CRN: 75718, 26-Aug to 14-Dec 2019 (offered Fall of Odd Years)
Department of Veterinary Medicine (Dr. O’Hara Academic Home)

WLF F305, Wildlife Diseases, T & R (14:00-15:30 in Murie 103)

Course listed with Department of Biology and Wildlife

Syllabus & Course Objectives

1. Course information:
Wildlife Diseases (WLF 305, 3 credits) will meet (in person) in Murie 103.
Prerequisites: Biol 310 or Biol 115 and 116 or permission of instructor. Fall of odd years.

2. Instructor information:
Dr. Todd O’Hara, AHRB 145, tmohara@alaska.edu; Office Hours TBD, 474-1838

3. Course readings/materials:
Supplies: None
Website for USGS texts (recommended, free downloads)
Field Manual of Wildlife Disease
Helpful website - http://www.wildlifeinformation.org

4. Course description:
This course builds on the strong wildlife interests of students, and animals in general, who are
eager to learn about the diseases that affect vertebrates as individual organisms and populations.
Thus, this course fits with those interested in veterinary medicine, conservation, wildlife biology
and natural resources management careers. The course is not outright required for any particular
degree but will help students applying for veterinary medical school (obtain an upper level
biomedical course) and allow those working on wildlife to have better understanding about the
impact of disease agents on animals and humans. For some students, used to meet some degree
requirements.

Catalog description WLF F305 Wildlife Diseases 3 Credits
Basic concepts of parasitic, infectious, environmental and nutritional diseases. Specific study of
Alaska wildlife diseases. Special fees apply. Prerequisites: BIOL F310 (3+0) or BIOL F115X and
BIOL F116X or equivalent; or permission of instructor.

Approach
The course starts out with a lecture series introducing the mechanisms of disease. This is followed
by lectures on common diseases of mammals and birds using a structure based on disease causing
agents (etiology). Using a variety of diseases occurring in wildlife we will discuss the cause, species
affected, occurrence, ecology, clinical disease, pathology, differential diagnoses, specimens for
diagnosis, and the significance to the animal population. It is impossible to discuss all causes of
disease but our review of certain disease causing agents will emphasize the importance of proper
diagnostics and how the “biologist” can facilitate this. The focus is on mammals with some time
spent on avian and fish species.
**What the course cannot do**

A single semester course in *wildlife diseases* cannot impart diagnostic skills or research capacity to address wildlife diseases for an individual. Work that requires diagnostics or research tools must involve trained diagnosticians/researchers. For diagnostics, usually veterinary pathologists with wildlife experience and consultation from experienced wildlife biologists is needed. This by no means limits wildlife disease work to individuals with diagnostic training. Wildlife diagnostics is only one part of wildlife disease work and may or may not be necessary in all research projects. In fact, the best wildlife disease work is generally done by teams that include wildlife biologists, population biologists, ecologists, pathologists, toxicologists, microbiologists, parasitologists, etc.

5. **Course Goals (general), and (see #6)**

The objective of this course is to introduce the natural resources management, fisheries (e.g., marine mammals), wildlife biology and/or biology (e.g., pre-health professional) student to disease processes at the individual animal and population levels. This course is intended to impart a basic understanding of disease processes and a basic knowledge of some common disease entities with a focus on the Arctic and sub-arctic regions (marine and terrestrial). Effects on populations and diseases of human health significance are addressed as well. There are numerous taxa to consider and in this course the bias is towards mammals, with some avian and fish subjects covered.

6. **Student Learning Outcomes (more specific)**

*Mechanisms of disease* – Students will demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of the basic host defenses and responses related to the disease outcome. Disease is a manifestation of the host response more than a result of the agent initiating the process.

*Agents of disease* – Students will be required to show they know that there are many classes of these agents and recognize how they can adversely impact wildlife. Some agents are very species specific while others can adversely affect numerous host species; including humans.

*Ecology of disease* – One key to this course is for the student to demonstrate how environment, animal host and disease agent interact as determinants of pathological responses.

7. **Instructional methods:**

The teaching techniques emphasize lectures, case studies (published manuscripts provided), discussion (manuscripts, current events), private instruction (upon request; usually involves aspects of advising, honors projects, etc.), and review of exams with open discussion.
8. **Schedule** See end of document

9. **Course policies**

   **Attendance/tardiness:**
   Attendance is vital to the grade. Much, if not all, of the exam information will be based on information from lectures, notes, discussion, etc. during class. “Notes” from lectures must be obtained from another student when absence is unavoidable. Attendance is recorded occasionally to maintain an idea of who is actually attending. Repeated tardiness will be noted. Out of respect for the instructor and classmates please be on time – disruptive tardiness is not appreciated.

   **Making up an Exam**
   An exam may be taken ahead of schedule if a suitable time can be agreed upon if there is a good reason. Exams can be made up after the scheduled date but this is at the discretion of the instructor (i.e., it is not guaranteed) and a **very good reason** for missing the exam must be **documented**. The instructor often requests input from the Biology and Wildlife Department Chair on how to best handle these situations. The make-up exam, or the early exam, will not be the same exam given to the other students. **There will only be one make-up exam offered.** Students who miss more than one exam will have difficulty passing the course. This does not apply to students involved with university-sanctioned events (e.g., athletes, scientific conferences) that this faculty member fully supports.

   **Plagiarism**
   Simply will not be tolerated in any form. When in doubt cite and quote your sources. If you do not know what this refers to please meet with Dr. O’Hara or ask for explanation in class.

   **Academic integrity**
   Examinations are to be performed by the individual and any attempts to gain assistance or knowingly provide assistance during an examination will be punished according to University policy towards “cheating.” Those taking early or make up exams are to not request assistance with the exams nor provide it. The exams should not be discussed until ALL members of the class have taken a specific exam.

10. **Evaluation:** *Wildlife Disease – WLF 305 - Grades*

    1st Examination: 100 points
    2nd Examination: 100 points
    Final (not cumulative): 100 points
    Total Points = 300

    Letter grades: no +/- grades given.
    A = 89.5-100%, B = 79.5-89.5%, C = 69.5-79.5%, D = 59.5-69.5%, F <59.5%

    [% are rounded up to the highest 0.X%].

11. **Support Services:**

    Every qualified student is welcome in my classroom. As needed, I am happy to work with you, disability services, veterans' services, rural student services, etc. to find reasonable accommodations. Students at this university are protected against sexual harassment and discrimination (Title IX), and minors have additional protections. As required, if I notice or am informed of certain types of misconduct, then I am **required to report** it to the appropriate
authorities. For more information on your rights as a student and the resources available to you to resolve problems, please go the following site: www.uaf.edu/handbook/.

The instructor is available to assist as noted above. On request, the instructor can provide other contacts on campus or off campus to pursue any interests or special needs identified.

Student Support Services are available at UAF: http://www.uaf.edu/sssp. These services include free tutorial services; academic advising, mentoring, and personal support; direct financial assistance to qualified low-income participants; use of laptop computers, labs, and other technology resources; and cultural and social engagement.

12. Disabilities Services: http://www.uaf.edu/disability/  The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and ensures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. The instructor will work with the Office of Disabilities Services to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. Please make the Instructor aware of any disabilities that may affect access or performance.

13. Title IX Protection
University of Alaska Board of Regents have clearly stated in BOR Policy that discrimination, harassment and violence will not be tolerated on any campus of the University of Alaska. If you believe you are experiencing discrimination or any form of harassment including sexual harassment/misconduct/assault, you are encouraged to report that behavior. If you report to a faculty member or any university employee, they must notify the UAF Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident.

Your choices for reporting include:
1) You may access confidential counseling by contacting the UAF Health & Counseling Center at 474-7043
2) You may access support and file a Title IX report by contacting the UAF Title IX Coordinator at 474-6600
3) You may file a criminal complaint by contacting the University Police Department at 474-7721.
## Course calendar: WILDLIFE DISEASES - WLF 305
**LECTURE SERIES, Murie 103 (Tu, Th)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic for Lecture</th>
<th>B&amp;B/ USGS Field Manual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Aug 27 &amp; 29</td>
<td><strong>Wildlife Disease</strong>: Intro, agents &amp; hosts. Email Sheele et al. 2019 paper</td>
<td>Preface/Chapter 1&amp;2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Sept 3 and 5</td>
<td><strong>Mechanisms of Disease</strong>: Host immune system and responses; &amp; diagnostics</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><em>Discuss Sheele et al.</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Sept 10 &amp; 12</td>
<td><strong>Diagnosing Disease &amp; Causative Agents</strong>: Mechanistic understanding Dx and some assays! Many immune based.</td>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Sept 17 &amp; 19</td>
<td><strong>Diagnosing Disease &amp; Causative Agents</strong>: con’d</td>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Exam 1 9</td>
<td>Sept 24 &amp; 26</td>
<td>Exam 1 Lectures 1-8 Sept 24 <strong>Diseases</strong>: Transmission/Reservoirs. Introduction to viruses.</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Ch. 8, 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>Oct 1 and 3</td>
<td><strong>Diseases</strong>: viruses con’d Rabies, morbilliviruses, etc.</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>Oct 8 &amp; 10</td>
<td><strong>Diseases</strong>: viruses con’d</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Ch. 11, Handouts</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>Oct 15 &amp; 17</td>
<td><strong>TSEs, CWD–prion</strong>. Lecture TSEs. [Current events &amp; discussion.](p. 358-362)</td>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>Oct 22 &amp; 24</td>
<td><strong>Non-infectious diseases</strong>: trauma, toxicants, malnutrition, etc.</td>
<td>ppt and presentation</td>
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<td>Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) use and rabies, <strong>One Health</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Exam 18</td>
<td>Oct 29 &amp; 31</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2</strong> (virus, prions, non-infectious)</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>Dz: Nematodes, Acanthocephala (18)</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>Nov 5 and 7</td>
<td><strong>Diseases</strong>: 18 con’d, Flatworms (19)</td>
<td>Chapter 4 &amp; 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>Nov 12 &amp; 14</td>
<td><strong>Diseases</strong>: Protista (20-21)</td>
<td>Chapters 5 &amp; 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Nov 19 &amp; 21</td>
<td><strong>Diseases</strong>: Ticks, mites, mosquitoes, flies (22); <strong>Bacterial diseases.</strong></td>
<td>Chapter 3 p. 33-35</td>
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<td>Handouts; Chapter 9</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>24-25</td>
<td>Nov 26 Thanksgiving</td>
<td>Emerging Dz, <strong>Transmissible neoplasia</strong></td>
<td>Chapter, handouts</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Dec 3 and 5</td>
<td>Emerging Dz, <strong>Transmissible neoplasia</strong> Hourly Exam (3rd exam)</td>
<td>Chapter, handouts Exam 3 on 5th</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>Final</strong></td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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*TSEs, CWD−prion. TSE = transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, CWD = chronic wasting disease.

*Reviews – designed to enhance comprehension and are both instructor and student driven. Use the upcoming test as motivation for discussion. This time also allows for any unexpected class cancellations (e.g., snow/ice).