



BSC/AG 337B Field Methods

COURSE SYLLABUS: SUMMER I 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Walter Paulin Tapondjou Nkonmeneck

Office Location: Science Building (STC) 208

Office Hours: MF 9:30-12:30 AM (By appointment, meeting either via Zoom link or in person)

Office Phone: (903) 886-5369

Office Fax:

University Email Address: Walter.Tapondjou@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: **email**

Communication Response Time: less than 48hr

Meeting Time: Online coursework with face-to-face labs. Lab 337L meets on Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm (noon) in STC 136. The lab schedule is based on animal handling protocols/requirements.

Locations of field work will vary so always check each week.

Graduate Teaching Instructor: TBD

Textbook (Required): You should already have this manual as part of other coursework so the following will serve as our reference:

The Wildlife Techniques Manual Volume 1: Research edited by Nova J. Silvy

This Manual is published in cooperation with The Wildlife Society and John Hopkins Press.

Course Description: This course provides students with practical training in the methods used to collect quantitative data on plant and animal populations, animal movements and home ranges, habitat associations, and animal behavior. Field exercises are integrated with lecture material emphasizing study design, statistics, and data interpretation.

Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Exemplify the ability to prepare and properly outfit for field work with safety of oneself and others as the goal.
- Index and characterize ecological conditions by the use of field documentation.
- Employ equipment for deterministic assessment of variables such as animal presences, range, habitat association and use.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

- Employ equipment for quantitative assessment of variables such as wildlife habitat, populations, animal behavior, and community interactions.
- Read and analyze peer-reviewed articles of field methodology from diverse evolutionary clades.
- Professional Skills
 - o Demonstrate the ability to work as a productive team member on a large field project.
 - o Articulate ideas through writing.
 - o Demonstrate interpersonal skills of critique, collaboration, and project management.

Course Requirements:

- Proficiency in using the D2L Brightspace Learning Management System through myLeo Online
- Proficiency in use of Microsoft Office; Word, Excel, and PowerPoint
- Potential usage or installation of relevant graphics programs or third-party programs for viewing PowerPoint slides

Instructional Methods Be sure to read this!

Students are responsible for beginning their participation on the first day of class by logging on and completing assignments according to the Course Timeline. Failure to submit online assignments between the first day of classes and the universities census date will result in an ADMINISTRATIVE DROP from the course.

This course will be a combination of project-work, text-book study and data analysis. You must participate on a small project team and contribute to the larger project. Your participation in the project includes weekly lab meetings which includes field assignments.

Participation Policy: Online participation will include posting on the course discussion modules and interacting with other students on the discussion board. It is required that you be in lab each week to learn how to gather data in the field. You really can't do that online.

You will have selected readings and complete independent research on methods for differing taxa each week. PowerPoints of chapter notes will be made available in the D2L Learning Management System at myLeo Online. In lab, you will work in teams to collect data using various field equipment and methods. You will have some quizzing and exams over key topics; however, the majority of your grade is based on your field work and the reporting of that gathered data. Our project this summer will focus on the Artificial Wetlands and Prairie Preserve on Hwy. 24.

Student Responsibilities:

- Read and understand the timelines for the course requirements on day one.
- Regularly check both myLEO Online and university email accounts for announcements.
- Attend and participate in weekly laboratory work sessions, grades will be taken in every session.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

How to stay Current:

Class and Lab announcements for important events will be regularly posted through the D2L course website. You should check it daily for important information. Course progress and grades can be monitored through the online D2L system.

Student Assessments:

Your course grade will be distributed and assessed as follows:

- 15% Weekly reading, analysis and discussions on field methods.
- 15% Temporal project – (early morning, evening, or night) independent field project.
- 15% Quizzing and Exams.
- 30% Final Project Report with species list and contribution to ArcGIS Online map.
- 25% Transferred from lab grade, see lab syllabus for grading framework.
- 100 %

Brief Overview of Course Required Assessments:**Weekly Reading & Discussion Assignments** – 15% of grade.

You will research a field method(s) from assigned clades and write a review. These review papers should be 3 pages double spaced with citations on the 4th page. These papers will have a summation of the field methodology reviewed within the researched article. You will add your opinions, ideas for further studies, thoughts on problems, or creative additions to the method reviewed. You will drop the paper into an assignment box each Friday by midnight and make a short posting about the methodology on the open discussion board for that week. You will then read about topics that other student's researched and add constructive comments or criticisms of those methods.

Temporal Project – 15%

Our field work is limited to our lab times on Wednesdays and Thursdays. You will have an extra assigned method that is outside of those timeframes. Animals have behaviors outside of our daytime labs, so you will apply a field method during early mornings (sunrise), late evenings (sunset) or during the night. We will have a discussion board for you to post about what you are planning and then your results. This will have to be something you can do with limited equipment and absolutely no animal handling. You will also drop your final report into an assignment box.

Quizzing and Exams – 15%

This is a project-based course; subsequently, grading is heavier on projects and lab work. I do want you to do some reading and learning (memorizing) covering some fundamental concepts.

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Exams and quizzing will be online and based upon the chapters assigned or additional information from each week's module.

All other grading comes from the lab and field work.

Lab Grade is based on the following:

- ✓ Explore a field method each week.
- ✓ Keep a field notebook.
- ✓ Safety and proper personal protective clothing.
- ✓ Participate in group data share, discussion and quiz at the end of each field method day.
- ✓ Build data into a final project report.

No field grade will be dropped. Lab participation has the following grade potential.

Week One: Wednesday June 4 th	50 points
Week One: Thursday June 5 th	50 points
Week Two: Wednesday June 11 th	50 points
Week Two: Thursday June 12 th	50 points
Week Three: Wednesday June 18 th	50 points
Week Three: Thursday June 19 th	50 points
Week Four: Wednesday June 25 th	50 points
Week Four: Thursday June 26 th	50 points
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Lab Grade Potential:	400 points

If you miss a lab you will NOT earn any points. For example, missing one lab will drop the lab portion of your grade to 350 points which is equal to a maximum lab grade of 87.5% for lab work. Missing two labs will drop you to 300 points or 75% as your lab grade.

Final Project Report with species list and contribution to ArcGIS Online map – 20%

You will assimilate each week's lab methods and data collected into a final report. The report must be 8 pages of text. You will organize the report in scientific-paper style: Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion. You will use 12-point, Times New Roman font and double-spaced with no extra spacing between paragraphs. A listing of species from all group members and a map with data points must be included as an addendum. Citations will also be added after the 8 pages of text. More information and weekly work will be in the Module about the Project report.

I will provide grading rubrics to guide your work with papers, projects, discussion-board exchange, and lab work. A lab syllabus will be provided as a separate document.

Weekly modules (content folders) in D2L will give required readings and completion dates and further information for field work, quizzing, projects, and discussions.

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Tentative* Schedule for Units and Exams:

Dates	Tentative Plans	Tentative Assignments Due Dates will be given in D2L
Week 1 June 1 st	Syllabus and Course Overview, Introductions and Field Safety Vegetative Sampling and Measurements & Habitat Assessment Methods Evolution and Clade Review	First 2 , You have 2 to start! Reading & Discussions Quiz Lab Field Grades
W2 June 8 th	Clade Methodology Research Chapter/PowerPoint Reading Lab Field Work	3 rd Reading & Discussions Lab Field Grades
W3 June 15 th	Clade Methodology Research Chapter/PowerPoint Reading Lab Field Work	Exam One Due Lab Field Grades
W4 June 22 nd	Clade Methodology Research Chapter/PowerPoint Reading Lab Field Work	4 th Reading & Discussion Lab Field Grades
W5 June 29 th	Final Exam and Final Report Week No Lab Fieldwork	Temporal Project Due Final Project Paper Due Final Exam Due

* This class schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class &/or through your D2L course announcements. The weather will impact our course and field dates.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage Distribution
A	89.5 to 100
B	79.5 - 89.5
C	69.5 -79.5
D	59.5 – 69.5
F	59.5 and below

Be sure to check the gradebook on D2L frequently.

Grade Questions or Disputes

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Once grades have been posted you have 4 days to question a grade or request a grade review.
Grades can be viewed on the myLeo D2L course page.

After the 4-day review period the grades will be “locked” and no changes will be made. Review your work on a timely basis, and don’t expect me to review or change a grade that is not current.

Grades are earned by student work and learning; you should therefore earn your grade and not expect a “bump-up”. How is an instructor to decide who deserves a bump and who does not? What is the bump level, a 69 or 68? If you make a 69.1 that is listed on the above grading scale as a D grade, expect to make a D.

A note about bonus work or extra credit:

It often happens that a student will send an email during the last days of class and ask for extra work to bring their grade up to the next grade level. *There is nothing you can do during the last week or days to make-up for a semester of great study habits.* Your job is to learn the material throughout the course. I understand that it can be frustrating when you earn an 89, but B will be your grade

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

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@etamu.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

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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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

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@etamu.edu.

Technology-Related Issues

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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

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

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY 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.

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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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

Academic Integrity

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

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of 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

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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

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

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

Nondiscrimination Notice

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.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

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 ETAMU 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.

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.

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East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, 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

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

Department and Accrediting Agency Statements:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

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