

National Scholars Program 2009 Maymester to Belize : May 10-18

Sunday, May 10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departure from various home airports to Houston 2. Continental #1628 Houston to Belize-Goldson 115p-244p <p>Mayan ruins @ Xunantunich LODGING: Crystal Paradise Resort 501-824-22823</p>
May 11-13	<p>Depart for Blue Creek Station Choose activities: Ethno-botany walk; cave hike; iguana walk; jungle climb; monkey hike; bird walk – Mayan Home Visits LODGING: Blue Creek 501.603.3202 or 501.670.5030</p>
May 14-17	<p>Depart for South Water Caye Activities: island survey and mapping; an exploration of the wrack line and a beachcomber's scavenger hunt; exploring the abundant grass beds and patch reefs located offshore; studies of marine plankton and encrusting communities; studies of mangrove habitat and the creatures that thrive in that ecosystem; snorkeling; visit Smithsonian Research Station LODGING: South Water Caye No phone; call IZE office, 501.670.7076 or 501.670.5030</p>
Monday, May 18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tropic Air # 310 Dandriga to Belize-Goldson 745a Res #: 1429283 2. Continental #1640 Belize-Goldson 1115a-251p 3. Departure from Houston to various home airports

**BIOSC 490 - SECTION 002 - SPRING 2009
2 CREDITS**

PREPARATORY SEMINAR FOR NATIONAL SCHOLARS BELIZE TRIP

COURSE INFORMATION & SYLLABUS

**COORDINATING
INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Jerry A. Waldvogel
Office: 330-E Long Hall
Phone: 656-3825 W 639-9807 H

Dept. of Biological Sciences
Email: waldvoj@clemsun.edu

OFFICE HRS

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. I am happy to meet with you and discuss course related topics or other matters, but I do not hold regularly scheduled office hours. Please arrange for an appointment with me during class, by phone, or by email.

**CLASS
MEETINGS**

Tuesday 5:00-7:00 pm 224 Long Hall

**COURSE
DESCRIPTION
& OBJECTIVES**

BIOSC 490 Section 002 provides students with the opportunity to study the culture and natural history of Belize, a small Central American nation known for its rich biodiversity and efforts to preserve both its historical roots and natural resources, in preparation for a 9-day trip to Belize in May. Formerly British Honduras, Belize is an English-speaking nation that has historical roots in ancient Mayan culture, European colonial control, and piracy. It achieved political independence in 1981 and has one of the fastest growing economies in the Americas. The country, while geographically small, is home to many endemic species of plants and animals and a wide range of tropical habitats ranging from the Caribbean Sea to the low mountains on its southern border with Guatemala. The largest barrier reef in the western hemisphere is found in Belize and almost 60% of the nation is forested. Conservation is an important issue there, with nearly 37% of the nations land designated for some kind of preservation status. Belize is thus a perfect laboratory through which to study the worldwide problem of biodiversity conservation, and to learn about the economic, political, and scientific issues that affect how we try to preserve Earth's dwindling biodiversity. Students will read several books about Belize and biodiversity, write on and discuss those readings, and make an end-of-semester research presentation to the class on some aspect of the natural history or culture of Belize.

**REQUIRED
TEXTBOOKS**

We will read and discuss all or part of the following books during this course:

- Twigg, Alan. (2006) *Understanding Belize: A Historical Guide*. Harbour Publishing. ISBN 1-55017-325-1
- Vandermeer, John et al. (2005) *Breakfast of Biodiversity: The Political Ecology of Rain Forest Destruction*. Food First Books. ISBN 0-935-02896-X
- Wilson, Edward O. (2003) *The Future of Life*. Vintage Books. ISBN 0-679-76811-4

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is expected at all class meetings, unless prior arrangements have been made with me. Your active participation in class discussions is also expected. If I am late for any of our meetings, you should remain for 15 minutes past the official start time before assuming that class has been postponed for that day.

EVALUATION & GRADING

Grades in this course will be based on the following:

Class attendance & discussion participation	20%
Short writings associated with text readings	20%
Final research project	
• Written component	30%
• Oral component	30%

Details and due dates for each of these assignments will be provided at relevant points throughout the course.

The following table shows how final course averages will relate to letter grades and grade points for BIOSC 490(2):

<u>Final Average (%)</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>
90-100	A	4.0
80-89.9	B	3.0
70-79.9	C	2.0
60-69.9	D	1.0
< 60	F	0.0

PROBLEMS

Problems regarding course material, or those of a personal or special nature, should first be discussed with me. If I cannot answer your question or resolve the problem, I will direct you to the proper departmental or university office for assistance.

STUDENT DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations should make an appointment with the Office of Student Disability Services located in G-20 Redfern (656-6848). These accommodations should be taken care of within the first few weeks of class to be most effective. SDS will provide qualified students with a Faculty Accommodation Letter that should then be delivered to me.

DROP/ADD/ WITHDRAWAL

Students can drop or withdraw from BIOSC 490(2) using the University's online registration system. You should be aware of the following important dates:

21 Jan	last day to drop without a record of Withdrawal
27 Feb	last day to drop without receiving a Final Grade

Given limitations on how many withdrawal hours a student may use during his/her time at Clemson University, it is generally a good policy to consult with your advisor before dropping a course.

COMMUNICATIONS & COURSE MATERIALS

I will periodically communicate with you outside of class via email. You should get in the habit of checking your university email account for such messages. Emails will be sent only to your university account, so it is your responsibility to make sure that you monitor that account on a regular basis. I am not responsible for messages that are lost when you transfer emails to and from multiple accounts.

I will also post lecture images and certain other course materials via Blackboard, the university's on-line course management system. Blackboard may be accessed from any web browser at <http://bb.clemson.edu>. Details about specific items posted on Blackboard for this course will be discussed as needed throughout the semester.

LAPTOPS & CELL PHONES

Our class time is valuable, and unnecessary interruptions detract from that time. This course does not require the use of your laptop computer for lectures or in-class discussions. You are welcome, however, to use your laptop as long as you use it only for work related to this course. If I find you using your laptop for other purposes, then I reserve the right to ask you to shut it down. In addition, please be sure to turn off your cell phone before class starts. If you must have your phone on during class for an important reason, please advise me in advance, take the call outside of the classroom, and return as quickly as possible.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & DISHONESTY

The following is Clemson University's official statement on academic integrity:

As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a "high seminary of learning". Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.

Academic dishonesty includes giving, receiving, or using unauthorized aid on any academic work. It also includes plagiarism, the copying of language, structure, or ideas of another and passing them off as one's own work. All academic work attempted contains an implicit pledge by the student that no unauthorized aid has been received. The official procedures for handling academic dishonesty are described in the current edition of the student handbook. You should read and become familiar with this information. A BIOSC 490(2) student found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy receives a grade of zero for the work attempted. Second offenses result in an automatic grade of "F" for the course, and raise the possibility of suspension or permanent dismissal from the University.

**BIOSC 490(2) – S'09 LECTURE & DISCUSSION SCHEDULE FOR NATIONAL SCHOLARS
BELIZE TRIP PREPARATORY SEMINAR**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
13 Jan	Introductions, Course Themes & Policies – Overview of Topics
27 Jan	An introduction to the geology and natural history of Belize.
3 Feb	An introduction to the cultural and political history of Belize.
10 Feb	Discussion of Twigg's <i>Understanding Belize</i>
17 Feb	Biodiversity – What is it and how is it being studied?
24 Feb	Discussion of Wilson's <i>The Future of Life</i>
3 Mar	Continue discussing Wilson's <i>The Future of Life</i>
10 Mar	What exactly we can expect to see and do on our trip to Belize.
17 Mar	<i>NO CLASS (spring break)</i>
24 Mar	Discussion of Vandermeer's <i>Breakfast of Biodiversity</i>
31 Mar	Continue discussing Vandermeer's <i>Breakfast of Biodiversity</i>
7 Apr	<i>NO CLASS</i>
14 Apr	Student research presentations
21 Apr	Student research presentations (if necessary)
10-18 May	Belize Trip (1 credit for separate BIOSC 490 course taken in Summer Session 1)