

# Course Syllabus

## ENV 120 Holt: The Biosphere

Summer 2016 May 16 – August 8. Monday and Wednesday 6:00-9:10 pm. Bush 212

Instructor: Jason Houck, GISP, PWS

Email: JHouck@rollins.edu

Environmental Studies office: 407-646-2392. Please contact Ann Francis

Office Hours by appointment. *I will be available in the classroom 30 minutes before every class.*

Text: Principles of Environmental Science: Inquiry and Applications. 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. William P. Cunningham and Mary Ann Cunningham. ISBN-13 9780073532516.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is intended to introduce students to real world environmental and ecological issues. Over the semester, we will introduce the concepts of ecological integrity (biodiversity) and ecological survey methods, environmental/ecological systems, biotic and abiotic interactions, energy flow through ecosystems, biogeochemical processes, human ecology, and environmental problem solving.

### CREDIT HOUR STATEMENT

This course is a six-credit-hour course. The value of six credit hours results from work expected of enrolled students both inside and outside the classroom. Rollins faculty require that students average about 3 hours of outside work for every hour of scheduled class time. In this course, the additional outside-of-class expectations are [please fill in what this course requires, e.g., fieldwork, research, experiential education, small-group projects, etc.]:

### COURSE CALENDAR

*Note: The course syllabus is subject to change as necessary. If class is canceled for any reason, please continue to follow the syllabus including completing any out-of-class assignments and turn them in at the start of the next class meeting. If class is canceled the evening of an exam, the exam will be administered during the next class meeting.*

*The last day to withdraw without academic penalty is June 29, 2016.*

*Deadline for withdrawal from intensive courses is the Monday following the mid-point class meeting. Withdrawals must be submitted in writing to the Holt School Office.*

#### May

- 16 Introductions/Course Overview  
Chapter 1: Understanding Our Environment
- 18 Chapter 2: Environmental Systems: Matter and Energy and Life  
Chapter 3: Evolution, Species Interactions, and Biological Communities

23 Chapter 4: Human Population  
Chapter 5: Biomes and Biodiversity  
**Lab 1: Environmental Organizations**

25 Exam 1

30 **No Class! – Memorial Day**

## **June**

1 Chapter 6: Environmental Conservation: Forests, Grasslands, Parks, and Nature Preserves  
Chapter 7: Food and Agriculture  
Review Exam 1  
**Lab 1 Report Due – submit through Blackboard**

6 Chapter 8: Environmental Health and Toxicology  
**Lab 2: Florida Wildlife Corridor Expedition (Documentary Film)**

8 **Lab 3: Guest Speaker: Jen Korn, PhD, Panther Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

13 Chapter 9: Climate  
Chapter 10: Air Pollution  
**Lab 2 Report Due – submit through Blackboard**

15 **Lab 4: Guest Speaker: Casey Lyon, Environmental Permit Coordinator, Florida Department of Transportation District 5**  
**Lab 3 Report Due – submit through Blackboard**

20 Chapter 11: Water: Resources and Pollution  
**Case Study Introduction, Groups, Role Assignments**  
Review for Exam 2

22 Exam 2  
**Lab 4 Report Due – submit through Blackboard**

27 **Lab 5: Guest Speaker: Alan Alshouse, Senior Scientist, Inwood Consulting Engineers, Inc.**

29 **Olin Library – Introduction to Research Resources**  
**Case Study Group Research**

## **July**

4 **No Class! – Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July**

- 6      **Case Study Group Research**  
**Lab 5 Report Due – submit through Blackboard**
- 11     **Case Study Group Research**
- 13     Chapter 12: Environmental Geology  
Chapter 13: Energy
- (Saturday) 16    **Field Trip: Econ Wilderness Area**
- 18     **Lab 6: Guest Speaker: Hannah Hernandez, Environmental Resource  
Program Manager, St. Johns River Water Management District**
- 20     Case Study Presentations (Mandatory Attendance)
- 25     Chapter 14: Solid and Hazardous Waste  
Chapter 15: Economics and Urbanization  
**Lab 6 Report Due – submit through Blackboard**
- 27     Chapter 16: Environmental Policy and Sustainability  
Review for Exam 3  
**Field Trip Report Due – submit through Blackboard**
- August**
- 1      Exam 3
- 3      Course Review – Bring your questions!!!
- 8      Final Exam

***Grades due August 16. Access through FoxLink. Be sure to do internet evaluations!***

**GRADING**

- 10% Exam 1  
10% Exam 2  
10% Exam 3  
25% Final Exam  
15% Case Study  
12% Lab Reports (6 reports x 2% each)  
18% Field Trip Report \_\_\_\_\_  
100% - Your Final Grade

**No extra credit will be offered in this course. Please do not ask.**

**Late Work Policy: No late papers or discussion accepted.**

## Grading Scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	88-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77, etc.

## COMMUNICATION POLICY

I will check my Rollins accounts regularly and respond within 48 hours to any communication when possible. If you need to reach me sooner, please call Ann Francis in the Environmental Studies office at 407-646-2392. She can reach me by phone in an emergency. Expect grades to be posted by the end of the week for your assignments.

**IMPORTANT: e-mail is the official means of communication in the Holt School.** You have been assigned a Rollins e-mail address. It is your responsibility to activate your account and check it regularly for messages. Contact IT for help.

## EXAMS

Exams will take place during the beginning portion of the class period for which they are scheduled. It is likely that they will not require the entire allotted time to complete the exam, so **time limits for completing the exam will be provided a minimum of one week prior.** The final exam is an exception. As **the final is comprehensive**, you can expect it to take longer to complete. Therefore, you will be given the entire allotted class time to complete the final exam.

All exams may include matching, multiple choice, short answer, and essay/discussion questions. Essay books will be provided, if required. Material covered in exams can be drawn from lecture, handout materials, guest speakers, videos, the course text, and any other material specifically brought to your attention. In a nutshell, if we cover it in class, it could show up on the exam.

## CASE STUDY

As an environmental professional, you will often be called upon to relay complex, oftentimes controversial, environmental concepts to the general public, elected officials, attorneys, other professionals, etc. Over the course of several lab meetings, I will introduce you to this concept. I will break the class into small groups and assign each group a role to play in addressing a fictitious environmental issue. Research time at the library will be provided and I will make myself available to provide assistance to groups that might be “stuck”. The project will culminate with each group giving a 30-minute multimedia presentation to the class outlining their assigned role’s stance on the issue and why their viewpoint should be adopted as policy.

**More details to follow.**

### **LAB REPORTS/GUEST SPEAKERS**

Lab work will include individual work, group work, presentations, or guest speakers. Please see the calendar above for due dates relating to lab/guest speaker reports. All lab/guest speaker reports will consist of a minimum of 1,000 words typed, double spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point font. Reports that do not meet the minimum format criteria will not receive credit. Reports may be submitted electronically in MS Word (.doc or .docx) format or Adobe PDF format. I must receive the report through Blackboard no later than the start of class on the day the report is due.

The lab reports will consist of a description of the lab activity, any pertinent classroom discussion, your thoughts on the information presented, and any conclusions drawn. In the case of a presentation or a speaker, the report will include a synopsis of the material presented and information you gained. You will be graded on your organization, description of the activity, interpretation of any findings or issues discussed, and discussion of your personal conclusions and/or thoughts. If you need help with grammar, spelling, punctuation, or length, please utilize the Johnson Student Resource Center. They are here to help! Don't lose points over there, their, or they're.

### **FIELD TRIP REPORT**

A class field trip is scheduled for **Saturday July 16th** at the Econ River Wilderness Area in Seminole County. I will lead you through a number of ecosystems common to central Florida. We will discuss each system's ecology including abiotic factors and energy sources, dominant vegetation types and keystone species, vegetative strata, producer/consumer relationships, competition, wildlife, and human interaction with the environment.

I encourage you to take plenty of notes and ask lots of questions. A field trip report will be due on **July 27th**. The report will be a minimum of 3,000 words in length using the same page formatting as the lab report. Within the report, you will choose one of the ecosystem types we visited and discuss it in detail. In addition to specific details outlined in the field, I encourage you to conduct further research into your specific habitat type. Questions to consider include: Why is this habitat type located here? What are its limiting factors? What species utilize this habitat type and for what? I encourage you to relate the observations you make during the field trip to your own experience. Where have you seen this type of habitat before? What did those places have in common?

I expect this project to be a rewarding experience for you. As a professional ecologist, I get paid to walk in the woods and observe the natural environment (It's a pretty great gig.). Take pictures. Collect leaves/bones (nothing alive or gross, please). Breathe deeply. Listen. Touch things. Have fun!

Again, if you need help with grammar, spelling, punctuation, or length, please utilize the Johnson Student Resource Center. They are here to help! Don't lose points over effect and affect.

**While I recognize that students may choose to concentrate on similar habitat types for their reports, each student must complete and turn in his or her own independent, separate report.**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is required at all class meetings. It is assumed that you will be on time for class (attendance is taken at the beginning of each class period). Each unexcused absence will impact your final course grade as follows:

- 1st and 2nd absence = use them wisely
- 3rd absence = 5 percentage points off
- 4th absence = 10 percentage points off... etc.

### **CLASSROOM POLICY**

Maintaining a healthy and respectful classroom environment is crucial to ensuring success for all students. Therefore, any of the following distractions may result in your being asked leave the classroom for the remainder of that class period:

1. Arriving late to class
2. Text messaging or using portable electronic devices (phones, tablets, etc.) during class for purposes unrelated to class activities
3. Laptop use unrelated to class activities
4. Repeated ringing of cell phone
5. Walking in and out of the classroom (If you are ill, please let me know.)

**All cell phones must either be turned off or set to silent mode during class.**

Classroom participation is expected and encouraged. While I will not grade you directly on the amount or substance of your in-class participation, it may be considered in the case of borderline grades. So....talk, ask questions, add to the discussion. I do not expect to be the only one talking during class.

### **GUIDELINES FOR DOING YOUR BEST**

1. Read the syllabus!!!!
2. Read! Text, notes, handouts....everything!
3. Study! Cramming the day/night before an exam is never a good idea.
4. Ask questions. Are you lost, confused, or unclear about something?
5. Use the Johnson Student Resource Center for tutoring or help on reports. It's free!!!
6. The Olin Library has prepared a great online resource for Environmental Studies students who need help with research. Check it out!!! <http://libguides.rollins.edu/envirostudies>

### **THE ACADEMIC HONOR CODE**

Membership in the student body of Rollins College carries with it an obligation, and requires a commitment, to act with honor in all things. Because academic integrity is fundamental to the pursuit of knowledge and truth and is the heart of the academic life of Rollins College, it is the

responsibility of all members of the College community to practice it and to report apparent violations.

The following pledge is a binding commitment by the students of Rollins College: The development of the virtues of Honor and Integrity are integral to a Rollins College education and to membership in the Rollins College community.

Therefore, I, a student of Rollins College, pledge to show my commitment to these virtues by abstaining from any lying, cheating, or plagiarism in my academic endeavors and by behaving responsibly, respectfully and honorably in my social life and in my relationships with others. This pledge is reinforced every time a student submits work for academic credit as his/her own.

Students shall add to all papers, quizzes, tests, lab reports, etc., the following handwritten abbreviated pledge followed by their signature: **“On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance on this work.”** Material submitted electronically should contain the pledge; submission implies signing the pledge.

**NOTE: It is OK to borrow notes, study together, or discuss report topics. However, your work must be your own.**

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Rollins College is committed to equal access and does not discriminate unlawfully against persons with disabilities in its policies, procedures, programs or employment processes. The College recognizes its obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to provide an environment that does not discriminate against persons with disabilities. If you are a person with a disability on this campus and anticipate needing any type of academic accommodations in order to participate in your classes, please make timely arrangements by disclosing this disability in writing to the Disability Services Office at (box 2764) 1000 Holt Ave., Winter Park, FL, 37289 or call 407-646-2345 for an appointment.

### **COLLEGE EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

In case of concerns about emergencies affecting Rollins information can be obtained at: <http://emergency.rollins.edu/>. You can also sign up for phone, e-mail and text alerts at this web site.

### **COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS**

At the end of each semester, students are asked to evaluate the course and instructor. These evaluations are extremely valuable in the teaching and learning process on our campus. Student evaluations help assess student perceptions of classroom learning and often lead to improved teaching. Your feedback is important and Rollins students are encouraged to be honest, fair, and reflective in the evaluation process.

The online evaluative survey is anonymous. Students are never identified as the respondent. Instead, each student's comments are assigned a random number. You will be asked to rate your course and instructor on a numerical scale and through narrative comments.

The online Course and Instructor Evaluation (CIE) process opens at 8:00 a.m. on the first scheduled date. It remains open for a period of 14 days (2 weeks) until 12:00 a.m. (midnight) on

the final scheduled date. The evaluation period ends prior to the start of final examinations and faculty cannot access completed evaluations until 10 days after the end of final exams.

Students will receive one email at the start of the CIE period, one after the 15th day, and a final reminder the day before the CIE period ends. Students who complete evaluations for all classes will be able to view grades ten-days before students who do not complete an evaluation form.