School of Science
BIOL 230
Conservation Biology
Term: Winter 2026
Number of Credits: 3

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR: Tara Stehelin, BSc, MSc, PhD
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PHONE: (867) 456-6957
TIME/DATES: Tues/Thurs 2:30 – 4:00 in Room A2202
OFFICE HOURS: *anytime*, email me, but scheduled office hours are Wed. 2:00 – 3:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course assessing the essentials of a broad and sometimes value-laden discipline addressing the crisis faced in the management of species at risk. The diversity of life on planet Earth is the focus, its values, its threats and potential solutions to its demise. Three aspects will be emphasized: basic factual content and principles; individualized research and reporting; class interaction and discussion skill.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites: For students taking the course as BIOL 230: BIOL 101 at YU or equivalent.

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

Please see the University Website for information on transferability:
https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to do the following,

1. understand the scope, nature of, and reasons for the biodiversity crisis faced by life on planet Earth, including identifying the places where biodiversity is greatest and under the greatest threat,
2. understand and verbalize ethical debates about the role of humans in creating biodiversity collapse,
3. understand and pose arguments of threats to and the nature of the threats to all life on earth by the loss of diversity,
4. understand the process of extinction and impacts to population, community and ecosystem,
5. understand and apply methods for using statutes and other public processes for cataloguing, assessing, and listing species according to the risks for extinction, and outlining basic recovery strategies for species at risk, and
6. utilize the practise of defending and proposing management strategies to address biodiversity crises in verbal presentation and debate in a small public forum.

COURSE FORMAT

This course will be delivered with the following breakdown per week: three hours of lecture (in two 1.5-hour blocks), and at least one field trip per semester. Although it will vary from individual to individual, students should expect to spend 4 hours on course material outside of the classroom time per week on studying or completing assignments.

Delivery format

This course will be delivered in a face-to-face (in person) format. However, lectures may be attended remotely and recorded to be watched later (upon request). Students will be expected to access the YU online learning platform for additional material (Moodle).

EVALUATION

The course grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm Exam	20 %
Course and Discussion participation; field trip participation	10 %
Advocacy Paper, Presentation or Poster	40 %
Final Exam	30 %
Total	**100%**

Students are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions and debates, including presenting an informed viewpoint based on previously-conducted research. A portion of the marks will be assigned based on active classroom participation.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Last date to withdraw without academic penalty is Thurs. Mar. 5, 2026. Refer to the YukonU website for important dates. https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

Students are required to purchase a textbook; either as a hard copy from the YU bookstore, or another source if they prefer.

Sher, A 2022. An Introduction to Conservation Biology, 3rd Edition. Oxford University Press. (3rd or 4th edition are fine)

Students will be expected to read and understand scientific articles relating to course material.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic

assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please note that the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software to complete any assessed work will be considered plagiarism. Works need to be cited.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures for further details about academic standing and student rights and responsibilities. https://www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact Accessibility Services for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: access@yukonu.ca.

WEEK	TOPIC	Chapters and notes
1	Course Introduction	CH 1 *First class Jan. 6*
2	What is *Biodiversity*? Where is the greatest biodiversity found?	CH 1 CH 2
3	Values of biodiversity	CH 3
4 5 6	Threats to biodiversity Overexploitation, invasive species Extinction Measuring risk of extinction Problems of small populations	CH 4 CH 5
7	Conserving populations and species Applied population biology ***Midterm Exam***	CH 6 ***Feb 17***
8	Legal protection of species Protecting biodiversity and bringing species back from the brink	CH 6 CH 7
9 10	Protected areas Landscape ecology Managing protected areas Ex Situ Conservation strategies First Draft of Advocacy Paper	CH 8 ***due Tue. March 3rd 5:00 pm***
Reading Week/Arctic Winter Games, University closed		***Mar. 6 – 16th***
11	Ecosystem management Restoration ecology	CH 9 CH 10
12	The challenges of sustainable development ***Thursday Feb. 26th 12:00 – 4:00 pm, field trip*** (date to be confirmed) Ice fishing with Elders and snowpack measurements, and animal tracking	CH 11 Please see the handout on the "subnivean"
13	An agenda for the future Council of all Beings	CH 12
Final Advocacy Paper due Tuesday April 7th 5:00 pm ***Final Presentations and Poster Sessions during student conference – April 14th and 16th***		
	Course Review, *Last Class*	Apr. 16
14	***Final Exam***	TBA