

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Lani Lyman-Henley  
**email:** [Lani.Lyman-Henley@TAMUC.edu](mailto:Lani.Lyman-Henley@TAMUC.edu)

**Office:** STC 237 (McFarland Science Building)

**Course Website:** at eCollege (enter via MyLeo)

**Office Hours:** M-F 10-11; appointments as needed

email & Virtual Office (at D2L) anytime (usual response within 24 hrs.)

\*Note on phone calls: Please leave a message with your name, number, and basic reason for calling; my husband and I are both "Dr. Henley," and both get a lot of correspondence, and I don't answer OR call back mystery numbers.

\*\* Cell phone does text messaging as well (others do not). Again, *please identify yourself*

**Cell phone:** 972-571-1042 \*\*

**Office Phone:** 903-886-5372

**Home Phone:** 972-722-1568\*

**Dept. FAX:** 903-886-5988

### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

*Vertebrate Life, 10<sup>th</sup> Ed.* Pough & Janis. 2018. **ISBN:** 9781605356075

It matters not what form it's in, or if bought, rented, or borrowed...just be sure you have ready access to one!

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Three hours. A study of advanced contemporary knowledge in vertebrate zoology. Prerequisites Graduate Standing.

**COURSE FORMAT:** This is a "web-based" course- that is, you don't actually attend a lecture class. Instead, you do your work via our **D2L** site- enter through your MyLeo page. Check the website frequently (I'd recommend daily!) for announcements, instructions, and discussion; the closest thing to a lecture or office hours you'll get from me will be in the eCollege discussion boards or via email. Try navigating the site early so you know that you can access everything. If you have difficulty with the material, talk to me *as soon as you can* for advice on how best to improve. Be sure to turn in work using appropriate file formats (doc, pdf, rtf, etc.- and NOT zip files!); if I can't open or read your work it cannot be graded and will be given a 0 score. I can't stress enough how important it is to keep up with the material...with this much reading and writing, it can be really difficult to catch up if you fall behind!

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Students will be familiar with what the study of vertebrate zoology entails.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the evolution of vertebrate diversity.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge about the current organization of vertebrate classification.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge about the importance of vertebrates in ecology and to humans globally.
- Students will be able to find and interpret scientific literature pertaining to the subject matter, and communicate in various written presentation formats

**ATTENDANCE:** Being an online course, attendance is measured by demonstrated time at the website. This is measured in two main ways- time spent actually logged into the site (yes, I can see that information), and participation in activities demonstrating you are engaged and participating. Minimum allowable attendance should reflect at least weekly logins- more appropriate and beneficial interaction will be rewarded in your grade (see below).

**MATERIAL AND GRADING:** This course is partially self-paced: there are periods in which you need to complete given portions of the work, but you can schedule your specific work times as

pleases you- and don't forget the website is still active at night, on holidays and weekends! The material for this class will be organized around content blocks. Please see the Topic folders in the Discussion Forums for guidance through specific materials. Each section will have a Commentary devoted to guiding you through the material to study- read that first, then work any assignments given as you study the material. Much of your work will be in the form of posting commentaries of your own to the Discussion boards, and responding to the postings of other students.

The bulk of the work will be such discussion of your readings of the assigned materials, with several Exercises, papers and "take-home" style tests (all of which will be detailed in separate handouts/postings). The nature of some of these assignments will be structured based on the student group in the class (for example, some in-person lab or field exercises may be offered if enough students could meet on campus for them). There will be 3 "take-home" style exams- 1 over Part I & II, a second emphasizing Part III, and the final covering Part IV and review of previous concepts. **There are NO drop grades for exams**, so take each exam seriously! Another aspect of the course that I'll introduce after about a week will be the written projects, exercises, and/or papers. You will be required to complete a minimum number of these items. The nature of some of these exercises/assignments will be structured based on the student group in the class (for example, some in-person lab or field exercises may be offered if enough students could meet on campus for them).

Grades will be computed based on a "10-point scale" such that a total of 90% or higher of possible points will result in a grade of A, between 80% and 89.9% a B, and so on. If your total is lower than 60% of the class points you will fail the class (yes, that's an F). The points are planned to be as follows:

3 exams (100 pts. each)	300
2 writing assignments	200
Short Exercises	100
Participation, etc.	<u>100</u>
<b><i>Total course points</i></b>	<b><i>700</i></b>

With a 700 point total, minimum scores for each letter grade would be 630 (A), 560 (B), 490 (C), and 420 (D). Any changes will be announced in class- this is a maximum workload, some items may be reduced, but the total will not exceed this outline.

**Late or Make-Up Work:** All graded work will be submitted online, and since there are therefore no actual sit-down exam periods, there really isn't any use for "make-up" work. All work will have a deadline posted; assignments MAY be accepted late, but will be penalized heavily on an increasing scale (the later it is, the more points it loses). Please contact me immediately if you are "absent" long enough to miss any due dates, but in general I strongly recommend planning ahead to avoid such problems. Obtain a calendar or planner for the semester, and USE IT. Extreme circumstances will always be taken into consideration- TALK TO ME before you assume anything.

**STARTING NOTES:** Oddly enough, we are going basically in the order the main text is organized in, so you can start at the beginning! Please DO read the Preface of the text before starting the chapters, and read each opening essay to the Parts of the text. Be sure to explore the class site at D2L...I am still re-organizing the course shell, so don't be confused if you skip ahead and things "aren't quite right yet." Use the first week to get your "e-feet"- learn to navigate the site, and jump right in with the first discussions of the early chapters as directed. If you find any of the underlying biological concepts unfamiliar, please let me know promptly so I can help you get up to speed.

Do remember that this is a GRADUATE level course, and therefore you will be expected to show appropriate levels of effort. You will be responsible for textbook readings, plus assorted outside readings as assigned (again, visit eCollege frequently for guidance), you will be expected to take part in discussions in a mature and in-depth manner, to write in a clear and professional voice, and you should not need excessive amounts of instructor “hand-holding.”

**A BIT ON ORGANIZATION:** The first couple of weeks we’ll start right in with the first section of the text while folks get used to the structure of the course. Be sure to read the materials posted at D2L under the first block of material, so you learn how to find assignments, post your work, and other such skills. I’ve tried to organize the chapters in sensible groupings per week- be sure to keep up with the associated materials at eCollege. Some chapters may take less time to complete, while others will likely take more- I’ve tried to allot a suitable amount of time. Feel free to read ahead, but do check back for specifics to review and discuss if you get ahead of the assignment postings so you don’t skip over stuff. Please DO NOT fall behind on reading- there is a lot of material to cover and it will pile up fast if you let it slide. The textbook will be the “meat” of your course reading, but not the whole meal!

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS\***

<b>Week</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Recommended Topic</b>	<b>Other Notes</b>
<b>PART 1: Weeks 1-5 (Ch. 1-9)</b>			
1	J 13	Ch. 1-2: What Vertebrates are	
2	20	Ch. 3-4: Origins of Jaws; Living in Water	<i>Monday Holiday</i>
3	27	Ch. 5-6: The Paleozoic and Chondrichthyes Origins	
4	F 03	Ch. 7-8: Extant Chondrichthyes; Osteichthyes Origins	
5	10	Ch. 9: Extant Osteichthyes	<i>Exam 1</i>
<b>PART 2: Weeks 6 – 11 (Ch. 10-18)</b>			
6	17	Ch. 10-11: Origin of Tetrapods; Amphibians	
7	24	Ch. 12-13: Living on Land; the Mesozoic	
8	M 02	Ch. 14-15: Amniotes and Ectothermy	
9	09	<b>SPRING BREAK- NO CLASSES</b>	
10	16	Ch. 16-17: Turtles and Lepidosauurs	
11	23	Ch. 18: Crocodylians	<i>Exam 2</i>
<b>PART 3: Weeks 12-16 (Ch. 19-26)</b>			
12	30	Ch. 19-20: Mesozoic Diapsids and Endothermy	
13	A 06	Ch. 21-22: Birds	
14	13	Ch. 23-24: The Cenozoic and Mammal Evolution	
15	20	Ch. 25-26: Mammals	
16	27	Finish up	
	<i>M 07</i>	<i>Finals Week-</i>	<i>Exam 3</i>

\*This schedule is a general outline for your reference and is subject to change. Note that only the main textbook chapters have been listed; additional readings may be required (check website for specifics). Any changes will be announced in class (at the course website); you will be responsible for keeping up with them.

**RESOURCES:**

Hopefully you no longer need the types of services provided by the **Academic Success Center** services, which include tutoring and workshops (including such topics as “Managing Test Anxiety”), but here’s the link:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/CampusLife/CampusServices/AcademicSuccessCenter/default.aspx> .

Those of you who are GAT’s may want to point your own students this way!

And of course the Academic Calendar, which does include information regarding University holidays, deadlines to add, drop, withdraw, and other such activities. This page also includes the link to each semester's Final Exam schedule (which may also be useful for your other courses): <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/academicCalendars/>

As many of you are (or plan to be) teachers and academics, you may find the following discussion about plagiarism interesting and/or helpful: <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9>

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#### **OTHER NOTES (INCLUDING OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS/AKA: THE FINE PRINT)**

It is the responsibility of the student to inform me of any problems you may have affecting your performance in class, be it due to professionally diagnosed disability, personal or work-related problems, or anything else that comes up, so that appropriate adjustments can be made.

#### **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

##### **LMS**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

#### **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.**

#### **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

##### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

## ***University Specific Procedures*** **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).  
<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

## **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx). <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

## **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

***“Plagiarism*** is a criminal activity. You must cite all sources of information. Unreferenced copying of material, whether parts of sentences, whole sentences, paragraphs or entire articles, will result in a score of zero for your essay and can result in further disciplinary action.” Note that this is true throughout the University and we do have plagiarism-detecting software in place. Of special note in an online environment- “cut and paste” from websites without appropriate citation IS plagiarism, yet putting everything in quotation marks is not an acceptable alternative. You must learn to construct your own sentences with information you find (and changing a couple of words in a sentence or reordering sentences in a paragraph are not enough). If you have any questions about what is considered plagiarism or wish advice on avoiding it, please contact your instructor.

## ***Students with Disabilities-- 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- Room 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

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

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### ***Campus Concealed Carry Statement***

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **FINAL NOTE:**

I make efforts to conserve resources (and cost) in providing materials for class. All materials provided in class are to be found at the D2L website. I will not provide hard-copy handouts of anything that you can access there- you may print what you need, when you need it; or just download a copy to have handy. Clearly computer access is assumed of all students. If you do not have one of your own (or your online access is limited), there are computer labs available all around campus- Gee Library most notably, and more locally Science building room 210. There are even kiosks for checking out a laptop. You may need to provide your own paper for printing, or pay a charge. Also, places like Staples and OfficeDepot will print materials for a reasonable fee if you bring your flash-drive. Last bit of advice: **Get a Calendar. Learn how to use it.** ☺