Geography 418/618 and Biology 418/618  BIOGEOGRAPHY

Autumn 2016
Lecture section (no lab) 3 credits

Time/Place: 1-2 PM Murie Building room 103

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Mann, Department of Geosciences, UAF
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Office Hours: immediately after lecture or by appointment

Course Description
Biogeography is the geography of life. Hence it is a broad topic with relevance to many other disciplines. In this class, I emphasize the biogeography of polar and alpine regions. We pay special attention to the effects of climate change on biogeography. Undergraduate and graduate sections are taught concurrently. Geography/Biology 618 requires extra readings and expanded writing assignments.

Course Prerequisites: BIOL 271 Ecology, GEOG 339 Mapping and Landscape Analysis, GEOS 401 Geomorphology, or instructor’s permission.

Course Objectives: This is a capstone course for upper division Geography, Geology, and Life Sciences undergraduates and graduate students. In addition to gaining a foundation in biogeography, students will gain extensive experience synthesizing, integrating, and then writing about what they learn in lecture and read in the literature. This is a writing-intensive class that emphasizes critical thinking and creative question-asking. Throughout this course, I stress the influences human ecology has on the biogeography of other species. Lectures emphasize aspects of biogeography most pertinent to Alaska. The assigned readings from recent scientific literature contribute to a geographically broader perspective.

Instructional / Teaching Methods: This course relies on students keeping up with assigned readings. There are usually 3-5 guest lecturers over the course of the
semester. Undergraduate students are required to write a weekly essay that synthesizes the previous week’s lectures and readings. Graduate students write a longer and more incisive version of this synthesis essay every week. There is a 1-day field trip required of all students.

**Learning Methods / Student Assignments:** Lectures and readings provide a sound background in biogeographic processes and patterns. Readings consist of two journal articles every week for undergraduates and 4-5 articles weekly for graduate students. Active participation in class discussions is required.

**Required Text:** There is no textbook; all readings are from the scientific literature. Readings are posted in the class DROPBOX account.

**Weekly Essays:** Because this is a capstone class, it is writing-intensive. Essays are due every Monday at the beginning of class. These essays (1+ pages for undergraduates and 2+ for graduate students) describe, integrate, and expand upon what each student learned that week from the previous week’s lectures and the readings.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, EXAMINATIONS, AND TERM PAPER**
See detailed lecture schedule and reading assignments posted in the class DROPBOX.

**Assignments and Grading:**
Midterm Exam: 30%
Final Exam: 30%
Class Participation (attendance + discussion): 10%
Weekly essays: 30%

**Attendance:** attendance in lectures is mandatory, as it is on the field trip.

**Course grades** will be assigned as indicated at the table below. Course %’s are for this course only and may vary with different instructors. Grade point values are indicated on the table as well. Please see “Academics and Regulations” section of UAF 2007-2008 Catalogue.

grade % GP
A+ 100-97 4.0
A 96-92 4.0
A- 91-90 3.7
B+ 89-87 3.3
B 86-82 3.0
B- 81-80 2.7
C+ 79-77 2.3
C 76-72 2.0
C- 71-70 1.7
D+ 69-67 1.3
D 66-62 1.0
D- 61-60 0.7

**Course Grading Scale:** All grades are determined on an absolute score (with no curve) according to the following scale:
A = 90-100 percent: outstanding work, mastery of topic
B = 80-89 percent: above average work, all assignments completed well
C = 70-79 percent: average, all or most assignments completed, most work satisfactory
D = 60-69 percent: pass, unsatisfactory or missing work
F = less than 60 percent: failure to meet requirements of course

**Support and Disabilities Services:** The UAF Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. The course instructors will work with the Office of Disabilities Services to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. Please notify the instructor of any special needs.

**Plagiarism/Academic Integrity:** University Standards and Policies apply (see UAF Catalog).

**Extra Credit:** Extra credit is not an option in this course except under very unusual circumstances.

**Information on Exams and Assignments:** Examination format will include a mixture of multiple choice, short answer / diagram / map, and essay.