

Texas Tech University
NRM 4324 + 4301 Summer 2015

NRM 4324 - PRINCIPLES OF CONSERVATION SCIENCE
NRM 4301 - TROPICAL AVIAN ECOLOGY

Course Credit Hours: 3 each
Course Lecture Hours: 3 each
Course Laboratory Hours: 0

Instructor: Drs. Perry (4324), Griffis-Kyle (4301)
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Class Meeting Time: all day, July 11- Aug 1

Class Meeting Location: Costa Rica

Required Texts: none

Course Description: An introductory survey of tropical ecology and conservation covering both theory and practice. Previous ecology course, consent of instructor, and field trip are required. We will survey material from the variety of disciplines important in conservation practice, including ecology, economics, philosophy, and the social sciences.

Course Goals/Objectives and evaluation: This course (NRM 4324) will introduce students to the realities of conservation work in the developing world. Students will also be expected to register for NRM 4301 which will focus on tropical field ornithology. Although we will discuss some of the theoretical underpinnings of modern conservation biology, our primary focus will be to explore, hands-on, global conservation case studies. Since conservation occurs in a social context, we will spend considerable time learning about the history and current culture of Costa Rica, as well as the physical setting. We will also spend a large portion of our time learning about the biota of the country, with NRM 4301 providing a focus on birds given their appeal for nature tourism and the migratory behavior of many species that directly link North America with the tropics. This is a hands-on, experiential class rather than a traditional lecture-based one. Although some lectures will be delivered, most learning will come from service-learning, personal exploration, and individual and group projects.

NRM 4324: Evaluation of goal achievement will be based on active participation (70%) and a written report submitted after we return (30%).

NRM 4301: Evaluation of goal achievement will be based on active participation (70%) and a field notebook (with field assignments) submitted after we return (30%).

Teaching philosophy: Education is a collaborative project between the student and the teacher.

Our part of the bargain: Be knowledgeable, informative, and whenever possible, exciting and relevant to your interests and needs.

Your part of the bargain: Take advantage of this opportunity. Be curious and open to new experiences. Allow yourself to be intellectually challenged, and do not be afraid to express yourself in a respectful manner. Given the unique setting for this class, remember to keep SAFETY as your #1 goal.

SAFETY: Field work involves extra challenges, and travel in the developing world and tropics even more so. The instructors will strictly enforce safe behavior, but **students have to be responsible for their own behavior**. You will receive safety instructions from both OIA and us. Very briefly: do not annoy the locals, do not annoy the wildlife, pay attention to your surroundings, follow all local laws, and avoid behaviors that might put you (and others) at risk. Remember, we will be away from the usual amenities and access to health care will not be trivial. Share any concerns with us **IMMEDIATELY**. **Unsafe behavior may result in being shipped back to the US, on your own and with no refund.**

Disability and special needs: Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, you may contact the Student Disability Services Office in 335 West Hall or 806-742-2405. PLEASE note that this is a physically demanding field class held in a foreign country and may not be appropriate for all students, regardless of disability.

Academic regulations and integrity: Please refer to the current Texas Tech University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog for a complete list of "Academic Regulations". **Cheating hurts everybody**. "Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student or the attempt to commit such an act. Strict adherence to the highest standards of academic integrity will be expected throughout this course. The attempt of students to present as their own any work that they have not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Submitted work may be checked for plagiarism by Turnitin or similar software. Violation of the policy **will be** penalized.

Absence: The field trip is the main part of this class and may not be missed.

Grading: Grades for each class will be based on **writing assignments** (30%) and **participation** (70%).

Writing assignment NRM 4324: Writing skills are an essential part of a successful career in conservation. One week following our return you must submit, via e-mail, two double-spaced Word documents: 1) a 1-2 page essay summarizing your experiences during the trip, your thoughts about the challenges of doing conservation work in the developing world, and how this experience might affect your future career; and 2) a 1-2 page summary of the projects you conducted as part of the class and what they have taught you.

Writing assignment NRM 4301: Each student will be responsible for a field notebook providing your descriptions of the places we visit, the things we see, and what you learn about conservation along the way. For example, if we visit a coffee plantation, how do you perceive the plantation functioning in context of wildlife conservation, sustainable agriculture, and the local economy. You will record your thoughts and observations at locations we visit as we proceed through the field trip.

Additionally, you will 1) record bird species observed during the field components of this class and record a species observation account for a minimum of 15 bird species. To do this, you will need to bring binoculars, a notebook, and bring or share a Birds of Costa Rica field guide. Do not just write down that you saw a particular bird in a particular habitat and then draw a picture later at your leisure, copying from the field guide. These are field notebooks – do your sketches in the field. You can add colors if you want later.

Participation NRM 4324 and 4301: Oral communication skills are an essential part of a successful career in conservation. Active and thoughtful participation in discussions – regardless of the opinions expressed – will be continuously evaluated. In addition, this class has a service-learning component and active participation in those activities is expected.

Office Hours: Since this is a field class, normal office hours will not be held. You are **strongly encouraged** to discuss any points that were unclear, as well as any related issues, during the trip. Once we return, office hours will be available by appointment. To make an appointment, contact Dr. Perry by telephone (834-2339) or e-mail (Gad.Perry@ttu.edu). Dr. Griffis-Kyle can be reached at (834-2619) or email (kerry.griffis-kyle@ttu.edu).

Civility in the classroom: We are travelling to areas that are physically challenging and very different from what any of us is used to. To maintain an atmosphere that facilitates learning opportunities, please do not engage in any forms of distraction. Please treat others, and especially our hosts, with courtesy. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.

Last update: 11 April 2017