

Trees and the Environment

Course Number: 11:216:199 Fall 2024

Days and Times: 3:50 – 5:10 pm Mondays and Wednesdays

Location: Bartlett Hall Room 123

Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Allyson Salisbury

Office: (Old) Blake 102

Email: asalis@sebs.rutgers.edu

Office Hours: By appointment for zoom or in-person

Course Website, Resources and Materials:

- I will post all course materials on Canvas.
- This course does not have a required textbook.
- I have posted a collection of supplemental reading materials on Canvas under Reading List. All quizzes and exams will be based only on material covered in lecture. However, if you find it helpful to read about a subject in addition to hearing about it in class, these supplemental materials are for you.

Course Description:

Trees are a fundamental component of many ecosystems here on Earth and they provide crucial resources for human civilization. In this introductory course, we'll learn about the structure and function of trees and forest ecosystems. Topics include population, community, and landscape ecology; forest dynamics; soils and biogeochemical cycling; photosynthesis; diversity; climate change; urban forestry; and conservation. This course does not require any prior knowledge on the subject, and all majors are welcome.

Ecology, Evolution, And Natural Resources Program Learning Goals:

- Goal 1: Explain basic population, community ecology and ecosystem-level concepts.
- Goal 6: Communicate effectively - orally and through written text and graphics.
- Goal 7: Evaluate ecology, evolution and natural resources management concepts in global context.

Assignments/Responsibilities, Grading & Assessment:

Quizzes (10 points each, 90 points total)

You will take 9 quizzes over the course of the semester based on material covered in lecture. These quizzes allow me to see if there are topics in class that need further explanation and help you track your own progress with learning.

Field Trip Activity Sheets (100 points each, 200 points total)

We will take two field trips to Helyar Woods at Rutgers Gardens in September and in November. During the field trips, you'll be given an assignment to complete and then turn in at the end of the trip. Note that you will need to provide your own transportation to the Gardens.

Exams (110 points each, 330 points total)

There will be three exams over the course of the semester. These exams are NOT cumulative and will cover the set of lecture material that precedes it.

Campus Tree Species Project (110 points total)

For the first half of the semester, you will choose a tree species that grows on campus to learn about. Each week, you'll answer a few questions on Canvas about that species. Then you'll take all the information you've gathered and assemble that into a one-page flyer designed to teach other people about that species.

Attendance (100 points total)

I expect and encourage you to attend all lectures and field trips. Partial lecture notes will be posted on Canvas, however I will expand on those notes during class and those notes will form the basis of the quizzes and exams. While the class is large, I will try to make it as interactive as possible and attending in-persons give you the opportunity to learn from fellow students and ask me questions in real time. If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website

<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Scoring

A: 90 and above

B+: 87-89

B: 80-86

C+: 77-79

C: 70-76

D: 60-69

F: 59 and below

Accommodations For Students With Disabilities

The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources. Please follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/getting-registered>. Full policies and procedures are at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Course Schedule

The course schedule is posted on Canvas and may be updated periodically.

Late Work

All work is due at midnight on Canvas the day it is due, unless otherwise specified. Work turned in after that time will be considered a day late. Late work receives a 10% deduction of the points attainable per day (including weekends and holidays). Therefore, work more than 10 days late will be worth zero points.

Academic Integrity

The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/current.pdf>. The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others.
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work.
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration.
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions.
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress.
- uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing.

Adherence to these principles is necessary in order to ensure that

- everyone is given proper credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other scholarly accomplishments.

- all student work is fairly evaluated, and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
- the academic and ethical development of all students is fostered.
- the reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching, research, and scholarship is maintained and enhanced.

Failure to uphold these principles of academic integrity threatens both the reputation of the University and the value of the degrees awarded to its students. Every member of the University community therefore bears a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

All work submitted should be your own, unless otherwise explicitly called for. In particular, AI-generated material is not allowed. Submissions from ai-generators like ChatGPT or Google Bard will be considered a violation of the above academic integrity policy. Since a core focus of this course is developing critical thinking skills and practicing the skill of writing a forest management plan and its associated prescriptions, it's important to practice these skills using your own work so that in the future you can be better equipped to evaluate generative AI output and use such tools more effectively.

DEI Statement

I intend for students from all backgrounds, identities, and perspectives to feel respected, included and valued in this course and get the most out of it that they possibly can. I believe that diverse perspectives and experiences are a strength and resource and it is my goal to foster a learning environment that reflects those values. I intend for the materials we encounter and activities we do to respect all aspects of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. I am always learning how to be a more effective teacher and I welcome and encourage your suggestions as we move through the semester. You can submit feedback to me directly in-person or via email, or anonymously via Canvas.

Additional University Resources

Rutgers has numerous resources available to help you get the most out of your time here and provide support. A list of relevant resources is posted on Canvas. And if what you're looking for isn't on that list, please talk to me and I'll do my best to connect you the right support.