

# BIO 262: Introductory Ecology

Fall 2009

**Evan Preisser; Woodward 237, phone: 874-2120, e-mail: preisser@uri.edu**  
Office Hours: M 9-10 am, W 3-4 pm or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:** Christine Newton, 874-5052, cnewton@mail.uri.edu

**Course goals:** “Introductory Ecology” is a one-semester introduction to ecological thought and principles discussing the many factors that influence the distribution and abundance of organisms. We will examine both biotic (living) and abiotic (non-living) elements of the environment that influence the distribution and abundance of organisms. The course covers topics in the areas of individual, population, community, and ecosystem ecology, as well as mankind’s effect on natural systems. This course is designed for anyone interested in ecology, both majors and non-majors.

**Course hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2:00-2:50 pm

**Textbook:** “Ecology: Concepts and Applications” by Manuel Molles (**either** 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> edition)

**Bring lecture notes and figures to class!** These are your responsibility to download & print out from the course’s Sakai site (see next page). This saves you the cost of having to buy a course reader at the bookstore (for significantly more \$\$).

**Course evaluation:** Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Best 2 of 3 exams	60%
Final exam	40%

During the semester, three exams will be administered during the regularly scheduled lecture period. Your lowest grade from these three exams will be dropped. This is to allow for missing an exam due to an illness, a car breakdown, etc. **Due to the size of this class, NO MAKEUP EXAMS CAN BE GIVEN.** The final exam will be comprehensive and thorough. All exams will be closed-EVERYTHING (no book, no notes, no calculators/cell phones, etc).

### Grading Scale

93 - 100 = A; 90 - 92 = A-; 87 - 89 = B+; 83 - 86 = B; 80 - 82 = B-; 77 - 79 = C+;  
73 - 76 = C; 70 - 72 = C-; 67 - 69 = D+; 63 - 66 = D; 60 - 62 = D-; 59 & below = F

**You will need to bring your own #2 pencils to all exams, including the final. If you do not, you will not be able to take the exam.** Erasers might also be helpful ☺

### **Web access:**

This syllabus, lecture notes and some lecture figures, and exam answer keys will be available for downloading on URI’s server. Please check it frequently for course updates. I do NOT post my lectures online; if you miss class please copy a classmate’s lecture notes. **If you cannot log on to it, call 874-HELP (don’t call me, as I can’t help log you on!)**

### Course Policies

**Attendance:** Attendance at all lectures is crucial to succeed in this course. The material covered in lecture will not overlap completely with the reading assignments, and the lecture notes do not cover everything discussed in class. University policy states that medical illnesses, emergencies, observance of religious holidays, or participation in university-sanctioned athletics or events are the only valid excuses for missing classes and deadlines. Any missed work is the student's responsibility.

**Illness Due to Flu:** The H1N1 flu pandemic may impact classes this semester. If any of us develop flu-like symptoms, we are being advised to stay home until the fever has subsided for 24 hours. So, if you exhibit such symptoms, please do not come to class. Notify me at 874-2120 or [preisser@uri.edu](mailto:preisser@uri.edu) of your status, and we will work together to ensure that course instruction and work is completed for the semester. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have posted simple methods to avoid transmission of illness. These include: covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; frequently washing your hands to protect from germs; avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth; and staying home when you are sick. For more information, please view [www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm). URI information on H1N1 will be posted on the URI website at [www.uri.edu/news/h1n1](http://www.uri.edu/news/h1n1), with links to the [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) site.

**Integrity:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. According to the URI policy, "Students are expected to be honest in all academic work.... Instructors have the explicit duty to take action in cases of cheating or plagiarism."

**Respect:** This is a large lecture course. Because of this, it is *especially* important that all students treat each other (and the instructor) with respect and do not disrupt the learning process. Failure to fulfill this requirement may lead to a lowered or failing grade, regardless of exam scores. Come to class on time; important announcements will be given at the start of lecture.

**Snow days, etc:** If classes are *officially* cancelled on the day of an exam, **the exam will be rescheduled automatically for the next class meeting**. Check the course's Sakai site for other updates in the case of snow days or other unexpected events.

**Special needs:** Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me early in the semester so that we may work out reasonable accommodations to support your success in this course. Students should also contact Disability Services for Students, Office of Student Life, 330 Memorial Union, 874-2098.

**Tutoring:** Success in this course requires that you keep up with the class work and study the course materials effectively. The Academic Enhancement Center ([www.uri.edu/aec](http://www.uri.edu/aec)) can help. Their friendly staff of learning specialists and student tutors can help you find an approach to studying that suits your needs and schedule, develop effective study strategies, understand course concepts, and practice productively. The center is also a great place to go and study on your own, with space available for individuals or groups. They are open Monday through Thursday until 9pm, Fridays until 1 pm, and Sundays between 4 and 8 pm. All services are free (the coffee is free as well). You can call them for complete information at 874-2367, or just stop by the center on the fourth floor of Roosevelt Hall.

## Class Schedule

Date	Class #	Unit	Topic	Chapters in Molles 4th ed. (5 <sup>th</sup> ed.)
Week of 9/7	1,2	intro	Introduction to Ecology; Natural Selection	1,8 <b>(1,4)</b>
Week of 9/14	3,4,5	Individual Ecology	Variation, Natural Selection, and Evolution; Kin and Group Selection; Predator Avoidance	7,8 <b>(4,8)</b>
Week of 9/21	6,7,8		Physical Environment: Temperature and Water	4,5 <b>(5,6)</b>
Week of 9/28	9,10		Physical Environment: Energy	6 <b>(7)</b>
Friday, 10/2	11	Exam #1		
Week of 10/5	12,13,14	Population Ecology	Mating	7 <b>(8)</b>
Week of 10/12	15,16,17		Rarity, Spacing, Territoriality; Population Structure & Dynamics	6,9,10 <b>(7,9,10)</b>
Week of 10/19	18,19,20		Population Growth, Life History Strategies	11,12 <b>(11,12)</b>
Week of 10/26	21,22		Life History Strategies	12 <b>(12)</b>
Friday, 10/30	23	Exam #2		
Week of 11/2	24,25,26	Community Ecology	Competition, Resource Partitioning	13 <b>(13)</b>
Week of 11/9 (no class on 11/11)	27,28		Predation, Mutualisms	14,15 <b>(14,15)</b>
Week of 11/16	29,30		Food Webs, Species Abundance & Diversity	16,17 <b>(16,17)</b>
Friday, 11/20	31	Exam #3		
Week of 11/23 (no class on 11/27)	32,33	Ecosystem Ecology	Primary Production, Nutrient Cycling	18,19 <b>(18,19)</b>
Week of 12/1	34,35,36		Succession; Terrestrial & Aquatic Biomes	20,2,3 <b>(20,2,3)</b>
Monday, 12/8	37,38,39		Island Biogeography, Human Impacts, Hotspots of Species Diversity	22,23 <b>(22,23)</b>
Final Exam: Saturday December 19, 3-6 pm. Exam is in our regular classroom.				