



## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

### AG 418 (01E, 02E, 03E)

### SPRING 2024

Instructor: Dr. Pedro M. Chavarria  
Course Location: TBA (Meet with Instructor at AG/ET 154)  
Course Hours: TBA  
Office Location: AG/ET 154  
Office Hours: By appointment, schedule by e-mail  
Office Phone: 903.886.5615 (E-mail preferred)  
University Email Address: Pedro.Chavarria@tamuc.edu  
Preferred Form of Communication: e-mail

### COURSE INFORMATION

#### **Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings**

**Textbook(s) Required:** Research Methods, Statistics, and Applications. 2023. Editors: Adams, K.A. and McGuire, E.K. Sage Publications, Inc. ISBN-10: 1071817833

**Recommended Text (not mandatory):**

Title: The Wildlife Techniques Manual (2 volume set)  
Author(s): Nova J. Silvy (Editor)  
Edition: and/or Publication Date: 7<sup>th</sup> Edition  
ISBN: 9781421401591  
Publisher: The Johns Hopkins University Press

**Supplemental Materials:** Presented by the instructor or on [myleonline.tamuc.edu](http://myleonline.tamuc.edu)

#### **Course Description**

This is a research-intensive course that requires permission from instructor for registration. The course is offered as a variable-credit course, meaning that students may elect to take between 1-3 credits, with a maximum of 3 credits applied towards the degree requirements, at any stage of their undergraduate degree standing (1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> year) after they have declared their major. Research projects undertaken by the undergraduate student are managed by a faculty mentor in CASNR based on the credit-hour requirements and the research interests of the student. Students will formulate a contract with the faculty mentor to design and implement inventory and monitoring of wildlife resources at TAMUC, including the Farms, Wetlands, and private or public

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

lands on which research is undertaken by TAMUC faculty and graduate students. Field labs will consist of field work consistent with the experience level of the student and provide an opportunity for applied skills in planning field studies, data collection, analysis, and synthesis of a management plan.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

1. To understand the process of scientific method in practice in a field or laboratory setting
2. To apply time management skills in planning a research project
3. To develop proficiency in data collection and data management
4. To apply management skills in maintaining scientific equipment
5. To develop communication skills and clarity to present ideas.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

You must be proficient in navigating [myleoonline.tamuc.edu](http://myleoonline.tamuc.edu), using Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, e-mailing your instructor, writing papers, and opening .pdf documents. Basic use of Google Maps / GoogleEarth installed on PC or Mac laptop.

### **Instructional Methods**

You will be required to conduct independent research from book chapters, supplemental reading material, and instructional PowerPoint slides. Research activities will be carried out in the field or lab and be supervised and guided initially by a research faculty member. The student is expected to conduct research independently in the field or lab after an initial period of training and orientation to the methods and facilities and study sites where the research is to be conducted.

### **GRADING**

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%; B = 80%-89%; C = 70%-79%; D = 60%-69%; F = 59% or Below

### **Assessments**

This predominantly field and/or lab-based course is based on a 1000 point scale. The points are earned by excellent performance on planning (100 pts.) and executing (200 pts.) all aspects of a custom-tailored research project. Students will produce weekly field notes (200 pts.), manage data collection and storage (100 pts.), and synthesize and analyze data (100) to produce a deliverable field report or management plan (100 pts), and produce a poster (200 pts.) to present (200 pts.) at a scientific conference such as the Annual Research Symposium at TAMUC.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## **Attendance and Participation:**

Each student is expected to communicate on a weekly basis with the faculty supervising the research project. This course meets in-person in the traditional lecture format and in the field or lab depending on the customized research project agreed upon by the student and supervising faculty member.

Your “attendance” and participation grade will be based successful submission of weekly field notes and execution of data collection in the lab or field.

## **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>.

You will be required to download the Codific Attendance Radar App (<https://codific.com/student-attendance-radar/>) to your mobile devices for in-class attendance verification. If you do not have a mobile device, you will need to consult with the instructor with your student ID to verify your attendance in-person.

## **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.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

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

### 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>

### Interaction with Instructor Statement

#### Student Success

To be successful in my class:

- Check the course daily (e-mail and myLeo D2L) and read all announcements.
- Some changes to the course content, including deadlines to assignments, may occur during the semester. These announcements will first be made in-class during lectures. Not all announcements and changes to deadlines may be posted immediately to myLeo online. It is the student's responsibility to check with the instructor, preferably by e-mail, if a class is missed.
- Read and respond to course email messages as needed; please understand that I will respond as quickly as conveniently as possible. Sometimes I will respond to messages late into the evening, but generally expect me to reply within regular business hours
- Because it may take me a while to immediately respond to your e-mail, I recommend you build a connection with peers in your class in which you can confide and rely (i.e. "study buddy") to keep you informed of the changes to the course schedule and material in case you miss a class.
- Complete assignments by the due dates specified; If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from meeting a deadline, please let me know ahead of time so I can consult with you about necessary accommodations or make-up opportunities.
- Communicate regularly with your instructor (office hours) and peers. I am very understanding of situations that may arise in the academic environment or in our personal lives which can create challenges to your performance. Please let me know what's going on so I can provide reasonable opportunities to help you recover and/or stay on track with the course.
- Create a study and/or assignment schedule to stay on track
- If you have any concerns regarding course content, need clarification on grading, or other matters related to the course, please make an appointment with your instructor to try to resolve the issue with the instructor first. If you find that the issue at hand cannot be resolved with the instructor after first consulting with the instructor, then feel free to seek support from the Chair of the department.
- Penalty enforcement (I reserve the right to adjust your grade for violation of the minimum expectations).
- Make-up assignments will only be given if arrangements are made with the instructor before missing the scheduled assignment. A documented excuse acceptable by the university standards will be required.
- If you miss class because of medical reasons, you will need to verify your illness through the TAMUC Student Health Services office (<https://www.tamuc.edu/student-health-services/>) or Student Disability Services office (<https://www.tamuc.edu/student-disability-services/>). A

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

confirmation note (e-mail) from staff from either office is needed to make accommodations for missed assignments.

- Otherwise, missing assignments will be counted as zeroes in the overall grade computation.

I want you all to succeed in my courses and in life beyond your graduation. Schedule a time to come and chat with me formally or informally to discuss your interest in wildlife conservation and what kind of things you are expecting to learn while a student at TAMUC. I will make the strongest effort to adapt the degree program to the needs of our students and make the learning experience fun and exciting!

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures/Policies**

#### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### **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>

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 Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<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](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

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

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Course Policy**

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty  
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

### **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  
Velma K. Waters Library Rm 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](#)

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

<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.

### **A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

*The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus during the semester, if needed. The instructor also reserves the right to extend credit for alternative assignments, projects, or presentations. Some elements of grading may be delegated to a teaching assistant for this course.*

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*