Instructor: DR. MATTHEW KWIAKTOWSKI (it’s easier than it looks: kwee-aht-kow-skee)

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Phone: (936) 468-5986
Office: Miller Science 241

Office Hours: M 1:00 – 3:00 pm, W 11:00 – 12:30 pm, Th 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, or by appointment. Office hours may get cancelled occasionally when unforeseen conflicts arise. Be assured Dr. Kwiatkowski will find a time to meet with you.

Lecture: TR 9:30 – 10:45 pm, Miller Science 225
Laboratory: T 1:00 – 3:50 pm, Miller Science 218

Course Description: A survey of the classification, distribution, ecology, evolution, and conservation of amphibians and reptiles. Emphasis on natural history and identification of regional species in lab. Field trips are required (detail below). Requires outside readings, papers and/or research projects.

This course is 4 credit hours and typically has 150 minutes of lecture material on average per week for 15 weeks. Students are expected to prepare detailed notes associated with each lecture and spend approximately 2 to 2.5 hours studying per hour of lecture material. Students are also required to take quizzes throughout the semester that will take approximately 10 minutes to complete and read thoroughly read two scientific articles such that the context, methods, results, and conclusions are understood. These activities average 5 to 6 hours of work each week. Labs typically involve 3 hours of activity per week.

Prerequisite: A “C” or better in BIO 1307 or BIOL 2371.

Required Course Materials:


Lab Safety and Behavior: Herpetology lab will include field trips. With any field trip, regardless of the course, students must observe certain safety and behavior guidelines. The safety and behavioral guidelines can be found at the end of this syllabus. Students must read through these policies and return a signed copy to the instructor before being allowed to participate in lab.

Attendance: Attendance at all lectures is essential to performing well in this course. Even though lectures will be posted to D2L, details that are discussed in class may not appear in the PowerPoint slides. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain information from missed lectures. Quizzes cannot be made up no matter what the reason for the absence.

Withdrawal Policy: It is the student’s responsibility to withdraw from the course if necessary. The deadline to withdraw from a course is 10 April 2024. More information about add/drop policies can be found at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-add-drop-6.10.pdf.

Assignments and Grading: Final grades will be based on student performance on exams and will be assigned according to the following scale:

100 – 90%: A (Exceptional)
The following weights will be used to calculate an overall grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture Exams (4 X 100 points each)</td>
<td>400 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecture Quizzes</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Quizzes</td>
<td>100 pts*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lab Practical</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory Lab Safety and Conduct Policy Signed</td>
<td>5 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Sessions (2 X 20 pts)</td>
<td>40 pts*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Participation</td>
<td>25 pts*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field (Lab) Notes (3 X 15 pts each)</td>
<td>45 pts*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>715 pts*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Points may vary from that shown here depending on the class schedule.

**Lecture Exams**: Lecture exams will include a variety of question types, which may include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay. If you are late to an exam, you will be allowed to take the exam as long as no one has turned it in yet. However, the class tardiness policy will still apply (see below), and you will have no extra time to finish the exam. If you are late to an exam and someone has already turned in the exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam.

If you miss an exam for any reason, the optional cumulative exam (see below) offered at the end of the semester will act as a make-up exam. Only ONE make-up exam is allowed. The optional cumulative exam will be given during the 2-hour exam period during finals week on Thursday, **9 May 2024, 8:00 – 10:00 am**. Realize this is the same period in which the fourth regular exam is given. Hence, if you take the optional cumulative exam, you will have to complete two exams during the two-hour period during finals week.

**Optional Cumulative Exam**: An optional cumulative exam can be taken to replace a student’s lowest regular exam score if desired. It will be a cumulative exam where students will be expected to synthesize material presented throughout the semester. If a student missed a regular exam, the cumulative exam will act as the make-up exam. The optional cumulative exam will be the same day as the 4th regular exam, which is Thursday, **9 May 2022, 8:00 – 10:00 am**. Hence, if you take the optional cumulative exam, you will have to complete two exams during the two-hour period during finals week.

**Discussion Sessions**: We will discuss scientific articles about amphibians and reptiles this semester. Students must come prepared to answer questions about the articles and therefore must read the articles thoroughly before coming to class. Questions will be asked randomly, so students must be present in order to get credit. One missed discussion can be made up by writing a summary of the paper (you must ask Dr. Kwiatkowski about the format of the summary).

**Lecture Quizzes**: Pop quizzes will be given during lecture throughout the semester. These are pop quizzes so students must attend lecture to ensure that they are present to take the quizzes. Quizzes will cover the lecture material. Dr. Kwiatkowski will explain in lecture which material will be covered on the different quizzes. **Absolutely no make up quizzes will be given.**

**Laboratory Quizzes** : Lab quizzes will be given regularly when the class meets in lab and not in the field. Points value may vary among quizzes. **One** make-up assignment is allowed for a missed quiz. Students must contact Dr. Kwiatkowski within one week of missing a lab quiz to discuss the make-up assignment. Quiz format will be discussed during the first lab meeting.

**Field (Lab) Notes**: Field notes from each field trip will be due soon after each trip has concluded. The notes should be a record of field conditions (weather, habitat, etc.), species seen during the trip, and data for the
projects. **No lab/field notes can be made up** if a student is absent from a lab. Students must participate in at least 3 field trips and **at least one of these must be a day trip and one a night trip.** If a student misses a field trip, **50 points** will be deducted from each field trip missed and any points from the field notes will be lost as well.

**Course Evaluations:** A course evaluation during dead week is considered a **mandatory** part of course participation. If you do not participate in the evaluation, one percentage point will be deducted from your lecture grade.

**Course Objectives:**
- To familiarize students with the diversity and evolutionary relationships within and among major amphibian and reptile taxa.
- To familiarize students with behavioral, ecological, physiological, and morphological adaptations unique to amphibians and reptiles.
- To familiarize students with conservation concerns regarding amphibians and reptiles.
- To familiarize students with local species of amphibians and reptiles.

**Student Learning Outcomes (Course Competencies):**
1. Student performance will be assessed with lecture exams during the semester, a cumulative final exam, article reviews, and laboratory practicals.
2. Students should be familiar with evolutionary relationships within and among major amphibian and reptile taxa.
3. Students should be familiar with diagnostic traits of major amphibian taxa.
4. Students should be familiar with diagnostic traits of major reptile taxa.
5. Students should be familiar with the majority of local amphibian and reptile species.
6. Students should be familiar with the majority of local amphibian and reptile species.
7. After reading scientific, peer-reviewed articles, students should be able to articulate the contexts, hypotheses, methods, results, and conclusions.

**Program Learning Outcomes:**
- **PLO 1 - Knowledge.** Demonstrate a good knowledge base in biological concepts and be able to integrate knowledge with critical thinking skills to become problem solvers. Knowledge base will include: levels of complexity (molecular/cellular through population/communities/ecosystems), biological principles and processes.
  - The first PLO is achieved with each SLO listed above.
- **PLO 2 – Communication Skills.** Clearly communicate scientific information. Provide clear structure and transitions; demonstrate scientific tone, language, and form.
  - PLO 2 is addressed with SLO 7.
- **PLO 3- Scientific Thinking.** Students shall be able to think scientifically; this includes critical thinking / reasoning and explaining biological principles as well as analyzing and interpreting quantitative data sets. There are two main components to this PLO:
  a. Given qualitative observations or defined criteria in a biological system, students shall exhibit the ability to draw and clearly explain conclusions in context;
  b. Beginning with a quantitative data set, students shall be able to analyze and interpret the data and formulate a conclusion(s) supported by the analysis.
  - PLO 3 is achieved with SLO 1, 2, 5, and 7 listed above.

**Withheld Grades.** 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 coursework 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 to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf).
**Student Wellness and Well-Being.** SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**
*The Dean of Students Office* (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

*SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic* Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
936.468.1041

*The Health and Wellness Hub* “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**Crisis Resources:**
- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

**Class Disruptions:** Class disruptions will not be tolerated because they detract from other students’ learning. As adults, students should be able to sit through class without disturbing others. It is recommended that students regard lecture as practice for future professional meetings; they may be fun, interesting, or horribly boring. Regardless, the student has to get through lectures acting like an adult.

**Dr. Kwiatkowski does NOT necessarily give you a warning or make an announcement that you are disrupting class.** Instead, points will simply be deducted in the grade book. Students are free to inquire at any time whether they have had points deducted during office hours.

**Online Behavior:** The online lecture format creates unique problems for lecture. To facilitate discussion and familiarity, it is best for students to have a video feed on so they are visible to the class and instructor. However, all students with the video feed on are responsible for any activity visible to the class and instructor. As such, students must have appropriate attire including shirt and pants (no pajamas or less). Students are responsible for their behavior and the behavior of others in their room. Students should pay attention during lecture and not talk with people in the room. People moving around in the background of the video is distracting, so plan your video environment accordingly. Points may be deducted for 1. inappropriate attire, 2.
leaving lecture, 3. talking with others outside of a class context, 4. distracting activity by other people in
your video. (10 points deducted each time)

**Tardiness:** Tardiness to lecture will not be tolerated; it disrupts the lesson and the concentration of fellow
students. Reasonable accommodations will be made in cases of emergency situations if documentation is
provided. It is the student’s responsibility to provide the instructor with documentation of emergencies. (10
points deducted each time)

**Sleeping:** Sleeping during class can be distracting to other students and the instructor. If a student is so
tired that they cannot stay awake for a lecture, as boring as it may be, the student should not be in class. (10
points deducted each time)

**Cell Phones:** Cell phones must be turned off during lecture. If a cell phone goes off, the student may be asked
to leave lecture for that day. In cases of family health (pregnant spouse, hospitalized family member, etc.),
the student must inform the instructor of the situation BEFORE class begins. In these cases, the cell phone
ringer must remain off (i.e., phone set to vibrate). (10 points deducted each time)

**Texting:** Given that cell phones should be turned off during lecture (see above), there should be no texting in
class. Texting may distract other students and the instructor. (10 points deducted each time).

**Leaving Class:** Leaving class is disruptive to other students who are trying to pay attention. Leaving the class
for any reason will count against you. Hence, be sure to use the restroom before coming to class (a 5 minute
break is given during lecture during the long summer lectures). If a student knows they will need to leave class
early, notify the instructor well ahead of time. Points will not be deducted if the student has a legitimate
excuse for leaving early. (20 points deducted each time)

**Talking/Disruptive Behaviors:** Dr. Kwiatkowski highly encourages students to ask questions or make relevant
comments during a lecture. However, talking to a neighbor or other disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated
because, again, it disrupts the learning environment of other students. (25 points deducted each time).

**Laptop Computers:** Laptop computers are not allowed in lecture. In the past, too many students have used
them for surfing the internet or working on other projects during lecture, which distracts other students. (15
points deducted each time).

**Academic Integrity.** The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any
student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to
adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and
procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation.
Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student,
(2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using,
obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key,
homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters
without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to
substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or
academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of
educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of
one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of
the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media,
and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program
course or degree requirements.
Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for
credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic
dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to
receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an
academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or
financially.

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/.

Lecture Schedule: This schedule is tentative. Some topics may require more or less time to cover than what is scheduled
below. Relevant text pages will be presented in the lecture material.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>Syllabus Review, Intro to Herps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Evolution of Tetrapods;</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Amphibian Intro; Amphibian Traits</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Amphibian Poison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Anurans: Reproduction/Life History.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Anurans: Some General Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Anurans: Diversity</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Exam I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Anurans: Diversity cont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Anurans: Diversity cont; Discussion 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Amphibian Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Salamanders: Intro &amp; Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Salamanders: Diversity cont.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 5</td>
<td>Amphibian Guest Lecture?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Exam II</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Turtles: What are they?; Diversity; Ecology &amp; Behavior intro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Turtles: Ecology &amp; Behavior cont.; Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Crocodilians: What are they? Diversity; Behavior &amp; Ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Easter Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 2</td>
<td>Squamates: What are they?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lizards: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lizards: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Exam III</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Lizards: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Lizards: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Snakes: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology; Discussion 2</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Snakes: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Snakes: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Snakes: Diversity, Behavior, and Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Exam IV and Optional Cumulative Exam 8:00 – 10:00 am</td>
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</tbody>
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