Life Science 3F03  
Applied Ecology Seminars  
Fall 2015

Instructors:  Dr. Patricia Chow-Fraser  (BSB 112)  
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Office Hours:  By appointment only

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Formal Meetings:  15:30-17:20 Wednesday ABB/164  
19:00-22:00 Wednesday ABB/164 or GSB 114A (see schedule)

Required text:  There is no required text. The required statistical software for the course is SAS JMP (for either Mac OS or Windows), available at http://www.onthehub.com/jmp/ for 6- or 12-month licenses (note: consult website for fees). Course notes will be available for download from Avenue for all registered students of the course at the beginning of term.

Course Objective:  Students will apply basic ecological principles to understand pressing issues in ecology and conservation biology. Topics in 2015 will include a study of different monitoring techniques of aquatic species including wetland fish, species at risk (e.g. Blanding’s turtles, eastern flowering dogwood) and invasive species (e.g. common reed, dreissenids, round goby) as well as impact of urbanization on ecosystem health of streams. Students are encouraged to attend field trips specifically organized for them that will take place during the fall term (nominal fees will be charged for travel, accommodation and food while on the field trips). On the field trips, students will have ample opportunity to use field and lab equipment commonly employed to conduct research in field ecology. Students will also learn to use GIS and statistical software to complete assignments and to make group or individual presentations on their results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scheme</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 In-class quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal technical report</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Critique</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take home final exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Note: The above grading scheme may change and this will be notified to students at the beginning of the term. The university also reserves the right to modify elements of the course during the term, including changing the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites (i.e. Avenue) weekly during the term and to note any changes.
**Academic dishonesty**

Students are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to *knowingly act or fail to act* in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with at notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity). The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work—e.g. copying each other's answers in your assignments
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

**Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with McMaster University’s policy on plagiarism!!**

The following are some pitfalls experienced by previous students:

- If you copy any information from the internet, verbatim or paraphrased, and you do not acknowledge the source, then you have plagiarized.
- If you copy a sentence or part of a sentence from a published source, changing only one or two words, and do not acknowledge this appropriately, then you have plagiarized. *This was the most common form of plagiarism encountered in 3F03 during 2013 and 2014.* When using wording from published sources, you must use quotations or indentations, and this should only be done under special circumstances.
- If you work with a classmate and have a similar answer (i.e. sentences or phrases have the identical wording or phrasing), then you have plagiarized.
- If you copy a photograph or a graph from the internet and do not acknowledge the source, you have plagiarized.
- If you are found to have committed plagiarism, you will automatically receive a *grade of zero* for the given assignment, presentation or exam. *There will not be any exceptions to this rule, and this has been the practice we followed in 2013.*

**Details of McMaster’s Policy on missed work, extensions, late penalties and missed exams (MSAF)** can be found at this link: [http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=2208#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=13&navoid=2208#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)

- All assignments are normally submitted to the TA in the assigned Dropbox via Avenue by the due date. *All late submissions of assignments will receive a grade of zero* without a valid MSAF.
- There will be no opportunity to make up any missed tutorial/presentation/discussion/field trip (hereafter will be referred to as "course component").
- Students who have missed a course component may use the online self-reporting tool, the McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)--you should read the policy if you have not done so already using the link provided.
• **NEW in 2015-2016** If the reason is a minor medical reason, lasting **fewer than 3 days** (formerly 5 days) **for a component worth <25%** (formerly 30%), students may report their absence without documentation once per term, using the MSAF. Absences for a longer duration or for other reasons must be reported to the students' Faculty/Program office, with documentation. Please note that accommodations are given at the discretion of the instructor and is not guaranteed!! *Therefore, relief may not necessarily be granted.*

• When using the MSAF, students must report their absence to the Life Sciences Instructional Assistant mailto:ispia@mcmaster.ca **within 2 days** (i.e. **48 hours**) of their absence to learn what relief *may* be granted. It is the students' responsibility to speak with the course Professor as soon as possible to determine accommodations. Accommodations will only be made for students with valid reasons.

**Policy for missing classes and tutorials and due dates in 3F03 with valid MSAF:**

1. **If a student misses class/tutorial and no MSAF is received:** the mark associated with the quiz or in-class assignment will be zero.

2. **If MSAF is received for a quiz that is missed during a class:** the mark associated with the quiz or in-class assignment will be automatically added to the final exam.

   Example: If the mark for the quiz is worth **1 mark** and the final exam is worth **15 marks**, then the final will be marked out of **16 marks**.

3. **If MSAF is received for a component of an assignment (e.g. Table):** the mark associated with that component will be waived and the final assignment will be marked without the component and pro-rated.

   Example: If a student were absent from class when Table 1 (**1 mark**) was due, then Assignment 1, which is worth 10 marks would be marked out of 9 and then prorated to 10.

4. **If MSAF is received within 48 h of the due date of an assignment:** the due date will be extended an additional 2 days (ending at midnight): no other accommodations will be made.

   Example: If an MSAF is received on Thursday for an assignment that was due on Tuesday, then, the deadline would be extended to Saturday midnight.

5. **If MSAF is received after 48 h of the due date of an assignment:** all marks associated with the assignment will be automatically added to the final exam.

   Example: If a student submits MSAF on Saturday for Assignment 1 that was due on Thursday, then the 10 marks for that assignment will be added to the final exam, which will be marked out of **30 marks.**