



COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor

Dr. Jeff Kopachena STC, Rm 258 (Phone 903 886-5395)

e-mail: Jeff.Kopachena@tamuc.edu

Office hours: MW 10:00 - 11:00 T 1:00 - 2:00

I. Textbook:

Course does not have a textbook.

II. iClickers: (required)

The iClicker student response system will be used in this class this term. The iClicker is being used to facilitate student engagement and to assist in formative assessment of student cognition. The iClicker may also be used to keep track of attendance; please see the attendance policy below. Participation with iClicker will account for 10% of your final grade. See below for more details on how the iClicker grade will be calculated.

iClickers are available for checkout at the Gee Library.

A. Student Responsibilities:

You are required to bring your device to every class period and make sure that is charged, connected, and in proper working order at all times. If your device is dead or not properly connected, you will not earn points towards your grade.

Students are required to bring their iClickers to every lecture. The iClickers will be used for in-class quizzes and to encourage class participation and discussions. Participation points will be calculated based on whether or not you answered questions, but will not be based on whether or not you got the correct answers. Class results of these quizzes will be displayed on the projection screen in class. However, individual responses to all questions will be entirely confidential.

You are required to register your device.

B. How to register:

In-class quizzes will begin in the second week of classes. Therefore, to receive credit for the responses you submit with iClicker, you must register the iClicker on or before Friday, January 23, 2015. Students who register after this time will not receive credit for participation in class quizzes for which they have an unregistered clicker.

Register your clicker @ <http://www1.iclicker.com/register-student-remote>

You must register your clicker on iclicker.com. Use your CWID in the student ID field. This will allow me to match your responses with your name. If you make a mistake registering, just register again—the correct information will

take precedence. *You must have come to class at least once and voted on at least one question in order to complete this registration properly.*

C. Lost or Damaged Devices: If device is lost/stolen/damaged the student will have to:

- 1) Notify instructor immediately.
- 2) Provide written documentation of the situation to the instructor.
- 3) Contact the Library.
- 4) The Library will automatically place hold/fine on student's account

D. End of Semester Procedure:

Devices are to be checked back into the library no later than the Friday before final exams. Devices that are not checked back in will result in a hold being placed on the student's account.

E. Cheating

Bringing a fellow student's iClicker to class is cheating and a violation of the University Honor Code. If you are caught with a remote other than your own or have votes in a class that you did not attend, you will forfeit all clicker points and may face additional disciplinary action.

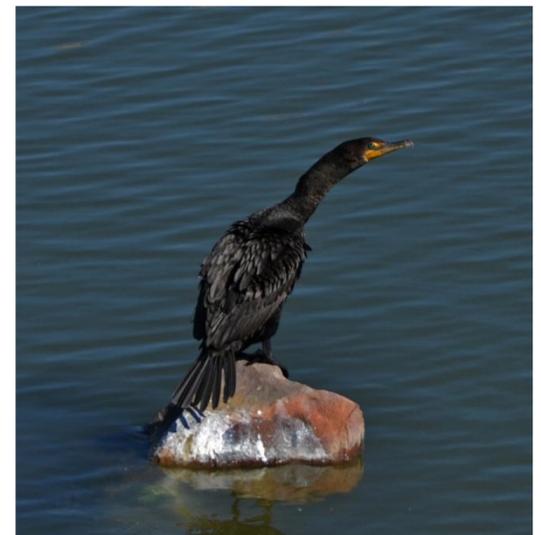
III. Attendance Policy

Any student with 5 or more unexcused absences will be automatically dropped from the class. No prior notification will be given.

IV. Course Objectives:

This course takes a systematic approach to understanding vertebrate evolution, diversity, and biology. We follow the development of each vertebrate taxon through the fossil record from the late Cambrian to the present. Major trends in ecological adaptations are described along with underlying structural and physiological modifications. The purposes of this course are:

- 1) To understand the origin and evolution of Vertebrate phyla
- 2) To learn about vertebrate diversity and ecology



Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) at Cooper Lake, Delta Co., Texas

V. Student Learning Objectives measured using entrance/exit test:

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the evolution of vertebrate diversity.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of vertebrate zoogeography and habitat relationships
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of vertebrate use of space and foraging behavior.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge



Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

of vertebrate mating systems and parental care

VI. Grading and Course Content

A. Tests

There will be 5 tests throughout the semester, each worth 10 percent of your final grade. The subject matter for each test is as follows:

Test #1

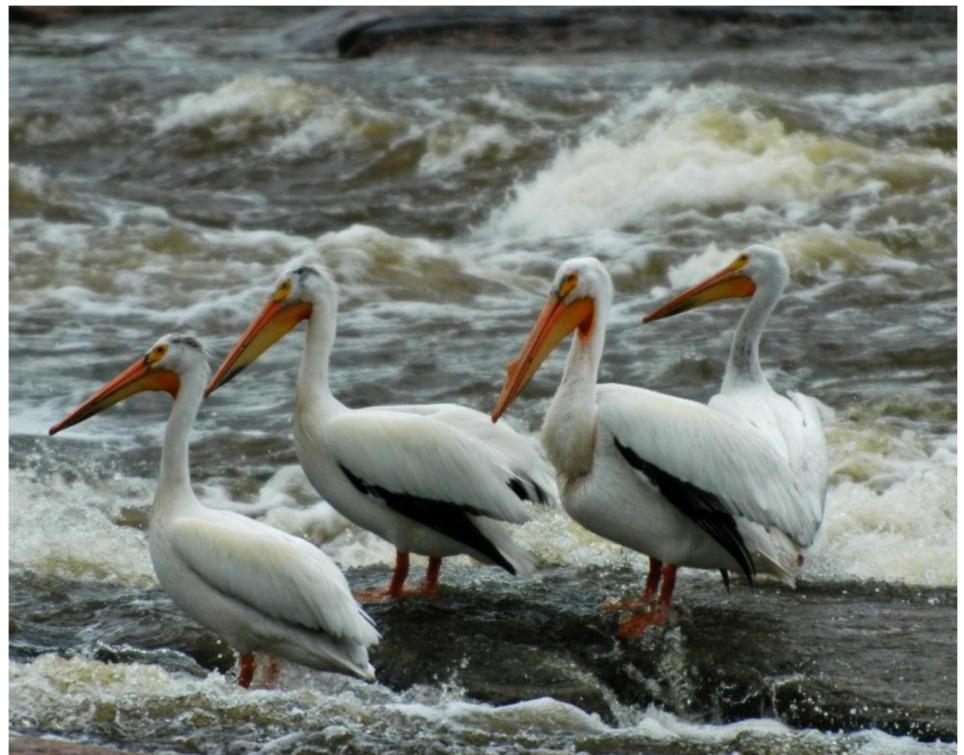
1. Introduction
2. Fishes
3. Amphibians

Test #2

4. Reptiles
5. Birds
6. Mammals part 1
7. Mammals part 2

Test #3

1. Zoogeography
2. Habitat and Foraging



American White Pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) at Whitemouth Falls, Manitoba, Canada



American Alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*). Avery Island, Louisiana

Test #4

1. Feeding Modes
2. Use of Space

Test #5

1. Sex, courtship, reproduction
2. Parental Care

Powerpoint slides from the lectures are available in the “Doc Sharing” tab in eCollege

B. Final Exam

Twenty-five percent of your final grade will be based on the final exam. The final exam is comprehensive and will be administered during finals week during the scheduled time.

C. iClicker Grade

Ten percent of your grade will be based on iClicker responses. These will be in the form of multiple choice questions given in class. A point will be scored for each class in which you get at least ½ of the questions correct. At the end of the semester these points will be added up and a score out of 10 will be calculated.

D. Essay Assignment



A Canadian Toad (*Bufo hemiophys*) at Oak Hammock Marsh, Manitoba, Canada

Fifteen percent of your total grade will be based on an essay that you write. It should be between 15 and 20 typewritten pages (Times New Roman, double-spaced, 12 point type, 1" margins). You must cite all sources of information including sources used for figures and tables. There should be at least 1 reference per typewritten page (i.e. if you write a 20 page essay you should have about 20 different sources of information). Cite all references using scientific journal format. Consult a journal or consult me to see how this is done.

Make the fullest possible use of the library facilities, including inter-library loans. Many students find that Google Scholar is a good source of peer reviewed articles. It can be accessed [here](#). Use only current references from primary sources. Do not use material taken from popular books and magazines that do not contain peer reviewed articles, or that are not edited by a professional in the field.

Use ample figures and tables (figures and tables do not count in determining the length of the paper). Past experience has shown that students who include figures and tables are most likely to get the highest grades.

Be sure to cite the sources of all tables and figures. Furthermore, your essay grade will be based largely on how thoroughly you have covered your topic. Therefore, be very concise and avoid verbosity and redundancy. Pay attention to your spelling and grammar. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to talk to me.



Green Anole (*Anolis carolinensis*), Wood Co., Texas



IMPORTANT NOTE:

People often lose marks for failing to properly cite their sources of information. You must cite all sources of information including sources used for figures and tables. Copying of material, whether, whether parts of sentences, whole sentences, paragraphs, or entire articles, will result in a score of zero for your essay. If you have questions, please talk to me.

Essay Topics:

Your assignment will be to choose a vertebrate species (not domesticated) and write a detailed account of that species' biology. The species account should be divided into titled sections, including, but not limited to:



A Three-toed Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina triunguis*) at Cooper Lake Center, Hopkins Co., Texas

Description
Geographic Distribution
Taxonomic relationships
Fossil History
Habitat
Food Habits
Vocalizations
Reproductive Biology
Behavior
 Maintenance Behaviors
 Sexual Behavior
 Parental Behavior
Demography and Population Biology
Human Impacts and Economic Impact

VII. Attendance:

Any student with 5 or more unexcused absences will be automatically dropped from the class. No prior notification will be given.

VIII. Course Grading Scheme

Item	Percent	Date
Test 1	10	February 9
Test 2	10	March 2
Test 3	10	March 30
Test 4	10	April 13
Test 5	10	May 8
Final Exam	25	TBA
Essay (submit in eCollege)	15	May 11
iClicker	10	TBA
Total	100	



Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), Florida, USA

IX. Obligatory Statements:

A. Plagiarism is a criminal activity. You must cite all sources of information. Copying of material, whether parts of sentences, whole sentences, paragraphs, or entire articles, will result in a score of zero for your assignment and can result in further disciplinary action.

****Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule of the class. Any alterations will be announced in class, in eCollege or via email by the instructor. Students who do not attend class, check eCollege or their email assume responsibility for missing adjustments to the course.**

B. TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology in your web-enhanced course.

The following technology is required to be successful in this course.

Internet connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

Word Processor (Microsoft Office Word – 2003 or 2007)

Access to University Library site

Access to an Email

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

C. ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Access and Log in Information

This course will be utilizing eCollege to enhance the learning experience, eCollege is the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

D. COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you experience issues while taking your exams or at any other point, feel free to contact the support desk.

1. **Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.
2. **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
3. **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.
4. **Help:** Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working

E. Withdrawal Policy

Every student has the right to drop the course without penalty until the drop-date. Students dropping the course during this period will be given a DP (drop while passing). A grade of DP is GPA neutral, but a grade of DF counts as an F on your transcript.

If you choose to stop attending class, you may be dropped from the course due to excessive absences. If you are not satisfied with your grade in the course and wish you to drop, it is YOUR responsibility to drop the course. Once a grade of DP or DF has been submitted, it cannot be changed.

A student may drop a course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled 'Drop a class' from among the choices found under the myLEO section of the Web page.

F. Student Conduct

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. You are adults and will be treated as such. Discriminatory, rude, and inappropriate language will not be tolerated in this class and students will be asked to leave or drop the class (these same rules apply for online discussions). If a student continues to act in the same manner during future classes, the instructor reserves the right to drop the student from the course.

G. Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly work free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution.

Texas A&M University-Commerce has explicit rules and regulations governing academic dishonesty and academic misconduct. As the University states, "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." These policies are stated in detail in the Student's Guide Handbook. Each student is expected to read this document and abide by the contained policies. These university policies will be followed in this class. The minimum penalty for an act of academic dishonesty will be the assignment grade of 0 on the examination or homework assignment. The maximum penalty is expulsion from the University.

Texas A&M University-Commerce further does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of academic **dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty.

"Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. Visit the following websites:

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

H. Requests for Special Accommodations

Requests from students with disabilities for reasonable accommodations must go through the Academic Support Committee. An individual instructor cannot decide to make accommodations for you without that Committee's approval.

I. ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

[Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)