

Virginia Commonwealth University
Ecology
Biology 317, Section 001 – Summer 2016

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Lecture: M/W 6:00-8:40PM

Office: Trani Life Sciences 234
Office Hours: by appointment
Class Location: Trani 150

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: BIOL 151, 152 and BIOZ 151, 152, and UNIV 200 or HONR 200, with minimum grades of C. An introduction to the basic principles of ecology, including interactions among organisms and influences of the physical environment.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Title: Ecology: concepts and applications [6th or 7th edition]
Author: M.C. Molles
Publisher: McGraw-Hill: NY.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To develop an understanding of basic ecological principles.
2. To develop an appreciation of the complexity, diversity and structure of ecological systems.
3. To apply our growing knowledge of ecology to situations in everyday life.
4. To recognize man as a part of all ecosystems -- and to explore how man impacts "nature" and how "nature" impacts man.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Chapter Readings:** I encourage you to at least skim (preferably read ahead) the readings prior to attending class. Reading the chapters before class will enable you to better understand the material that is being discussed in class.
2. **Class Attendance:** I will not be taking attendance for this class. If you must miss, you will need to get the notes from one of your colleagues. With few exceptions that involve online lectures, I will not post powerpoint presentations, so coming to class is essential.
3. **Quizzes** – At the end of each week, I will give a quiz on Blackboard for the pervious material covered. These quizzes may be cumulative as this course material builds on itself. You must complete the quiz by the due date and I will not give extensions on quizzes. Your quiz average will be doubled and worth 200 points of your final 600 points
4. **Examinations:** There will be a total of three examinations. The first two exams will cover the chapters covered up to the date of the test. The final is cumulativePoints will be distributed as the following:

Quiz Average -	200 points
Exam 1 -	100 points
Exam 2 -	100 points
Final Exam -	200 points
Total	600 points

GRADING:

- A 90-100**
- B 80-89**
- C 70-79**
- D 60-69**
- F 59 and below**

CLASS POLICIES:

1. **Test Days:** Unless there is an excellent reason, any student arriving late (*after the first student has turned in his or her test*) may be turned away with a grade of "zero."

Absences from a test or exam: An unexcused absence from a test/exam will be recorded as a "zero." Please be prepared to present valid documentation (physician's note, obituary, etc.) for make-up tests. Make-up test formats will be left to my discretion (and may include an oral exam).

2. **Communication:** My preferred method of communication with students (other than in person) is via email. Having said this, I will respond to emails as quickly as my schedule allows. Therefore, you should not delay in writing an email to me that may be time-sensitive. Further, each student should identify himself or herself in the email and in which class they are enrolled. Failure to do so may delay your response or result in an unanswered email. If you choose to call, I am only guaranteed (unless otherwise specified) to be in my office during the posted office hours, however if I am in my office, feel free to stop in.

Test Dates

EXAM	DATES
Exam #1	Wednesday, June 29th
Exam #2	Monday, July 18th
Final Exam	Wednesday, August 3rd

Tentative Chapters To Be Covered
TOPIC

CHAPTERS
Molles

I. Introduction

A. The "e" words

1

B. Natural history

2,3

II. Individuals

A. Temperature relations

5

B. Water relations

6

C. Energy and nutrient relations

7

III. Populations

A. Selection

4,8

B. Distribution and abundance

9

C. Dynamics

10

D. Growth

11

E. Life histories

12

IV. Biotic interactions

A. Competition	13
B. Exploitation	14
C. Mutualism	15

V. Community and ecosystem processes

A. Biodiversity	16
B. Food webs	17
C. Production and E ^o -flow	18
D. Nutrient cycling	19

VI. Integrated processes

A. Succession	20
B. Landscape ecology	21
C. Biogeography	22
D. Global ecology	23

Classroom Conduct & Computer Use Policy:

Any behavior which is distracting or disruptive to fellow students or to me will not be tolerated – you will be asked to leave. If you bring a computer to lecture or lab, it must be used solely for that class. In lecture, anyone using a computer must sit up front in the front row. If you are caught doing something other than class work, you will lose your privilege to bring a computer to class for the rest of the semester.

Statements for Syllabi and Blackboard Pages

This content was last updated in January 2016. Please reference <http://provost.vcu.edu/faculty-resources/academic-affairs/syllabus-statements/> for the online version.

The topics include:

- Class registration required for attendance**
- Honor System: uploading academic integrity**
- Important dates**
- Mandatory short-term training or deployment**
- Student conduct in the classroom**
- Student email policy**
- Student financial responsibility**
- Students representing the university – excused absences**
- Student with disabilities**
- VCU Mobile**
- Withdraw from classes**

Campus emergency information

What to know and do to be prepared for emergencies at VCU:

- Sign up to receive [VCU text messaging alerts](#). Keep your information up-to-date. Within the classroom, the professor will keep his or her phone on to receive any emergency transmissions.
- Know the safe evacuation route from each of your classrooms. Emergency evacuation routes are posted in on-campus classrooms.

- Listen for and follow instructions from VCU or other designated authorities. Within the classroom, follow your professor's instructions.
- Know where to go for [additional emergency information](#).
- Know the emergency phone number for the VCU Police (828-1234).
- Report suspicious activities and objects.
- Keep your permanent address and emergency contact information current in eServices.

CLASS REGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR ATTENDANCE

Students may attend only those classes for which they have registered. Faculty may not add students to class rosters or Blackboard. Therefore, if students are attending a class for which they have not registered, they must stop attending.

HONOR SYSTEM: UPHOLDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The VCU Honor System policy describes the responsibilities of students, faculty and administration in upholding academic integrity, while at the same time respecting the rights of individuals to the due process offered by administrative hearings and appeals. According to this policy, "Members of the academic community are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity." In addition, "All members of the VCU community are presumed to have an understanding of the VCU Honor System and are required to:

- Agree to be bound by the Honor System policy and its procedures;
- Report suspicion or knowledge of possible violations of the Honor System;
- Support an environment that reflects a commitment to academic integrity;
- Answer truthfully when called upon to do so regarding Honor System cases;
- Maintain confidentiality regarding specific information in Honor System cases."

More information can be found at in the [VCU policy library](#) under the Education and Student Life tab.

IMPORTANT DATES

You can view important dates for the semester in the [academic calendar](#).

Mandatory responsibility of faculty members to report incidents of sexual misconduct

It is important for students to know that all faculty members are mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual misconduct/violence (e.g., sexual assault, sexual exploitation and partner or relationship violence). This means that faculty cannot keep information about sexual misconduct/violence confidential if you share that information with them and they must report this information immediately to the university's Title IX Coordinator. In addition, department chairs, deans, and other unit administrators are required to report incidents of sex or gender-based discrimination to the university's Title IX Coordinator.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING SOURCES INCLUDE STAFF IN SEXUAL ASSAULT AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AT THE WELLNESS RESOURCE CENTER, UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES. THE POLICY ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/VIOLENCE AND SEX/GENDER DISCRIMINATION - INTERIM, CAN BE FOUND IN THE [VCU POLICY LIBRARY](#).

MILITARY SHORT-TERM TRAINING OR DEPLOYMENT

If military students receive orders for short-term training or for deployment/mobilization, they should inform and present their orders to Military Student Services and to their professor(s). For further information

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on policies and procedures contact Military Student Services at 828-5993 or access the corresponding policies.

STUDENT CONDUCT IN THE CLASSROOM

According to the [Faculty Guide to Student Conduct in Instructional Settings](#), "The university is a community of learners. Students, as well as faculty, have a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment that supports effective instruction. In order for faculty members (including graduate teaching assistants) to provide and students to receive effective instruction in classrooms, laboratories, studios, online courses, and other learning areas, the university expects students to conduct themselves in an orderly and cooperative manner." Among other things, cell phones should be turned off while in the classroom. The Student Code of Conduct also prohibits the possession of or carrying of any weapon. For more information see <http://register.dls.virginia.gov/details.aspx?id=3436>.

STUDENT EMAIL POLICY

Email is considered an official method for communication at VCU because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost-effective, and environmentally aware manner. Students are expected to check their official VCU email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of university-related communications. The university recommends checking email daily. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, university-related communications sent to their official VCU student email account. This policy ensures that all students have access to this important form of communication. It ensures students can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of the university as needed. Mail sent to the VCU email address may include notification of university-related actions, including disciplinary action. Please read the policy in its entirety at the [VCU Policy Library](#) under the Education and Student Life tab.

STUDENT FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students assume the responsibility of full payment of tuition and fees generated from their registration and all charges for housing and dining services, and other applicable miscellaneous charges. Students are ultimately responsible for any unpaid balance on their account as a result of the University Financial Aid Office or their third party sponsor canceling or reducing their award(s).

STUDENTS REPRESENTING THE UNIVERSITY – EXCUSED ABSENCES

Students who represent the university (athletes and others) do not choose their schedules. Student athletes are required to attend games and/or meets. All student athletes should provide their schedules to their instructors at the beginning of the semester. The Intercollegiate Athletic Council strongly encourages faculty to treat missed classes or exams (because of a scheduling conflict) as excused absences and urges faculty to work with the students to make up the work or exam.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, require that VCU provide "academic adjustments" or "reasonable accommodations" to any student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. To receive accommodations, students must register with the Disability Support Services Office on the Monroe Park Campus (828-2253) or the Division for Academic Success on the MCV campus (828-9782). Please also visit the [Disability Support Services website](#) and/or the [Division for Academic Success website](#) for additional information.

Once students have completed the DSS registration process, they should schedule a meeting with their instructor (s) and provide their instructor (s) with an official DSS accommodation letter. Accommodation letters will outline the required classroom accommodations. Additionally, if coursework requires the student to work in a lab environment, the student should advise the instructor or a department chairperson of any concerns that the student may have regarding safety issues related to a disability. Students should follow this procedure for all courses in the academic semester.

VCU MOBILE

The VCU Mobile application is a valuable tool to get the latest VCU information on the go. The application contains helpful information including the VCU directory, events, course schedules, campus maps, athletics

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and general VCU news, emergency information, library resources, Blackboard and more. To download the application on your smart phone or for more information, please visit <http://m.vcu.edu>.

WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASSES

Before withdrawing from classes, students should consult their instructor as well as other appropriate university offices. Withdrawing from classes may negatively impact a student's financial aid award and his or her semester charges. To discuss financial aid and the student bill, visit the [Student Services Center](#) at 1015 Floyd Avenue (Harris Hall) and/or contact your financial aid counselor regarding the impact on your financial aid.