ANTHRBIO 461 / ENVIRON 461 / EAS 501-008, Fall 2018  
Seminar in Primate Conservation Biology

Description

This seminar is intended to foster critical consideration of a range of issues within primate conservation biology. Weekly discussions will be based on several broad topics. We will begin by considering alternative conceptual approaches commonly employed in conservation biology, surveying the role of models in conservation, assessing the present-day conservation status of primate populations and habitats, and discussing the major threats facing wild primate populations. Next, we will consider the relationship between the discipline of conservation biology and the practice of conservation on the ground. We will progress to a discussion of conservation priority setting, strategies and tactics, local human communities as both potential allies and threats to conservation of wild primate populations, and whether primates deserve protection and conservation more than other taxa. Over the course of the semester seminar participants will identify topics of interest that will be pursued in depth and developed through peer review and discussion, culminating in a term paper and formal presentation.

Readings

Weekly readings will come from the primary scientific literature and an edited volume:


Readings from the scientific literature are posted on the course website (Canvas).

General information

Meeting times: Wednesdays 1:00-4:00pm, G437 Mason Hall  
Contact: Andy Marshall (PGPs: he/his/him), ajmarsha@umich.edu  
Office hours: Tu 3:00–4:30pm and by appointment, 204B West Hall  
Assessment: I will assess your performance based on six course components:

- Attendance & participation 5%
- Weekly assignments 25%
- Term paper overview (due 5pm 9/28) 10%
- Overview peer review comments (due 5pm 10/1) 10%
- Term paper (due 5pm 11/20) 30%
- Oral presentation (11/28 or 12/5) 20%

For the first four items above, there will be multiple ways to achieve a “perfect” score. For example, to receive full credit for the weekly assignment portion of your grade you must accumulate 250 total points. There will be 9 weekly assignments and you will have the opportunity to score a maximum of 30 points on each, for a total score of 270 points. You will not receive any extra credit if you score more than 250 total points, meaning that there are various combinations of weekly scores that would result in a “perfect” score of 250 points. We will discuss this in more detail in our first and second class meetings. The basic philosophy is to reduce the stakes on many individual assignments and provide various paths to a good grade.
Based on current attendance (which affects the number of term paper overviews you will complete), I anticipate the precise breakdown of points will be as follows. Should this change slightly due to changing enrollments, I will inform you and update the syllabus accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>points per assignment</th>
<th>total available points</th>
<th>maximum points towards final grade</th>
<th>% of grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper overviews</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer reviews</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1042</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the extent possible, I would like your term paper to further your larger academic development and goals. As such, I will be flexible about the precise form your paper takes; any reasonable format that effectively addresses your topic of choice is acceptable. Some possibilities include: 1) an essay-type review of a theoretical topic, 2) an original paper using published or unpublished data, 3) an NSF-style research proposal, or 4) a critical review (as opposed to a mere description of contents) of a set of papers or book chapters that we will be reading for this course. If you have questions about format or are unsure whether your proposed format is appropriate for the term paper, please consult me. While I anticipate that most papers will be equivalent to roughly 20-25 double spaced pages, I am less concerned about their length than I am in seeing that they are substantive, original, critical, and careful pieces of work.

**Questions and feedback**

This course is a seminar and the value of our meetings will depend in large part on your engagement and participation. I therefore encourage you to ask questions at any time. If you have a question or comment you would rather submit anonymously, you may do so on Canvas at Quizzes / Anonymous feedback.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**

If you require an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience so I may make appropriate preparations in conjunction with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). SSD (734-763-3000; www.umich.edu/sswd) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.
**Student mental health and wellbeing**

The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and caps.umich.edu during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: http://umich.edu/~mhealth/.

**Academic integrity**

I take academic integrity seriously and will not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or other violations of the LSA Community Standards of Academic Integrity. For more information or if you have questions regarding what constitutes academic dishonesty, feel free to talk to me. You may also find the following links useful:

www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/index.html

www.lib.umich.edu/shapiro-undergraduate-library/academic-integrity-resources-students

**Provisional Schedule**

Below I have listed a tentative schedule of our weekly topics. Readings for the following week will be posted a week in advance. Starting in week three, discussions will be led by students.

9/5 1. Introductory and organizational meeting (AJM)

9/12 2. Caughley’s two paradigms


9/19 3. Conservation biology and population biology: the role of models

9/26 3. Assessing the state of primate conservation

9/28 5pm term paper overview due, submit electronically by file upload to Canvas

I will provide explicit instructions

10/1 5pm term paper peer comments due, submit electronically by file upload to Canvas

I will provide instructions and a template.

10/3 5. Round table discussion of term paper overviews (AJM)

Term paper overviews (one from each participant)

10/10 6. Threats to primate populations
10/17   7. The relationship between conservation biology and conservation
10/24   8. Setting conservation priorities
10/31   9. Conservation strategies and tactics
11/7    10. Local communities: saviors or specters?
11/14   11. Are primates special? Should they be conserved above other species?
11/20   Term papers due at 5pm (uploaded to Canvas)

11/21   No class (Thanksgiving)

11/28   12. Presentations I

Each of you will make a 20-30 minute presentation of your term paper topic to the group. You may wish to produce a digital slide presentation (e.g., PowerPoint), but this is not required. Half of you will present this week, half will present the following week.

12/5    13. Presentations II