



EAST TEXAS A&M

UNIVERSITY

AG/BSC 436 Fall 2025 Instructor: Brandon Belcher

Office: STC122

Email: Brandon.belcher@etamu.edu

Hours: Monday

Monday: 6:00 pm - 8:50 pm Room STC 122

5pm – 6pm

Textbooks

None – reading assignments will be made through online links and papers provided by the instructor.

Class Schedule

<u>WEEK</u>		<u>SUBJECT MATERIAL</u>
1	August 25	Welcome, Syllabus; Introduction to Plant Diversity, Conservation Biology; Ecological Review
2	September 1	Labor Day Holiday – No Class
3	September 8	Importance of Biodiversity; Evolution of Plants Research paper abstract due
4	September 15	Plant Diversity, Conservation Genetics in Landscapes
5	September 22	Grassland Diversity and Ecology
6	September 29	Population Ecology, Dispersal Mechanics of Plants
7	October 6	Plant Communities, Threats to Biodiversity
8	October 13	Introduction to Conservation Planning – Exam 1
9	October 20	Restoration Ecology
10	October 27	Urban Conservation – Research Paper Due
11	November 3	Conservation Management -Fire, Grazing, Forests, Wetlands
12	November 10	Conservation Policy, Economics, Legislation
13	November 17	Climate Change and Global Conservation
14	November 24	No Class Thanksgiving Week – Exam 2
15	December 1	Presentation Group Project
16	December 8	Final Exam

The instructor reserves the right to administer revisions to the schedule if circumstances require.

Grading

Tests – Two (2) tests – **30%** – 15% Test 1, 15% Test 2

Tests will be based on lecture notes, class handouts, and assigned readings.

Writing Assignment – **15%**

A writing assignment will be given during the course of the semester – 5 page paper providing synopsis and review of selected peer-reviewed journal research article.

Class Participation – **15%** - 5% communication, 10% quizzes

Students will participate in class communication online each week. This will include answering questions posed by the instructor, as well as supporting or debating topics provided. A quiz, to be taken each Friday, will be based on weekly lecture notes, handouts, readings.

Group Project – **20%**

Groups of 3-4 students will select a group project (action plan, restoration plan, conservation initiative, policy analysis, conservation strategies) ; written project will be 12-15 pages and an overview will be presented to the class near the end of the semester.

Final Exam – **20%**

A comprehensive final exam will be given covering all material presented during semester, including lecture notes, class handouts, and assigned readings.

**** Use of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, will not be allowable for use on any assignment in this course.**

Attendance

Because this course meets only once per week, much material will be presented and discussed with every meeting. It will be impossible to perform well in this course without attending all classes. Students must read the assigned readings to fully understand the concepts presented.

Students will be expected to comply with all ETAMU policies and guidelines. It is the student's responsibilities to maintain contact with the instructor and to inform me of any issues which may impact their attendance and participation in coursework, assignments, or exams.

Online Communication Policy

- Weekly online discussions will be held between students and/or instructor regarding current class materials presented.
- All students will be expected to participate in online discussions weekly.
- Students will be respectful of all opinions expressed; no direct attacks or confrontational language will be tolerated.

Student Learning Outcomes

This course is a survey of concepts in plant diversity, community diversity, preserve design, and conservation practices. Expected outcomes will be a basic familiarity with nomenclature, concepts, and approaches to conservation of plant populations, communities, and ecological systems. The emphasis of this course will be on grassland, savanna, and forest communities, although other systems will also be explored. The course will be primarily in-person lecture, with one or more local fieldtrips to be scheduled as applicable.

University Statements

Academic Integrity

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

East Texas A&M University 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.

East Texas A&M University 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.

Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M University 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

<https://inside.etamu.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesprocedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

<https://inside.etamu.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesprocedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

Tenets of Common Behavior

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook)

Campus Concealed Carry

Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedure/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Nondiscrimination Statement

East Texas A&M University 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

Students with Disabilities Information

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:

Student Disability Resources & Services
East Texas A&M University
Gee Library, Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@etamu.edu

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.