

## Introduction to Collections and Research in Natural History Museums

ZOO6927 Section 14AG  
ANG6930 Section 389F

Instructors: Dr. David C. Blackburn, Dr. Charles Cobb

### **General Class Information:**

#### ***Course Summary***

This course will introduce graduate students to research and collections in natural history museums, with a focus on the Florida Museum of Natural History. Each week we will discuss important topics in the operations and management of scientific collections or we will tour different collections in the Florida Museum of Natural History.

2 Credit hours

#### ***Course Meetings***

Thursday, Periods 7 and 8 (1:55 – 3:50 pm).

The course will meet once each week.

For in-class meetings, we will meet in Carr Hall, room 222.

For classes in which we tour different aspects of the museum's collections and programs, we will meet in the lobby of either Dickinson Hall or Powell Hall (i.e., the public museum) at the beginning of each class period. Please pay attention as to where each class will be meeting and be on time.

Please see the course schedule below for details on where each week's class will take place. Readings will be distributed by Canvas before each class.

#### ***Instructors***

Dr. David C. Blackburn  
Associate Curator of Herpetology  
Florida Museum of Natural History  
Email: dblackburn@flmnh.ufl.edu  
Office hours: By appointment. Office: 262 Dickinson Hall.

Dr. Charles Cobb  
Curator of Historical Archeology  
Florida Museum of Natural History  
Email: ccobb@flmnh.ufl.edu  
Office hours: By appointment. Office: 114 Dickinson Hall.

***Grading and Exams:***

Grades will be based on attendance and active participation in all discussions and all tours of collections. Students will be expected to do any reading of any course materials before each class. As part of learning about communicating museum-based science to the public, students will also complete one writing assignment about research in which they have been involved; while it would be excellent if this research was based in a museum, that is not required.

***Attendance Policy:***

Students are expected to attend all classes. Absences will be excused with a doctor's note provided within 1 week or if previously arranged with the instructor.

## **Course Details**

### ***Schedule***

#### Week 1 (Aug. 23):

Carr Hall, room 222

Introduction to course

Guest: Dr. David Reed, FLMNH Associate Director and Curator

#### Week 2 (Aug. 30):

Meet at Dickinson Hall entrance

Invertebrate Paleontology

Guest:

Roger Portell, Collection Manager, Invertebrate Paleontology

#### Week 3 (Sept. 6):

Carr Hall, room 222

Science Writing and the Thompson Institute

Guests:

Natalie van Hoose, FLMNH science writer

Dr. Bruce MacFadden, Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology  
& Director of Thompson Institute

#### Week 4 (Sept. 13):

Meet at McGuire Hall entrance

Lepidoptera

Guests:

Andrei Sourakov, Collection Manager, Lepidoptera

#### Week 5 (Sept. 20):

Carr Hall, room 222

Ethics & Permitting

Guests:

Elise Lecompte, Anthropology Registrar

Dr. Tom Webber, Collection Manager, Ornithology

Week 6 (Sept. 27):

Carr Hall, room 222

Imaging & Genetic Resources

Guests:

Zach Randall, Research Technician, Ichthyology

Dr. Pam Soltis, Curator, Molecular Systematics

Week 7 (Oct. 4):

Meet at Dickinson Hall entrance

Ornithology

Guest:

Dr. David Steadman, Curator, Ornithology

Week 8 (Oct. 11):

Meet at Dickinson Hall entrance

Herbarium

Guest:

Kent Perkins, Collection Manager, Herbarium

Mark Frank, Collection Manager, Herbarium

Week 9 (Oct. 18):

Meet at Dickinson Hall entrance

\*\*\*van transportation provided to off-site facility\*\*\*

Ethnography

Guest:

Elise Lecompte, Anthropology Registrar

Week 10 (Oct. 25):

Meet at Dickinson Hall entrance

Environmental Archeology

Guest:

Dr. Nicole Cannarozzi, Collection Manager, Env. Archeology

Week 11 (Nov. 1):

Meet at McGuire Hall entrance

Public Programs & Exhibits

Guest:

Darcie MacMahon, Director of Exhibits and Public Programs

Week 12 (Nov. 8):

Carr Hall, room 222

Biodiversity Informatics

Guests:

Dr. Rob Guralnick, Curator of Informatics

Rob Robbins, Collection Manager, Ichthyology

Gifford Waters, Collection Manager, Historical Archeology

Week 13 (Nov. 15):

Meet at Dickinson Hall entrance

Invertebrate Zoology

Guest:

Dr. John Slapcinsky, Collection Manager, Invertebrate Zoology

Week 14 (Nov. 29):

Carr Hall, room 222

Course Wrap-up

## University of Florida Policy Statements

### **Grades and Grade Points**

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Absences and Make-Up Work**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **Online Course Evaluation Process**

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### **Academic Honesty**

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: *"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."* You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see:  
<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

### **Software Use**

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator.

Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

### **Campus Helping Resources**

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, [www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/)
  - Counseling Services
  - Groups and Workshops
  - Outreach and Consultation
  - Self-Help Library
  - Training Programs
- U Matter We Care, [www.umatter.ufl.edu/](http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/)
- Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/)

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

0001 Reid Hall, 392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

### **Student Complaints**

Each online distance learning program has a process for, and will make every attempt to resolve, student complaints within its academic and administrative departments at the program level. See <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process> for more details.

### **Sexual Harassment**

It is the policy of The University of Florida to provide an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. In accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment. Sex discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated, and individuals who

engage in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The University encourages students, faculty, staff, and visitors to promptly report sex discrimination and sexual harassment. If you believe you have been subjected to sex discrimination or sexual harassment please report the incident to me or any University official, administrator, or supervisor. The Office of Human Resource Services investigates all complaints. Incidents should be reported as soon as possible after the time of their occurrence ([larry-ellis@ufl.edu](mailto:larry-ellis@ufl.edu)).