

*** TENTATIVE SYLLABUS ***

ES 395 & 396: FIELD STUDIES IN WISCONSIN ECOREGIONS

May 13-May 31, 2013.

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Scientists, natural resource managers, and nature writers all base their work on an in depth and intimate understanding of the natural world. Central to that understanding is knowledge of native and invasive plants, natural communities (such as maple-basswood forest, prairie, and bog), ecoregions, watersheds, and geology. This course is an opportunity for students to get out of the classroom and learn about the ecosystems in our state. The course will begin with a brief in-class introduction to native plants, natural communities, and ecoregions of Wisconsin. Then we will spend nearly three weeks traveling to ecologically rich sites in our state.

Course goals

- 1. Give students another option for field studies in the ES program**
- 2. Introduce students to the essential components of bioregional *knowledge*:**
 - Native & invasive plant identification
 - Wisconsin's natural communities
 - Wisconsin's watersheds
 - Wisconsin's ecoregions
- 3. Introduce students to related aspects of bioregional *knowledge* (basic level)**
 - Phenology
 - Bird and frog call identification
 - Wisconsin geology
- 4. Develop initial experience and *skills* in**
 - Field notebook and nature journaling
 - Using topo map and compass
 - Phenological analysis
 - Methods of plant community analysis

Common Assignments

- 1. Initial exam.** (~% of final grade)
 - Monday of second week, before we set off west
- 2. Final exam.** (~% of final grade)
 - Friday of third week
- 3. Field notebook.** (~% of final grade)
- 4. Teamwork, flexibility, cooperation, and enhancing the intellectual and social environment of the group.** (~% of final grade)
- 5. Participation in bioregional analysis: data gathering, group reports** (~% of final grade)
 - plant identification & phenological records

Special focu

Students choose one of three focuses

- *Methods of plant community analysis*
- *Analysis of policy and values in various parks, refuges, etc. (ES 395)*
- *Nature journal*

On enhancing the intellectual and social environment of the group

We will be living and working together closely for three weeks. We are a team and a community, each person responsible for the well-being of all the others. An individual student's attitude and behavior will have a major impact on the quality of the experience of all others. Indifference, impatience, negative vibes, inflexibility can really bring the course down. Interest, cooperation, flexibility, patience, and working for the benefit of the group can make for a pleasant and effective educational experience.

We will be spending a lot of time on the trail, looking at plants, listening for nature's songs, getting a feel for different natural communities. We can do this only if we are not distracted by chatter: talk about social life, sports, or other matters unrelated to the course. Talk should be confined to the topics of the course, and silence should be prized as a way to be open to the natural world we normally ignore. Trail time is "nature time."

There will be three ways of dividing our class, with three groups in each case.

1. Driving groups
2. Meals teams
3. Trail teams

Flexibility and cooperation with the rest of your mates is expected. This means working together as a team, taking a leadership role on occasion without being imposing. These are essential skills that employers are very interested in.

At the end of the term, each student will hand in a peer evaluation with your evaluation of the way other students enhanced that intellectual and environmental experience of the whole group.

WEEK ONE

MONDAY MAY 13

- *Campus 9:00-12:00: Introduction to elements in bioregional knowledge*

TUESDAY MAY 14

- *Campus 9:00-12:00: Introduction to elements in bioregional knowledge*

WEDNESDAY MAY 15

- **AM: Drive to Peninsula SP**
- *Lunch: Peninsula SP*
- **PM: Peninsula SP** (guided tour with naturalist)
- *Dinner & Lodging: Bjorklunden*

THURSDAY MAY 16

- *Breakfast: Bjorklunden*
- **AM: Ridges Sanctuary** (guided tour with naturalist)
- *Lunch: Peninsula SP*
- **PM: Peninsula SP**
- *Dinner & Lodging: Bjorklunden*

FRIDAY MAY 17

- *Breakfast: Bjorklunden*
- **AM: Cathedral Pines**
- *Lunch: Cathedral Pines*
- **PM: Drive to Oshkosh** (2.5 hours)

WEEK TWO

MONDAY MAY 20

- **AM: Lake Butte des Morts**
- *Lunch: Sandhill SWA*
- **PM: Sandhill SWA**
- *Dinner & Lodging: Sandhill SWA*

TUESDAY MAY 21

- *Breakfast: Sandhill SWA*
- **AM: Necedah NWR** (guided tour with naturalist)
- *Lunch: Necedah NWR*
- **PM: Necedah NWR**
- *Dinner & Lodging: Sandhill SWA*

WEDNESDAY MAY 22

- *Breakfast: Sandhill SWA*
- **AM: Devil's Lake SP**
- *Lunch: Devil's Lake SP*
- **PM: Devil's Lake SP**
- *Dinner & Lodging: Aldo Leopold Center, Black Earth*

THURSDAY MAY 23

- *Breakfast: Aldo Leopold Center, Black Earth*
- **AM: Spring Green SNA**
- *Lunch: Governor Dodge SP*
- **PM: Governor Dodge SP**
- *Dinner & Lodging: Aldo Leopold Center, Black Earth*

FRIDAY MAY 24

- *Breakfast: Aldo Leopold Center, Black Earth*
- **AM: Pleasant Valley Conservancy** (guided tour with naturalist?)
- *Lunch: Aldo Leopold Legacy Center*
- **PM: Aldo Leopold: Legacy Center & the Shack** (guided tours)
- *Drive Home*

WEEK THREE

MONDAY May 27: Memorial Day

- *no class*

TUESDAY May 28

- **AM: North Kettle Moraine SF & SNA**
- *Lunch: North Kettle Moraine*
- **PM: North Kettle Moraine SF & SNA**
- *Dinner & Lodging: UWM Field Station*

WEDNESDAY MAY 29

- *Breakfast: UWM Field Station*
- **AM: UWM Field Station, Cedarburg Bog SNA**
- *Lunch: UWM Field Station*
- **PM: UWM Field Station, Cedarburg Bog SNA**
- *Dinner & Lodging: UWM Field Station*

THURSDAY MAY 30

- *Breakfast: UWM Field Station*
- **AM: Kohler-Andrae SP & SNA**
- *Lunch: Kohler-Andrae SP*
- **PM: Drive home**

FRIDAY MAY 31

- *Campus 9:00-12:00: final exam, reports, and photos*

Texts & such

Numerous documents on D2L site to be printed and brought to class.

Randy Hoffman. *Wisconsin's Natural Communities: How to Recognize Them, Where to Find Them.*

Madison: University of Wisconsin, 2002.

Stan Tekiela. *Trees of Wisconsin Field Guide.* Adventure Publications, 2002.

Main Assignments

Journals

- Field notebook: detailed notes of observations and information
- Nature journal: impressions, reflections, speculations, and conclusions

Analyses

- point-quarter method of community analysis
- phenology
- plant ID

Final group reports

- summary of community analysis
- list of locations: plants and birds & frogs
- list of plants: locations and phenology
- list of bird songs and frog calls heard: locations
- summary of phenology
- photobooks to go on ES website, ES Facebook
- video to go on youtube?