Syllabus

Ecology of South Florida Lab

1188-FIU01-EVR-3013L-SECRVC

General Information

Professor Information

Instructor:
Seema Sah
Office Hours:
By Appointment
E-mail:
Use canvas 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 and 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, discussions 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.

Late Policy
There are no makeups for the three Discussion forums since they are, by their nature, interactive sessions with other students. There is a make-up for one of the two assessments; however, it will consist of essay questions and will only be available for documented medical emergencies or legal obligations. Assignment reports submitted up to 24 hours after the deadline will have an automatic 20% deduction in grade. No credit will be given for assignment reports submitted more than 24 hours after the deadline. Requests for an Incomplete grade must follow FIU guidelines, and all missing work must be submitted within two weeks after the end of the semester.

Cyberbullying
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 and will be prosecuted to full extent 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. Cyber bullying 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.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the deliberate 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 guilty of 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.

**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. Any student helping another cheat may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

**Technical Requirements and 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's 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:

- Canvas learning management system including messaging, discussions, viewing course material via web links, assessments, submission of assignments through a link to Turn-it-in and chat.
- Adobe Connect or equivalent system for course communication.
- Microsoft Office or equivalent that produces MS Office files to prepare and read documents (Word) or slide-show presentations (Powerpoint).
- Adobe reader or equivalent to view pdf files.

Please visit our Technical Requirements webpage for additional information.

**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.

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

**Accessibility and Accommodation**

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

Please visit our ADA Compliance webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

For additional assistance, please contact FIU’s Disability Resource Center.

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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**

It is strongly recommended that students take EVR 3013 Ecology of South Florida at the same time as this course, or have taken EVR 3013 in a previous semester. The content from the lecture course will be needed as preparation for EVR 3013L.

**Proctored Exam Policy**

A proctored exam is not required for this course.

**Textbook**

There is no required textbook for this course. All required reading and viewing material will be available through Canvas.

**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 discussion forum;
- take the practice quiz to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas.
- interact online with instructor/s and peers;
- review 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 discussion boards postings within **2 days**;
• respond to messages within 2 days; and
• submit assignments by the corresponding deadline. There will be penalties for late submissions.

The instructor will:

• log in to the course at least daily Monday-Friday;
• respond to discussion boards, within 5 days;
• respond to messages within 2 days (Monday-Friday); and
• 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 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.

Discussions

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. A 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 period. You are expected to post both your initial posting and reply within the timeframe that the blog is open. Discussion topics are described further in the introduction to each discussion. The schedule of discussion is shown below:

• Discussion #1 (Introductory discussion) opens Monday August 20 at 12:01 am and closes Tuesday September 4 at 11:59 pm
Discussion #2 (FIU Nature Preserve) opens Monday September 17 at 12:01 am and closes Tuesday September 25 at 11:59 pm
Discussion #3 (Visit to second nature preserve) opens Monday October 8 at 12:01 am and closes Tuesday October 23 at 11:59 pm
Extra Credit Discussion (News story about the Everglades region) opens Monday November 5 at 12:01 am and closes Friday November 30 at 11:59 pm

"Extra Credit Discussion (News story about the Everglades region) opens Monday November 5 at 12:01 am and closes Friday November 30 at 11:59 pm". This discussion 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, Discussion 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 discussion 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.

Discussions will be graded within 7 days of the closing of the activity. Exceptions will be announced to the class.

**Assignments**

**Worksheets:**
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 8 worksheets each worth 10 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 – Ecology and ecosystem services due Tuesday September 11 at 11:59 pm
- Worksheet #2 – Use of ReMap site to study wetlands in Everglades due Tuesday September 18 at 11:59 pm.
- Worksheet #3 – Everglades’s wetlands due Tuesday September 25 at 11:59 pm.
- Worksheet #4 – Coastal ecosystems due Tuesday October 9 at 11:59 pm
- Worksheet #5 – Pollution in the Everglades due Tuesday October 16 at 11:59 pm.
- Worksheet #6 – Pine and hammock forests due Tuesday October 23 at 11:59 pm
- Worksheet #7 – Climate change due Tuesday November 6 at 11:59 pm
- Worksheet #8 – Everglades Restoration due Tuesday November 20 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 preserves. Details are provided in the Assignment. This assignment will be submitted through a link to Turnitin provided in the course. Review the detailed [Turnitin instructions](#) on how to submit your assignments and how to review the Grademark comments (feedback) from your professor. The Reflection Essay will be graded using a Rubric for the Assessment of Essays. The rubric will also be provided through a link. This essay is worth 15 points and is due on Friday December 8 at 11:59 pm.

Review the detailed [Turnitin Instructions](#) on how to submit your assignments and how to review the Grade mark comments (feedback) from your professor.

**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:**

41. Disable any window pop-up blocker.
42. [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.
43. 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirements</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Points for Each</th>
<th>Total Points Available</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Blogs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments - Worksheets</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Essay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>N/A</strong></td>
<td><strong>110</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Course Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra Credit Blog</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Points for Each</th>
<th>Total Points Available</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Letter</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Letter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td><strong>Letter</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>103 and above</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>92 - 95</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>99 - 102</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>88 - 91</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>96 - 98</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>85 - 87</td>
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Course Calendar

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<tr>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Topics and Tasks</th>
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| **Week 1**<br>Aug 20 - Aug 26 | o Video/Reading: Introduction to Class  
o Discussion #1 opens Monday August 20 and closes Tuesday September 4 at 11:59 pm |
| **Week 2**<br>Aug 27 – Sep 2 | o Lecture/Video/Reading: Review of ecology and ecosystem services; visit to FIU Nature Preserve  
o Last day to add/drop Monday August 27, 2018 |
| **Week 3**<br>Sep 3 - Sep 9 | o Monday September 3 – Labor Day Holiday  
o Lecture/Video/Reading: Review of ecology and ecosystem services; visit to FIU Nature Preserve  
o Start Worksheet #1 ecology and ecosystem services due Tuesday September 11 at 11:59 pm (two weeks for first worksheet) |
| **Week 4**<br>Sep 10 - Sep 16 | o Lecture/Video/Reading  
o Use of Remap site to study wetlands in Everglades; Worksheet #2  
o Worksheet #2 due Tuesday September 18 at 11:59 pm. |
| **Week 5**<br>Sep 17 - Sep 23 | o Lecture/Video/Reading: Everglades wetlands; Worksheet #3  
Discussion #2 (visit to the FIU Nature Preserve) closes Tuesday September 25 at 11:59 pm |
<p>| <strong>Week 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sep 24 - Sep 30 | o Lecture/Video/Reading Coastal ecosystems; Worksheet #4 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Worksheet #3 due Tuesday September 25 at 11:59 pm.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1 – Oct 7</td>
<td>Worksheet #4 due Tuesday October 9 at 11:59 pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>o Lecture/Video/Reading: Pollution in the Everglades; Worksheet #5</td>
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<td>Oct 8- Oct 14</td>
<td>Begin Discussion #3 due Tuesday October 23 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>o Lecture/Video/Reading: Climate change</td>
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<td>Oct 15 - Oct 21</td>
<td>o Worksheet #5 due Tuesday October 16 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>o Lecture/Video/Reading: Climate change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 22 – Oct 28</td>
<td>o Worksheet #6 due Tuesday October 23 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Drop deadline for Fall 2018: Monday October 29, 2018</td>
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<td></td>
<td>o Discussion #3 due Tuesday October 23 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>o Worksheet #7 due Tuesday November 6 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Oct 29 – Nov 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>o Lecture/Video/Reading: Everglades’ restoration; Worksheet #8</td>
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<td>Nov 5 - Nov 11</td>
<td>o Worksheet #7 due Tuesday November 6 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>• Worksheet #8 due Tuesday November 20 at 11:59 pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 12 - Nov 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Effect of Climate Change in Your Preserve</td>
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<td>Nov 19 - Nov 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Everglades Restoration/Preservation (Stoplight System)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 26 – Dec 2</td>
<td>o View video: Alligators</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
<td>Reflection essay due Dec 8 at 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>Dec 3 Dec 8</td>
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