Syllabus
Ecology of South Florida Lab
1195-FIU01-EVR-3013L-SECRVAA-50761

GENERAL INFORMATION
Professor Information

Instructor:
Melinda Paduani
Phone: 305-348-1930
Office Hours:
By Appointment
E-mail:
Please use Canvas course messages

Course Description and Purpose
This course offers a virtual tour of the Everglades ecosystems of South Florida. This unique place demonstrates the variety of habitats and organisms present in those habitats arising from the interplay of water, elevation, season and fire. One hundred years of human modifications of the Everglades has resulted in species loss and serious degradation of the natural services provided by the Everglades. We will see how researchers are studying the Everglades in order to understand the critical parameters needed to preserve and restore the natural functioning of this special place. We will be examining some of these studies to gain an understanding of important characteristics of the Everglades.

Course Objectives
Students will be able to:

- Explain methods that scientists use to investigate the health of the Everglades
- Recognize the major biological communities of the Everglades
- Identify the biological and physical factors that shape different habitats and the characteristic species that inhabit them
- Explain the impacts of human modification on the ecosystems of the Everglades

Major & Curriculum Objectives Targeted
EVR 3013L Ecology of South Florida Lab, along with EVR 3013 Ecology of South Florida complete a requirement for the B.A. in Sustainability and the Environment. These courses also satisfy the Natural Sciences/Life Sciences component of the Undergraduate Core Curriculum.

Teaching Methodology
This is a fully online course in which all of the instructional materials and activities are delivered through Canvas, and/or other internet-based media. Materials and activities will include readings,
videos, preparation of reports, blogs and online assessments. Should you have any questions, please contact the professor.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Policies**
Please review the [FIU’s Policies](#) webpage. The policies webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU, as well as additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses.

As a member of the FIU community, you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Code of Conduct](#).

**Technical Requirements & Skills**
One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy, we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently, and learning to use your computer is operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; but students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the "[What’s Required](#)" webpage to find out more information on this subject.

This course utilizes the following tools:

5. Adobe Connect ([Privacy Policy](#))
Please visit our [Technical Requirements](#) webpage for additional information.

**Accessibility And Accommodation**
Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

Please visit [Accessibility within Canvas](#) webpage for more information.

For additional assistance, please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

**Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**
If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate’s well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU’s [Panthers Care website](#).

[Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)](#) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don’t wait to call 305-348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

**Academic Misconduct Statement**
Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of
ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes:

**Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not.

**Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism. Any student helping another to plagiarize may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

All of the Following are Considered Plagiarism:

- Turning in someone else's work as your own.
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit.
- Failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation.
- Changing words, but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.
- Submitting a copy of your own work to satisfy the requirement of a second class without informing your instructor.

**Cyberbullying** – is commonly defined as the use of information and communication technologies to support repeated and deliberate hostile behavior intended to harm others. Cyberbullying falls under (c) Disruptive Conduct – Offenses described at [http://conduct.fiu.edu/code/offenses/](http://conduct.fiu.edu/code/offenses/) and will be prosecuted to full extend allowed under FIU policies.

Language – You will use appropriate language in your e-mail messages, online postings, and other digital communications, you will not use profanity, vulgarities or any other inappropriate language as determined by school administrators. Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. You may use e-mail and other means of communications responsibly. You will not send or post hate or harassing mail, make discriminatory or derogatory remarks about others, or engage in bullying, harassment, or other antisocial behaviors while in school or out of school.
Data – FIU’s technology or library staff is not responsible for any data lost while working on a school owned computer. You will store said data on either local drive or on an external storage device (i.e. USB drive) at your own risk.

Security – You will not attempt to bypass security settings or internet filters, or interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, including file sharing, shareware, or freeware, on school computers.

Accounts and Email – Passwords are private and must not be shared with anyone. You are responsible for all activities through your account. You must not allow others to use your account, or use someone else’s. You understand that you will be in violation of the law if you attempt to electronically capture another person’s credentials. You understand that it is important to log off the computer at the end of every session so another user cannot use your account.

Network – You will not search, retrieve, save, circulate or display hate-based, offensive or sexually explicit material, information about weapons using any FIU’s computer resources unless authorized by school administrator/teacher as part of a school assignment. You will not deliberately or otherwise cause the network to crash or experience excessive traffic resulting in a stalled or frozen condition.

Learn more about the academic integrity policies and procedures as well as student resources that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

Course Prerequisites
This course should be taken at the same time as or after EVR 3013 Ecology of South Florida. This is the lab course that accompanies EVR 3013 Ecology of South Florida. The content from the lecture course will be needed as preparation for EVR 3013L.

Proctored Exam Policy
This course does not require a proctored exam.

Textbook
There is no required textbook for this course. All required reading and viewing material will be available through Canvas. Students will be required to visit a local nature preserve one time during this course. While many nature preserves do not charge for entry, students may need to pay up to $10 for an entry fee.

Expectations Of This Course
This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- Review the how to get started information located in the course content
• **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate blog (see blogs for more information)

• **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas

• online with instructor/s and peers

• and follow the course calendar. This course only lasts **6 weeks**. Keeping up with course activities is critical to success.

• Log in to the course **5 times** per week

• Respond to blogs within **2 days**

• Respond to **messages** within **2 days**

• Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

**The instructor will:**

• Log in to the course **at least 7 times** per week

• Respond to blogs, within 2 days

• Respond to **messages** within **2 days**

• Grade assignments within **7 days** of the assignment deadline

**COURSE DETAIL**

**Course Communication**

Communication in this course will take place via **Messages.**

Messages is a private and secure text-based communication system which occurs within a course among its Course members. Users must log on to Canvas to send, receive, or read messages. The Messages tool is located on the Course Menu, on the left side of the course webpage. It is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

Visit our [Writing Resources webpage](#) for more information on professional writing and technical communication skills.

**Discussion Blogs**

Keep in mind that your discussion postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

**Expectations:**

Discussions are important for the exchange of information, ideas and opinions. There will be 3 discussions (including the Introduction in Week 1) worth 15 points of the 110 points for the course. Introductory discussion will consist of an initial posting of at least 300 words. Each student will also be expected to compose a carefully thought out and reasoned reply to one other student’s posting during the time. You are expected to post both your initial posting and reply within the timeframe that the discussion is open. Discussion topics are described further in the introduction to each one. The schedule of discussion is shown below:

26. Discussion #1 (Introductory discussion) opens Monday May 6 at 12:01 am and closes Tuesday May 14 at 11:59 pm

27. Discussion #2 (FIU Nature Preserve) opens Monday May 20 at 12:01 am and closes Tuesday May 28 at 11:59 pm

28. Discussion #3 (Visit to second nature preserve) opens Monday June 3 at 12:01 am and closes Tuesday June 11 at 11:59 pm
"Extra Credit Discussion" (News story about the Everglades region) opens **Monday June 10 at 12:01 am and closes Friday June 14 at 11:59 pm". This blog is worth 5 points and is optional.

Participation in discussion will be graded using a Rubric for the Assessment of discussion. The rubric will be provided through a link. In addition, Blogs will be evaluated for the originality of the information placed there. Please refer to the section on Academic Honesty in this syllabus. All postings to a Blog will adhere to a level of decorum that respects and acknowledges diversity of opinion. Negative attacks on individuals for their opinions or inappropriate language will not be tolerated. See syllabus below for policies regarding cyber bullying and inappropriate conduct in an online course. There are no makeups for blogs. Plan ahead to ensure timely completion of activities.

Discussion will be graded within 7 days of the closing of the activity.

**Assessments**
There are no quizzes or exams in this class.

**Assignments**
Accompanying each week’s reading, video, or data analysis activities there will be an assignment report (worksheet) submitted through an assignment dropbox. The topics and structure of each report will be included in the assignment posted for the week. There will be 4 worksheets each worth 20 points for a total of 80 points. Submission within 24 hours *after* the due date will have a 20% deduction in grade. No submissions will be accepted after 24 hours after the due date. Worksheets will be due on the following dates:

- Worksheet #1 – Use of ReMap data and Sawgrass Community Part 1 due Tuesday May 21 at 11:59 pm
- Worksheet #2 – Sawgrass Community Part 2 and Pollution due Tuesday May 28 at 11:59 pm. (Note: Plan ahead Monday May 27 is Memorial Day holiday)
- Worksheet #3 – Pine Forests and Shorelines due Tuesday June 4 at 11:59 pm
- Worksheet #4 – Climate Change and Everglades Restoration due Tuesday June 11 at 11:59 pm

There are no makeups for worksheets. Plan ahead to ensure timely completion of activities.

**Reflection Essay**
The reflection essay is a 500 word essay that summarizes what you learned in this class through the worksheets, readings and videos, along with your experience in visiting the nature preserve near you. Details are provided in the Assignment. This assignment will be submitted through a link to Turnitin provided in the Canvas course. The Reflection Essay will be graded using a Rubric for the Assessment of Essays. The rubric will also be provided through a link in Canvas. This essay is worth 15 points and is due on Friday June 14 (Last day of class) at 11:59 pm.

**Adobe Connect Pro Meeting**
Adobe Connect is an online meeting room where you can interact with your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, sharing files, chatting, broadcasting live audio, and taking part in
other interactive online activities. We will be utilizing this tool to conduct office hours or student consultations upon request.

**Requirements for using Adobe Connect:**

- **33.** Disable any window pop-up blocker.
- **34.** Adobe Flash Player is required to successfully run your Adobe Connect meeting. You can test your computer to make sure your computer and network connections are properly configured to provide you with the best possible Adobe Connect meeting experience.
- **35.** Use of a combination headset and microphone with USB connection is recommended to ensure quality sound and reduce technical difficulties.

Reference Adobe Connect (Tutorials & Help) to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting rooms and recordings.

**Grading**

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<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Points for Each</th>
<th>Total Points Available</th>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Blogs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments - Worksheets</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Essay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>110</strong></td>
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*Extra Credit Blog*  
1 up to 5

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<th>Letter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Above 103</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>92 - 95</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>77 - 84</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>99 - 102</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>88 - 91</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>66 - 76</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>96 - 98</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>85 - 87</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 66</td>
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**COURSE CALENDAR**

Weekly Schedule
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<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
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| **Week 1**<br>May 6 - 12 | Lecture/Video/Reading: Introduction to Class; general ecological history of Everglades  
Discussion #1 opens Monday May 6 and closes Tuesday May 14 at 11:59 pm |
| **Week 2**<br>May 13 - 19 | Lecture/Video/Reading: Characteristics of sawgrass dominated ecosystems in the Everglades (Part 1) and Introduction to ReMap website  
Discussion #2 Planning visit to nature preserve near you opens May 13 and is due Tuesday May 21 at 11:59 pm. Note: Visit your chosen nature preserve 1 time between weeks 2 and 6 of the course.  
Worksheet #1 Characteristics of sawgrass Everglades (1) due Tuesday May 21 at 11:59 pm |
| **Week 3**<br>May 20 - 26 | Lecture/Video/Reading: Characteristics of sawgrass dominated ecosystems in the Everglades (Part 2) and Pollution in the Everglades  
Worksheet #2 Characteristics of sawgrass Everglades (2)/pollution threat due Tuesday May 28 at 11:59 pm  
Note: Plan ahead Monday May 27 is Memorial Day Holiday |
| **Week 4**<br>May 27 - June 2 | Monday May 27 – Memorial Day Holiday  
Lecture/Video/Reading: Forests and Shorelines in the Everglades  
Worksheet #3 Forests and Shorelines due Tuesday June 4 at 11:59 pm |
| **Week 5**<br>June 3 - 9 | Lecture/Video/Reading: Climate change and Everglades Restoration  
Discussion #3 (A visit to your nature preserve) opens on Monday June 3 and closes on Friday June 14 at 11:59 pm  
Worksheet #4 Climate change and Everglades Restoration due Tuesday June 11 at 11:59 pm.  
Complete visit to your nature preserve this week |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 6</strong></td>
<td>Reflection Essay is due to Turnitin on Friday June 14 at 11:59 pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10 - 14</td>
<td>Extra Credit Blog closes Friday June 14 at 11:59 pm.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Class ends Friday June 14 at 11:59 pm.</td>
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