

## TROPICAL FOREST ECOLOGY

Spring 2017

TENTATIVELY Tuesdays Periods 4-5 (10:40-12:35); Thursday Period 5 (11:45-12:35)

**Course credits:** 3

**Instructor:** Stephanie Bohlman  
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School of Forest Resources and Conservation  
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**Office hour:** TBD

### **Course Description:**

This course is designed to allow students to study in-depth the ecology of tropical forests. We will examine foundational concepts regarding tropical forests: including, but not limited to, tropical forest structure, dynamics and diversity, plant-animal interactions and tropical forest biogeochemistry. Additionally, we will focus on understanding ecological issues underlying tropical forest management, conservation and other applied issues. We will survey current frontiers and controversies in the field.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Develop understanding of foundational concepts regarding tropical forest structure, dynamics and diversity.
2. Discuss current and controversial issues in tropical forest ecology
3. Investigate the ecological underpinnings of conservation and management issues in the tropics
4. Allow students to develop a body of ecological knowledge relevant to their own research projects
5. Sharpen skills on reading literature constructively and critically
6. Produce a written a research proposal or report that integrates student research interests with course learning
7. As we will have many students who have worked in the tropics (although this is not a prerequisite), an objective is to share our perspectives and experience in tropical forests

### **Course Format:**

1. Reading and discussion of primary literature (we may also use some textbook chapters), on average 2-2.5 scientific articles per week
2. Mini-lectures on various topics and papers, conducted by the instructor, students and guest speakers
3. Each student will lead a class discussion on a topic of their interest. The student will work with the instructor to pick readings. The student will prepare some general background on the topic and the paper.

4. The course will require a written semester “project”, which is intended to further student’s graduate careers. This can either be a research proposal, section of dissertation/thesis, manuscript or other type of written project. In the first two weeks, we will schedule time to meet with instructor to discuss writing project. Midway through the course you will prepare a literature review related to the project. The final project will be due at the end of the semester.

**Textbook Resources (optional, not required):** Most readings will be primary literature provided at least one week in advance. However, these textbooks might be useful if you want a more comprehensive resources on tropical forest ecology: Tropical Ecology – Kirchner; Tropical Rain Forest Ecology, Diversity, And Conservation - Ghazoul; Tropical Forest Community Ecology – Carson and Schnitzer

**Detailed weekly topics and readings:** TBA

**Website and Electronic Communication:** We use the canvas course management system for this course. Go to “<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>”, click on “e-learning in canvas” and find course listed at the top of the page. I will send frequent communications about readings, assignments and other course activities via the elearning/canvas course website e-mail.

**Grades and Grade Points** Grading follows University standards and will based on the following scale: A (95-100), A- (90-94.99), B+ (87-89.99), B (83-86.99), B- (80-82.99), C+(77-79.99), C (73-76.99), C-(70-72.99), D+(67-69.99), D (63-66.99), D- (60-62.99), E (<60)  
For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

**Academic Honesty:** As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit 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."

**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:** Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, [www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/)

Counseling Services, Groups and Workshops, Outreach and Consultation, Self-Help Library, Training Programs, Community Provider Database

- Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/)

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)