

Course Approval Form

For instructions:
<http://registrar.gmu.edu/facultystaff/catalog-revisions/course/>

Action Requested: (definitions available at website above)

- Create NEW Inactivate
 Modify (check all that apply below)

Course Level:

- Undergraduate Graduate

- Title (must be 75% similar to original) Repeat Status Prereq/coreq Grade Mode
 Credits Schedule Type Restrictions Other: _____

College/School: College of Science **Department:** Biology
Submitted by: Arndt F. Laemmerzahl **Ext:** x3-5608 **Email:** alaemmer@gmu.edu

Subject Code: BIOL **Number:** 439 **Effective Term:** Fall Spring Year 2017
 Summer

(Do not list multiple codes or numbers. Each course proposal must have a separate form.)

Title: Current Herpetology
Banner (30 characters max w/ spaces)
New Herpetology

Fulfills Mason Core Req? (undergrad only)

- Currently fulfills requirement
 Submission in progress

Credits: (check one) Fixed → 4
 Variable → to
 Lec + Lab/Rct → 0 or

Repeat Status: (check one) Not Repeatable (NR)
 Repeatable within degree (RD) →
 Repeatable within term (RT) →

Max credits allowed: (required for RT/RD status only) 4

Grade Mode: (check one) Regular (A, B, C, etc.)
 Satisfactory/No Credit
 Special (A, B C, etc. +IP)

Schedule Type: (check one) Lecture (LEC) Independent Study (IND)
 Lab (LAB) Seminar (SEM)
 Recitation (RCT) Studio (STU)
 Internship (INT)
LEC can include LAB or RCT if linked sections will be offered

Prerequisite(s) (NOTE: hard-coding requires separate Prereq Checking form; see above website):

Corequisite(s):

BIOL 308 or equivalent or POI

Restrictions Enforced by System: Major, College, Degree, Program, etc. Include Code(s).

Equivalencies (check only as applicable):

- YES, course is 100% equivalent to EVPP 439
 YES, course renumbered to or replaces

Catalog Copy (Consult University Catalog for models)

Description (No more than 60 words, use verb phrases and present tense) Study of evolution, systematics, physiology, ecology and behavior of reptiles, emphasizing field work.	Notes (List additional information for the course)
Indicate number of contact hours: When Offered: (check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Summer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spring	Hours of Lecture or Seminar per week: 3 Hours of Lab or Studio: 2:40

Approval Signatures

Department Approval: _____ Date: 6/28/16 College/School Approval: _____ Date: _____

If this course includes subject matter currently dealt with by any other units, the originating department must circulate this proposal for review by those units and obtain the necessary signatures prior to submission. Failure to do so will delay action on this proposal.

Unit Name	Unit Approval Name	Unit Approver's Signature	Date

Undergraduate or Graduate Council Approval

UGC or GC Council Member: _____ Provost's Office: _____ UGC or GC Approval Date: _____

Biology 439, Herpetology

Date of Departmental approval:

October, 20, 2016

New course:

Course designation is to cross list BIOL 539, Herpetology, which has been taught for many years at GMU. As such, course is almost identical to BIOL 539.

The main reason for the cross listing is to make more organismal courses available to undergraduate students. (Mammalogy used to be solely an undergraduate course).

Relationship to existing courses:

Same as the current course, BIOL 539 as well as EVPP 539 and EVPP 439 (proposed in conjunction with this course).

Semester of initial offering:

Spring, 2017

Proposed Instructors:

Dr. Arndt F. Laemmerzahl

See attached syllabus.

BIOL 539 - Herpetology

Basic information:

Instructor:

Arndt F. Laemmerzahl
Office: DK 3035
Phone: 703 993 5608
e-mail: alaemmer@gmu.edu
Office hours: See web page (under contact information)

Texts:

Herpetology, 3rd ed., L.J. Vitt and J.P. Caldwell, 2009. Academic Press.

Not the best text, but there are not a lot of choices. A new edition is actually out, but the only substantial difference is taxonomy (which changes every year anyway).

A field guide is also required. Unfortunately none are really up to date. There are only two reasonable choices:

Reptiles and Amphibians, Eastern/Central North America
R. Conant and J. T. Collins. Peterson Series Field Guides. 1998.
Houghton Mifflin.

Good, but a bit dated. A lot of taxonomy has changed.

The National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Reptiles and Amphibians.
F. W. King. 1979. Knopf.

Uses photographs instead of drawings. Even older than above. The above is the better choice, but some people prefer this one or use it as a secondary source.

Lecture exams:

Two exams, a midterm and final. Each is worth 35% (30% if you are a graduate student) of your total grade. Each exam is closed book, and will contain a combination of short essays, multiple choice, fill in the blanks, labeling and other things.

The midterm will use the entire class period and is 1:15 minutes long.

The final will use 1:30 minutes of the allotted time (the final is designed to be the same length as the midterm, but we can give ourselves a little extra time). The final is not cumulative.

Labs:

Lab is worth 30% of your grade. You have three lab exams as well as various miscellaneous assignments. Points are earned as follows:

Two identification exams, worth 10% each

A frog call exam, worth 5%

Miscellaneous assignments worth 5%

Field trips are worth 1/3 extra credit point each (all you need to do is attend!).

There are seven field trips scheduled.

Paper:

Graduate students will also need to write a paper on the natural history and ecology of selected species of reptiles or amphibians and then present their results in class. Details will be given in class.

Note that exams will be worth 30% for graduate students. The paper and presentation will be worth 10% of your grade.

Grading scale:

Your final grade will be based on your percent out of 100. The following grading scale will be used:

Undergraduates:

96-100 = A+	90 - 95 = A	86 - 89 = B+	80 - 85 = B
76 - 79 = C+	70 - 75 = C	60 - 69 = D	0 - 59 = F

Graduate students:

96-100 = A+	90 - 95 = A	86 - 89 = B+	80 - 85 = B
76 - 79 = C+	70 - 75 = C	0 - 69 = F	

You will notice that (-) grades are not used.

Miscellaneous

Honor code: if you are caught cheating, you will be taken to the honor committee. No arguments. Although quite rare, they have expelled people even for a first offense. Offenses are treated more severely for graduate students.

You are responsible for information and announcements presented in class and/or through e-mail. Not being in class or not checking your e-mail is not an excuse. Make sure your GMU e-mail is working - this is *your* responsibility!

Please do not be disruptive in class. No one is forcing you to be in class. If you want to have a conversation, use your phone, etc., please do it outside of class or you may be asked to leave.

Missed class : if for some reason class is canceled, then the following class will cover the material for the missed class. This is particularly important should an exam day be canceled for whatever reason (the exam will take place during our next scheduled class).

If you are having problems please see your instructor. Your instructor is here to help you learn this material *and* help you pass this class. They will do what they can to make sure that you make it through this class successfully. *Please don't wait too long if you are having difficulties.*

Finally, please try to be in class. *You will almost certainly not do well if you are absent too often.*

Information that applies to all classes at GMU:

(Some of this is a bit repetitive, but important. It applies to *all* your classes at GMU.)

Academic integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit to those people in the proper, accepted form. When doing homework, the work must be yours. It is totally unacceptable to copy the work of another student in this course in any form.

GMU email accounts

Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

Writing center

A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

University libraries (“Ask a Librarian”)

<http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

Counseling and psychological services (CAPS)

(703) 993-2380;
<http://caps.gmu.edu>

University policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Disability Resource Center

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Tentative schedule:

Week	Lecture topic	Lab topic	Comments
TBA	Intro/Taxonomy	Introduction/Lab procedures	
TBA	Evolution/origin	Taxonomy lab (?)	
TBA	Amphibian anatomy and physiology	Amphibian diversity	
TBA	Amphibian anatomy and physiology	Field trip to Huntley Meadows	
TBA	Amphibian diversity	Amphibian diversity	lab is self study
TBA	Amphibian diversity	Lab exam on Amphibians Discussion of preservation techniques	
TBA	Reptile anatomy and physiology	Field trip to Burke Lake	
TBA	Spring Break	Spring Break	
TBA	Reptile anatomy and physiology	Lab exam on frog calls Reptile diversity	
TBA	Midterm Reptile diversity	Reptile diversity	lab is self study
TBA	Reptile diversity	Field trip to Mason Neck	Wednesday lecture and lab will be combined
TBA	Reptile diversity	Lab exam on Reptiles Discussion on keeping Field notes	
TBA	Behavior	Field trip to Smithsonian facility	Wednesday lecture and lab will be combined
TBA	Ecology	Field trip to Huntley Meadows <i>or</i> Mason Neck	Wednesday lecture and lab will be combined
TBA	Ecology	Field trip to research <i>Studies of the Piedmont</i>	Wednesday lecture and lab will be combined
TBA	Conservation	TBD	