

Invasion Ecology of Aquatic Animals

FAS 4932 (3 credits) Spring, 2014

Section 17AG

Course Description

A comprehensive overview of invasion ecology, highlighting aspects related to aquatic animals, including ecological concepts and debates underlying this developing field; biology and life history of nonnative aquatic animals, including characteristics of successful invaders; risk analysis methodology; and the conservation and regulatory implications of nonnative aquatic species.

Instructor

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Office hours: Available by email or phone; office visits available by appointment.

Note that the instructor is located about 2 hrs from main campus and will be most available for discussion in Gainesville before and after class.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, each student will:

- understand the concepts associated with species invasions
- use basic risk assessment methodology
- think critically to evaluate literature and arguments, especially when faced with uncertainty and scientific disagreement
- more effectively communicate orally and in scientific writing
- appreciate for the complex relationship between science, management, and regulation

Course Meeting Times

Tuesday Periods 7-9 (1:55-4:55 pm); MCCA 2196

Required Texts/Readings

There is no required text for the course. Some important texts that I draw heavily upon for the course are listed as “Additional References,” below. Required readings will be provided and will include (among others) the following papers:

Courtenay, Jr., W.R. 1997. Nonindigenous fishes. Pages 109-122 *in* D.S. Simberloff, D.C. Schmitz, and T.C. Brown, editors. *Strangers in Paradise*, Island Press.

Hill, J.E. 2002. Exotic fishes in Florida. *LakeLines*, North American Lake Management Society 22(1):39-43.

Hill, J.E. 2008. Non-native species in aquaculture: terminology, potential impacts, and the invasion process. USDA-Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Publication No. 4303.

Hill, J.E. 2009. Risk analysis for non-native species in aquaculture. USDA-Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Publication No. 4304.

RAM Committee (Risk Assessment and Management Committee). 1996. Generic nonindigenous aquatic organisms risk analysis review process. Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force.

Shafland, P.L. 1996. Exotic fish assessments: an alternative view. *Reviews in Fisheries Science* 4:123-132.

Trexler, J.C., W.F. Loftus, F. Jordan, J.J. Lorenz, J.H. Chick, and R.M. Kobza. 2000. Empirical assessment of fish introductions in a subtropical wetland: an evaluation of contrasting views. *Biological Invasions* 2:265-277.

Zaret, T.M., and R.T. Paine. 1973. Species introduction in a tropical lake. *Science* 182:449-455.

Additional required readings will be provided and announced in class and in the online course site. Supplemental readings will be provided for each lecture topic and by invited speakers.

Class Format, Policies on Attendance and Make-up Exams

The course is a classroom-based, lecture and discussion format. No specific pre-requisites are required but the class is intended for advanced undergraduates. Given the broad scope of the field of invasion ecology, the course will cover diverse topics, each requiring a base of knowledge for the course to build upon. Students should have prior coursework in biology and have an understanding of basic ecological concepts.

Attendance records will not be maintained, but it is the responsibility of the student to maintain satisfactory progress in the course and to make up all work. Late project assignments will be penalized 10% on the first day and 5% on each subsequent day. Missed quizzes cannot be taken after the scheduled date without prior written consent of the instructor except under exceptional circumstances. Cases of serious illness, bereavement, or activities covered under the Twelve-Day Rule will be considered for make-up. Appropriate documentation must be provided in all cases.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Students are expected to turn off all cell phones, messaging devices, or other communications devices during class unless specifically allowed by the instructor.

Assignments

Projects **MUST** be turned into the instructor before class ends on the due date. There will be a penalty for late projects. Make prior arrangements and expect to turn projects in early if there are conflicts with the schedule.

- *Species Synopsis* – Students will choose a non-native aquatic species of relevance to Florida and write a brief species synopsis. The species may be freshwater, estuarine, or marine and must be a non-plant taxon. Species will be chosen in consultation with the course instructor to prevent student overlap. A detailed outline of the project requirements will be provided during class. In brief, students will conduct literature and internet searches to obtain information on the occurrence, life history, ecology, effects, and regulatory status of the species and write a fact sheet summarizing this information and pointing out gaps in knowledge.
- *Risk Assessment* – Students will participate in teams to conduct a risk assessment using the Federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force RAM Committee Generic Analysis method or a risk screen using the Fish Invasiveness Screening Kit (FISK or related FISK-like variant) on a select group from the class species synopses. Teams will present their work and lead a discussion of their risk assessment during class. More detailed instructions will be provided during class.
- *Exams* – There will be two exams (a midterm and final). These will cover all information in lectures, readings, and from invited speakers. Species profiles and risk assessments (except what is covered in lecture) will not be covered on exams.

Evaluation of Student Learning

20% *Species Synopsis*
 25% *Mid-Term exam*
 20% *Risk assessment*
 25% *Final exam*
 10% *Discussion participation*

Grading Scale

A 94-100%; A- 90-93; B+ 86-89; B 83-85; B- 80-82; C+ 76-79; C 73-75; C- 70-72; D+ 66-69; D 63-65; D- 60-62; E <60%

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Schedule of Class Topics

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
1	Jan 7	Introduction/Case Studies	
2	Jan 14	Case Studies	
3	Jan 21	Case Studies/Risk Analysis	Species Choice Due
4	Jan 28	Biogeography/Invasion Process	
5	Feb 4	Invasion Process	
6	Feb 11	Invasion Process	Species Profiles Due
7	Feb 18	AFS Meeting—Guest Speaker	
8	Feb 25	Review/Effects of Invaders	
9	Mar 4	Spring Break—No Class	
10	March 11	Effects of Invaders	Mid-Term Exam
11	March 18	Effects of Invaders	
12	March 25	Risk Assessment	Risk Assessment Presentation
13	April 1	Ecological Theory	
14	April 8	Ecological Theory	
15	April 15	Ecological Theory/Management	
16	April 22	Management/Conservation/Review	
	May 1		Final Exam (1A – 7:30-9:30 am: Note that this is a Thursday)

Additional References

Davis, M.A. 2009. *Invasion Biology*. Oxford University Press.

Elton, C.E. 1958. *The Ecology of Invasions by Animals and Plants*. Revised edition (2000). The University of Chicago Press.

Lockwood, J.L., M.F. Hoopes, and M.P. Marchetti. 2007. *Invasion Ecology*. Blackwell Publishing.

Williamson, M. 1996. *Biological Invasions*. Chapman & Hall.

Online Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Other Information

Honor Pledge

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources

- Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
- Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, www.crc.ufl.edu/

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.