

## BIO2483A Course Outline

### 1. Course Information

Ecology, BIO 2483A, Fall 2025 term.

Tutorials: There will be three tutorial sessions for each student. Specific time slots & room numbers & TAs have been assigned, and this information will be available on the course OWL site.

#### List of Prerequisites

A minimum grade of 60% in either Biology 1001A or 1201A and a minimum grade of 60% in either Biology 1002B or 1202B, or Integrated Science 1001X.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from the Department of Biology to enroll in it, you may be removed and withdrawn from this course in accordance with university policy. This may be done after the add/drop deadline of the academic term, and the course will be marked as withdrawn (WDN) on your academic record. This decision may not be appealed.

### 2. Instructor Information

Dr. Hugh Henry, [hhenry4@uwo.ca](mailto:hhenry4@uwo.ca), (course coordinator)

Dr. Graeme Taylor, [gtaylor8@uwo.ca](mailto:gtaylor8@uwo.ca),

Office hours: Thursdays 12:30-1:20 via Zoom. Meeting hosted by that day's lecturer.

**In many cases, questions regarding the course content can be answered by consulting the textbook. Likewise, questions regarding administrative aspects of the course typically can be answered by consulting the course outline. If you still have questions after consulting these resources, you can attend the office hours or email the instructors directly.**

Students must use their Western ([@uwo.ca](mailto:@uwo.ca)) email addresses when contacting their instructors.

### 3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

Learning objectives: In addition to covering fundamental concepts about how life on Earth interacts with the environment, this course provides the foundation for 3000- and 4000-level courses in ecology and conservation biology. By the end of the course, students will be able to describe and explain the ecological mechanisms and interactions that determine the distribution and abundance of organisms in the environment at the population, community, and ecosystem levels. Students will also be able to explain ecological concepts within an evolutionary context.

#### Lecture schedule:

Unit #	Dates	Textbook chapters	Chapter titles	Instructor
1	Sept. 4 - 11	1, 4, 5	The web of life Coping with environmental variation – temperature and water Coping with environmental variation – energy	Henry
2	Sept. 16 - 23	6 - 8	Evolutionary ecology Life history Behavioural ecology	Taylor
3	Sept. 25 – Oct. 7 (Truth and Reconciliation Day Sept. 30)	9 - 11	Population distribution and abundance Population dynamics Populations – growth and regulation	Henry
4	Oct. 9 - 23	12 - 15	Predation Parasitism Competition Mutualism and commensalism	Taylor
5	Oct. 28 – Nov 13 (reading break Nov. 3 -7)	16 - 19	The nature of communities Change in communities Biogeography Species diversity in communities	Henry
6	Nov. 18 - 25	20 - 22	Production Energy flow and food webs Nutrient supply and cycling	Henry
7	Nov. 27 – Dec. 9	23 - 25	Conservation biology Landscape ecology and ecosystem management Global ecology	Taylor

## Tutorial schedule:

Unit #	Approx. Dates	Program	Tutorial Lab	Instructor
1	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10	SimBio	Darwinian Snails	TA
2	Oct. 22 – Oct. 31	SimBio	Isle Royal	TA
3	Nov. 12 – Nov. 19 (reading break Nov. 3 -7)	SimBio	Keystone Predator	TA

Video recording or photographing lectures is not permitted. If you have academic accommodation to make audio recordings of the lectures, you must first seek permission from the instructors. Recording lectures without the instructor's knowledge or consent is against Canadian law, and violators will be reported to the Dean.

Course materials (lecture slides, other materials posted on OWL, exams, etc.) are the intellectual property of the instructors and are made available to you for your personal use in this course. Sharing, re-posting, or using this material outside of your personal use in this course is considered an infringement of intellectual property rights and will be reported to the Dean.

## 4. Course Materials

**Required Textbook:** Bowman and Hacker, Ecology, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. The textbook will be an important resource for students. The 5<sup>th</sup> edition is also acceptable. Paper or electronic copies of the textbook can be purchased from the Western bookstore via this link:

[https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2025A&courses%5B0%5D=001\\_UW/BIO2483A](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2025A&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/BIO2483A)

**SimBio Software:** This software will be used in each of the tutorials. You may either i) purchase a SimBio voucher from The Book Store at Western ([https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2025A&courses%5B0%5D=001\\_UW/BIO2483A](https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=UWO&term=W2025A&courses%5B0%5D=001_UW/BIO2483A)) and use the code to access the software, or ii) purchase the software directly from SimBio. Instructions for setting up the software will be posted on the OWL site under the tutorial info tab.

**OWL website:** Items posted to this website will include lecture materials, tutorial schedule and TA contact information, a question/answer forum, announcements, and exam information. Students who need

assistance with the course OWL site can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661 3800 or ext. 83800.

All course material will be posted to OWL: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## 5. Methods of Evaluation

### Grading Scheme and Assessment Dates

Value	Item	Date (s)
35%	Midterm exam	
20%	Three Tutorial quizzes (1/3 of 20% each)	Run each tutorial session
45%	Final exam Students must pass the final exam to pass the course	December exam period; Time and Locations TBA **It is a cumulative exam – all material covered including tutorials**

**Exams and course grades:** No electronic devices may be in your possession during exams. The midterm will be multiple choice and the final exam will be a combination of multiple choice and short-answer questions. Students **must pass the final exam to pass the course** (i.e., final exam grade  $\geq 50\%$ ). A student who fails the final exam will receive the lower of 49% or their earned course grade. Course grades will be calculated to one decimal place and will be rounded to the nearest whole number (e.g., 81.4 will be rounded to 81 and 81.5 will be rounded to 82). There will be no rounding to the next letter grade (e.g., 89.4 will not be rounded to 90).

Computer-marked multiple choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Graders of short-answer questions will also be comparing answers for unusual similarity. Please see page 6 of this document for the university policy on academic offenses.

Due to the size of the class, students must write the midterm and final exams in the room to which they have been assigned. Stay tuned for OWL announcements about room assignments.

After the midterm exam has been graded, the grades will be posted on the course OWL site. Neither midterm nor final exams will be returned but students will have an opportunity to view their exams. Information about exam viewing will be posted on OWL.

### **General information about missed coursework**

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs*, posted on the Academic Calendar:  
[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf),

This policy does not apply to requests for Academic Consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person.

The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

[https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic\\_considerations/](https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/)

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All Academic Consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, examinations scheduled during official examination periods (Defined by policy) are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

When a student mistakenly submits their one allowed Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** for the assessments listed above or those in the **Coursework with Assessment Flexibility** section below, the request cannot be recalled and reapplied. This privilege is forfeited.

**What to do if you miss a lecture:** Read the corresponding chapter in the textbook to learn the material that was covered in class. Review the posted lecture slides and ask another student to verify which material in the chapter was emphasized in class. In fairness to all students in the class, the professors will not provide additional lecture notes.

**What to do if you miss a tutorial:** Please contact your TA within 24 hours of the missed tutorial. Missed tutorials/quizzes will receive a grade of '0' unless academic consideration has been approved. If academic consideration is approved, the other quiz grades will be re-weighted such that the total value of quizzes remains 20% of the final grade (if >2 quizzes are missed, the remaining marks for missed quizzes will be reweighted to the final examination). **It is not possible to attend another tutorial section to make up for a missed tutorial.**

**What to do if you miss an exam:** If you are unable to write an exam due to illness or other serious circumstance, please seek academic consideration as soon as you are able to do so (see the university policy about academic consideration). Only students who have been granted academic consideration may write a make-up exam. Based on university policy, there will be only one make-up exam scheduled for each of the mid-term and final exams.

Students with valid (and documented) reasons for missing the make-up midterm exam will have all of their exam marks re-weighted towards the final exam (making the final exam worth 80% of the final course grade).

For the **final exam**, students who have exam scheduling conflicts with the Biology 2483A final exam may be eligible to write the make-up final exam. Resolving exam scheduling conflicts requires approval from your Academic Counselling Office. [http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/exam\\_schedule.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/exam_schedule.html)). If you miss the Final Exam, please contact the Academic Counselling office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as you are able to do so.

The **make-up final exam** (called a Special Exam by the university) for students who received academic consideration for the December exam will take place in January 2023. When the day, time, and location are determined, they will be posted on OWL. Students with valid (and documented) reasons for missing the Special Exam may take the final exam with the next class (summer 2026 or Dec 2026).

**What to do if you wish to have an exam or a quiz reassessed:** For quizzes, contact your TA no later than one week after the graded quiz was returned to you. If you wish to have an exam reassessed, contact Dr. Henry ([hhenry4@uwo.ca](mailto:hhenry4@uwo.ca)) no later than one week after the exam viewing period (see OWL for details about the viewing period). Your entire quiz/exam will be reviewed, not subsections of it. Your mark may increase, decrease, or remain the same. The revised grade will replace the original grade, with no basis for appeal.

For your information, the university-wide descriptors of the meaning of letter grades are:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	Below 50	Fail

[http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading\\_73](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_73)

## 6. Additional Statements

### 6.1 Religious Accommodation

When conflicts arise with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request an accommodation for their absence in writing to the course instructor and/or the Academic Advising office of their Faculty of Registration. This notice should be made as early as possible, but not later than two weeks prior to the writing of the examination (or one week prior to the writing of the test).

Please visit the Diversity Calendars posted on our university's EDID website for the recognized religious holidays - <https://www.edi.uwo.ca>

## 6.2 Academic Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic\\_Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf).

## 6.3 General Academic Policies

The website for Registrar Services is <https://www.registrar.uwo.ca/>.

**Use of @uwo.ca email:** In accordance with policy, [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies\\_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university email address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that emails received from the University at their official university address are attended to in a timely manner.

**Requests for Relief** (formally known as “appeals”)

Policy on Request for Relief from Academic Decision:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/requests\\_for\\_relief\\_from\\_academic\\_decisions.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/requests_for_relief_from_academic_decisions.pdf)

Procedures on Request for Relief from Academic Decision (Undergraduate):

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/undergrad\\_requests\\_for\\_relief\\_procedure.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf)

Procedures on Request for Relief from Academic Decision (Graduate):

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/graduate\\_requests\\_for\\_relief\\_procedure.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/graduate_requests_for_relief_procedure.pdf)

## 6.4 Scholastic Offences

Policy on Scholastic Offences:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_offences.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf)

Procedures on Scholastic Offences:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/undergrad\\_scholastic\\_offence\\_procedure.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/undergrad_scholastic_offence_procedure.pdf)

## Use of Electronic Devices During Assessments

In courses offered by the Faculty of Science, the possession of unauthorized electronic devices during any in-person assessment (such as tests, midterms, and final examinations) is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: mobile phones, smart watches, smart glasses, and wireless earbuds or headphones.

Unless explicitly stated otherwise in advance by the instructor, the presence of any such device at your desk, on your person, or within reach during an assessment will be treated as a *scholastic offence*, even if the device is not in use. It is your responsibility to review and comply with these expectations.

## Use of Generative AI Tools

Unless otherwise stated, the use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini, or similar platforms) is **not permitted** in the completion of any course assessments, including but not limited to: assignments, lab reports, presentations, tests, and final examinations.

Using such tools for content generation, code writing, problem solving, translation, or summarization—when not explicitly allowed—will be treated as a **scholastic offence**.

If the use of generative AI is permitted for a particular assessment, the conditions of use will be specified by the instructor in advance. If no such permission is granted, students must assume that use is prohibited. It is your responsibility to seek clarification before using any AI tools in academic work.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## 6.5 Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Advising webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, requests for relief, exam conflicts, and many other academic-related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. If you have any questions regarding accommodations, you may also wish to contact Accessible Education at [http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)

Learning-skills counsellors at Learning Development and Success (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.