

Proposed Syllabus and Itinerary

AFR 308 Conservation and Management of Large African Mammals

May Interim 2023

Note: This syllabus is to demonstrate learning objectives, assignments, grading scheme and activities for learning in the course. The required university and study abroad materials will be added prior to broad distribution.

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Foré

“In the wilderness is the preservation of the world” –Henry David Thoreau

Course Description:

Large mammals are important in many to functional systems. The Earth was once inhabited with a grand variety of enormous mammals. Today, Africa is the last remaining continent a great diversity of living large mammals.

In this 3 credit hour course, you will learn about the issues surrounding conservation these mammals. Our exploration of issues will touch on socio-political, environmental and biological aspects surrounding the future of these magnificent animals.

This course is aimed at individuals passionate about wildlife who wish to become a part of conservation in action. Wildlife management has become an accepted and necessary part of wildlife conservation. Successful management includes monitoring and moving animals to reestablish the checks and balances of nature in managed systems. This type of work requires specialized training and experience which you will receive through this wildlife capture course. Training emphasizes professional and humane animal handling and covers practical techniques to maximize field success and human/animal safety, including chemical and mechanical game capture techniques, drug delivery systems, modern immobilization drugs, wildlife diseases, common species capture techniques, rehabilitation and release of endangered mammals, occupational health hazards, translocation equipment and holding facilities.

In addition, we will discuss the role of national parks and private lands as living museums and consider the role of these to the needs of local communities and conservation education and research.

This course involves preparatory seminars at Truman State University (1 hr/wk during second block of spring semester) in which we will explore the conservation and issues of large mammals and compare these issues in North America and South Africa. The course culminates in 11 days of hands-on work and instruction with Parawild Safari operating in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Parawild instructors will give lectures and demonstrations and include

students in the work of animal captures as extensive as possible, limited by field conditions, the species being handled, and safety issues. We will visit Kruger National Park and participate in service opportunities in the local community.

Prerequisites:

This course has no expected course background.

Must be able to sprint 50 yards, climb over 12 foot fences, crawl 20 feet under brush, stand for several hours in outdoor conditions, and lift minimum of 35 pounds.

Course Resource Information:

There are no required textbooks for this course.

Links will be provided for all required reading on Blackboard.

Equipment and Supplies Required for the Course:

- Passport
- Vaccinations: you and your medical professional will determine what is best for you. My typical vaccinations are routine boosters (including tetanus), typhoid, malaria (and proof of yellow fever as I have traveled to a country with yellow fever).
- Field Journal
- Field clothes that include long sleeved pants and shirt and sturdy closed toed shoes, preferably boots. The spines and thorns are viscous (“we are more afraid of the plants than the animals” anonymous quote from last offering of the course).

Learning Objectives:

- Compare and contrast environmental difference between Missouri and South Africa
- Develop a deeper understanding of why large mammals are an important conservation issue
- Develop a deeper understanding of the socio-political constraints in conservation (compare and contrast the United States and South Africa)
- Gain factual knowledge about and hands-on practice in safe and humane handling methods
- Consider why management is part of conservation and how national parks and private lands serve as living museums.

STUDENTS’ AND INSTRUCTOR’S EXPECTATIONS

My Expectations of Students

- You are ready to engage in class that may begin before dawn and end after dark.
- Tell friends and family that this is downtime from social media/communicating back home and engage fully in the experiences. Cell phones are primarily for pictures. Time will be provided outside of class and community activities for you to catch your friends and family up.
- You are brave! Engage in conversations with your peers. Be willing to ask questions without hesitation. Express concerns about the course at any time.

- Be respectful. This is a professional experience. Nonprofessional attitudes and commentary are not welcome. Please treat everyone with respect.
- Be a scholar. Be here, in the moment, engaged with experience. Put other things aside and take this time to be intellectually curious and apply your creative skills to the activity of learning about and communicating your understanding of course matter.
- Be flexible, patient and learn to handle uncertain daily schedules.
- Be adaptable to outdoor living conditions such as tent camping and undeveloped waste removal systems.

What Students Should Expect of Me as Their Instructor

- It is my responsibility to clearly explain the expectations of the reading and writing assignments and these reasonable and appropriately challenging.
- Provide regular announcements about the course prior to leaving and upon return to the country through Blackboard
- While in the USA, respond to email within 24 hr during the work week. Items posted after 1 pm on Friday will receive response by 1 pm the following Monday (unless that day is a school holiday).
- Make you aware of concerns that I have about performance or ability to succeed in the course.
- Assist you with personal issues. Traveling abroad can come with many unexpected issues, I will do my best to support you.

What the Instructor is Not Responsible For

- Our work while in South Africa is driven by the work of Parawild. This work is emergent with the needs of community. I cannot provide you with a detailed itinerary for the day; sometimes the work schedule changes on the fly in the day.

Grading Criteria:

- 30% Participation: full participation in all discussions and activities is expected.
- 30% Journal: Maintain a journal that includes written summaries of papers read, classes on game capture, and actual capture processes, notes on the habitats of in capture locations, notes on landscapes and communities in our travels. Will be graded for completeness and the development of thought processes related to conservation and game management.
- 20% Final Written Review: This will be a typed report with prompt to be provided during the spring semester.
- 10% Other graded assignments: These assignments will be homework during the spring semester.
- 10% Deportment: We will be in a different country with different values AND working with wild animals. It is important that we leave a positive impression on the people that we interact with AND conduct ourselves in a way that keeps us all as safe as possible. This includes following the instructions of all instructors.

Itinerary

Spring Second Block: Four, one-hour seminars to discuss literature on conservation biology and wildlife management, conservation issues for African mammals and review basic biology of many species we will

encounter. It is expected that you will devote a minimum of 2 hours in preparation for each class period.

May Interim:

Day 1 and 2: May 14 or 15, 2023: Depart from Missouri for South Africa (overnight flight). Parawild will pick us up from Johannesburg International Airport and take us to our work location in northeast South Africa.

Day 3-12: Workshop with Parawild Edu Capture. The schedule of activities and events are fluid as the field projects involve capturing large wild animals. The objectives of the workshop and planned activities include:

- Introduction to conservation principles, the history of game capture, reasons and risks for translocating wild mammals, basic immobilization procedures.
- Discussion of social and economic issues confronting conservation in Africa.
- Lectures on topics such as capture physiology, pharmacology of capture drugs, and practice with darting equipment.
- Hands-on participation in large mammal capture.
- One night in Kruger National Park.
- Service opportunities in the local communities that may include working with orphans at AIDS Orphanage and agricultural visit and parasite treatment of community cattle or other cultural activities provided by Parawild.

Day 13: Travel to Johannesburg International Airport.