 11-15th: Spring Break (no classes)

Apr 5th: Exam 2

Mar 25th: Last Day to Withdraw

May 1st: Final Exam

Academic Integrity: Students should be aware that absolute academic integrity is expected of every student, in all courses taken at The University of Texas at Tyler. Failure to comply can result in strong university-imposed penalties. For instance, submitting plagiarized work to meet academic requirements including the representation of another's work or ideas as one's own; the unacknowledged word-for-word research results shall be grounds for charges of academic misconduct. **Any cheating or other types of academic misconduct will be reported to the university administration and at minimum will result in an automatic failure of the course.**

Exams

- **TAKEN INDIVIDUALLY**, without input or assistance from anyone else, including students that have taken the exam, quiz, or course previously.
- The use of notes, texts, or any other reference material is **PROHIBITED**.
- Possession of anything containing course content will be considered cheating, whether or not you actually refer to them or not during the exam
- **TALKING** during an exam to anyone other than the instructor or proctor will automatically be considered cheating. It does not matter what you were talking about.
- Any use of a cell phone or any other electronic device that could be used to record or transmit test material is **PROHIBITED**. Phones must be out of sight and silenced during the exam.
- Hats worn during exams must be turned around or removed so the face is not covered in any way.

Lab Reports or Writing Assignments

- Students may **NOT** plagiarize any part of the lab report, it must be written individually.
- Methods may be similar since the same labs will be conducted; however, they may not be identical, since everyone writes a bit differently.
- Results may have similar data to your group members; **HOWEVER**, you should prepare your own tables and figures and create your own titles.
- You will submit this to a plagiarism checker via Canvas (unicheck), which will check for all forms of plagiarism. Your similarity report should be less than 40%, if it is not, you better double-check your work!
- All submissions should be in a Word document.

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM AND HOW CAN IT BE AVOIDED?

Plagiarism may be defined as (1) presenting work, ideas, or phrasing of another, in whole or part, as one's own without giving credit and proper documentation of sources; (2) copying material directly from sources (including electronic media) except when the material is enclosed in quotation marks and the source is clearly identified; (3) paraphrasing too closely to the original, even when the source is identified; and (4) claiming credit for work in any media (electronic, digital, artistic, etc.) where the student is not the original creator of said work. Work that is plagiarized will receive an automatic grade of "F". If you are unsure about this subject, please take the time to talk to your instructor and /or read this:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>

You will also be required to turn in all written assignments (lab report assignments) in a Word document on **CANVAS** which will use **UNICHECK** to assess your paper for Plagiarism. You will find this on your Canvas page for this lab course; each assignment will be compared to previous student work and the work of your classmates! You will only need to turn in a copy of your assignment via the CANVAS Link.

Use of an AI Generator such as ChatGPT, iA Writer, MidJourney, DALL-E, etc. is **explicitly prohibited** unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The information derived from these tools is based on previously published materials. Therefore, using these tools without proper citation constitutes plagiarism.

Additionally, be aware that the information derived from these tools is often inaccurate or incomplete. **It is imperative that all work submitted should be your own.** Any assignment that is found to have been plagiarized or to have used unauthorized AI tools may receive a zero and/or be reported for academic misconduct.

Corrupted File Policy: Any student that turns in a corrupted file will be given 24 hours to turn in a file that can be opened successfully by the instructor. Failure to do so will earn a grade of "0" (Zero) for the paper.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/StudentRightsandResponsibilities.html>

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness

If you are repeating this course for a grade replacement, you must file an intent to receive grade forgiveness with the registrar by the 12th day of class. Failure to do so will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average.

Undergraduates will receive grade forgiveness (grade replacement) for only three course repeats; graduates, for two course repeats during his/her career at UT Tyler.

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the 12th day of class (See Schedule of Classes for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

Disability Services

In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Support Services counselor. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact Ida MacDonald in the Disability Support Services office in UC 282, or call (903) 566-7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.