Course Outline

**Code: ANM100**  
**Title: Animal Ecology Field Course**

**Faculty:** Science, Health, Education and Engineering  
**School:** Science & Engineering  
**Teaching Session:** Semester 1  
**Year:** 2019  
**Course Coordinator:** Dr Andrew Olds  
**Email:** aolds@usc.edu.au  
**Course Moderator:** Dr Kathy Townsend

Please go to the USC website for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. **What is this course about?**
   
1.1 **Description**
   Animal ecologists are passionate, field-orientated scientists, who work in a broad variety of industries across a diverse range of animal groups and ecosystems. This practical and exciting Field Course will introduce you to the discipline of animal ecology and engage you directly in studying animals in some of the unique coastal ecosystems of Australia. You will spend several days in the field where you will be exposed to hot topics in contemporary animal ecology research and use – in a hands-on fashion – multiple techniques to survey animals in marine, coastal, and terrestrial habitats.

1.2 **Course topics**
   In this course you will:
   1. Discover the evolutionary and functional foundations of animal ecology;
   2. Appreciate what makes the scientific study of animal ecology a rewarding and exciting endeavour;
   3. Apply modern techniques for studying animals in the wild in a hands-on fashion;
   4. Learn how to apply field skills to answer fundamental questions about biodiversity and conservation;
   5. Value the importance of high ethical standards that underpin all work done by animal ecologists; and
   6. Engage in field-based research activities that enmesh you with the discipline of animal ecology in a tangible and practical way.

2. **What level is this course?**
   100 level Introductory - Discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Normally associated with the first full-time year of an undergraduate program.

3. **What is the unit value of this course?**
   12 units
4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Tasks</th>
<th>Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On successful completion of this course you should be able to:</td>
<td>You will be assessed on the learning outcome in task/s:</td>
<td>Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate and apply knowledge about: a) the fundamentals of animal ecology as a scientific discipline; b) the questions it asks; c) the evolutionary processes that shape it; and d) the techniques used to study it.</td>
<td>Task 1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Knowledgeable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate effectively and professionally.</td>
<td>Task 1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Empowered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematise and analyse: a) core concepts in animal ecology science; b) the adaptations of animals to their environment, c) biological and ecological levels of organisation, and d) processes that shape the structure of animal communities;</td>
<td>Task 1, 2, 3</td>
<td>Creative and critical thinkers. Sustainability-focussed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the USC Glossary of terms for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1 Enrolment restrictions

The course is restricted to students enrolled in SC320 Bachelor of Animal Ecology, UU301 and XE301

5.2 Pre-requisites

Nil

5.3 Co-requisites

Nil

5.4 Anti-requisites

Nil

5.5 Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Nil

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1 Grading scale

Standard – High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL)

6.2 Details of early feedback on progress

This class includes two formative assessment items that provide early feedback on academic progress, and identify the need for additional support. A formative fieldwork notebook is completed on the field Course and reviewed in in week 4, and a formative practice quiz is conducted in class in week 7.
### 6.3 Assessment tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task No.</th>
<th>Assessment Tasks</th>
<th>Individual or Group</th>
<th>Weighting %</th>
<th>What is the duration / length?</th>
<th>When should I submit?</th>
<th>Where should I submit it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fieldwork Notebook</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Formative - not graded</td>
<td>Using templates provided, record notes and observations on techniques learned during Field Courses</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>During field course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Written quiz during scheduled workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Oral presentation describing the research techniques used to answer a chosen research question – topics will be provided during the Field Courses (10 min plus 5 min discussion/questions).</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Oral presentation during scheduled workshop</td>
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</table>

#### Assessment Task 1: Fieldwork Notebook, 0% (formative – not graded)

**Goal:** Demonstrate an understanding of key research techniques that are used to study animals in their environment and the ability to collect and accurately record ecological data.

**Product:** A structured “fieldwork notebook”.

**Format:** You will individually compile an electronic or hand-written record, based on a template provided, that contains records of data collection, describes methods used, summarizes activities undertaken, sketches the skills obtained, and lists critical technical specifications of equipment/instruments used.

**Criteria:** You will be assessed on your ability to:
1. Organise information logically and securely;
2. Clearly articulate the focus, aims and design of each study conducted;
3. Accurately describe all research techniques used and survey methods conducted; and
4. Comprehensively log data collected.

#### Assessment Task 2: Quiz, 50%

**Goal:** Help you develop an understanding of the key concepts and techniques in animal ecology and support your practice in animal ecology.

**Product:** A written exam.

**Format:** A one (1) hour written exam. The questions will be based on the material covered in workshops and directed readings.

**Criteria:** You will be assessed on your ability to:
1. Correctly identify and outline the key concepts of animal evolution, adaptations, and ecology as presented in the lectures and contained in supporting readings;
2. Demonstrate your knowledge of animal ecology; and
3. Apply knowledge from lectures and readings to solve unseen problems.
Assessment Task 3: Seminar, 50%

Goal: Demonstrate your ability to communicate professionally and accurately the important facts and concepts associated with research activities and techniques in animal ecology.

Product: A presentation (seminar-style or similar) outlining the method and/or techniques used to study animals during the field course.

Format: You will work in a group to deliver a 10-minute presentation to the class on a topic selected from a list provided by the Course Coordinator. This presentation can be in the form of a standard seminar/talk supported by PowerPoint slides, or any other format approved beforehand by the Course Coordinator.

Criteria: You will be assessed on your ability to:
1. Introduce the research question and clearly state the aims and objectives of the work;
2. Describe the survey design;
3. Succinctly summarize the key scientific, methodological, and ethical facets of the field activity undertaken;
4. Accurately synthesise the ecological importance or conservation significance of the project;
5. Communicate your interpretation of the material in a professional manner;
6. Answer questions appropriately in the context of animal ecology and conservation; and
7. Make an active contribution to group work.

7. What are the course activities?

7.1 Directed study hours

The directed study hours listed here are a portion of the workload for this course. A 12 unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Directed study hours may vary by location. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>Directed study hours for location:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USC Sippy Downs</td>
<td>2-hr workshop (Weeks 1-10) 2-hr tutorial (Weeks 4-5) 3-day Intensive Field Course (Week 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>USC Fraser Coast</td>
<td>2-hr workshop (Weeks 1-10) 2-hr tutorial (Weeks 4-5) 3-day Intensive Field Course (Week 4)</td>
</tr>
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7.2 Course content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week # / Module #</th>
<th>What key concepts/content will I learn?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Workshop: Animal ecology, classification and evolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Workshop: Animal biology, diversity adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Workshop: Animal interactions, ecological processes and ecosystem functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Workshop: Introduction to the Field Course, your notebooks and seminars</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorial: Introduction to field ecology seminars (on Field Course)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field Course: Guided training in field research techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Workshop: Hot topics, techniques and ethical considerations in terrestrial animal ecology research</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutorial: Selecting topics and groups for your seminars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Workshop: Hot topics, techniques and ethical considerations in freshwater animal ecology research</td>
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</table>
8. **What resources do I need to undertake this course?**

Please note that course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Blackboard site. Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1 **Prescribed text(s)**

N/A

8.2 **Specific requirements**

You will be required to undertake field studies for one week in the mid-semester break. You will be required to wear covered footwear, hat, long-sleeved shirt and long trousers for field safety. Accommodation and travel costs will be covered. Details of management and costs for food will be set out at the beginning of the semester. Discuss any financial hardship that might be associated with the field studies with the Course Coordinator.

9. **Risk management**

There is minimal health and safety risk in the on-campus component of this course. Risk assessments have been performed for all field activities and low to moderate levels of health and safety risk exists. Moderate risks may include working in an Australian bush setting, working with people, working outside normal office hour for example. It is your responsibility to research and understand the risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online induction training for students. Prior to the field studies you will need to complete a fieldwork induction and adhere to field safety protocols at all times.

10. **What administrative information is relevant to this course?**

10.1 **Assessment: Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.
10.2 **Assessment: Additional requirements**

### Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent on the following conditions applying:

a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%
b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale
c) You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

10.3 **Assessment: Submission penalties**

Late submission of assessment tasks will be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task’s identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- 10% (of the assessment task’s identified value) for the third day
- 20% (of the assessment task’s identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late.

To request an extension, you must contact your Course Coordinator and supply the required documentation to negotiate an outcome.

10.4 **Study help**

In the first instance, you should contact your tutor, then the Course Coordinator. Additional assistance is provided to all students through Academic Skills Advisers. To book an appointment or find a drop-in session go to Student Hub. Contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au

10.5 **Links to relevant University policy and procedures**

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability


10.6 **General Enquiries**

**In person:**

- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC South Bank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890

**Email:** studentcentral@usc.edu.au