Honors 2030: Out of the Woods
MWF 9:30-10:20
Stewart Library 325 (LI 325)

Dr. Jesse L. Morris, III
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course covers social-ecological perspectives of trees and forest systems. Emphasis is placed on forests in western North America though overseas forests will also be discussed.

COURSE-SPECIFIC EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of this course, I expect that students will:
  1. Acquire substantive knowledge about the distribution and attributes of forest ecosystems worldwide;
  2. Understand how society views, uses, and protects forests;
  3. Comprehend the needs and requirements for trees to survive and compete among other plant species.

WSU EXPECTED PHYSICAL SCIENCE LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will demonstrate a grasp of the following features of the physical world:
  1. System Organization: The universe is scientifically understandable in terms of its interconnectedness. The system evolves over time in accordance with physical laws.
  2. Matter: Matter comprises an important component of the universe, and has physical properties that can be described over a range of spatial and temporal scales.
  3. Energy: Interactions within the universe can be described in terms of energy exchange and conservation.
  4. Forces: Equilibrium and change are determined by forces acting at all organizational levels.

COURSE MATERIALS


Additional readings will be provided. Please keep an eye on Canvas ‘Announcements.’

POLICIES
Grade Calculation
Exams (40%): There will be two exams: a midterm and a final. Both exams will be administered at WSU Testing Centers and will reflect materials covered in each half of the course. Exam questions will include multiple choice, essays, and map exercises.
Participation (40%): Course participation will be assessed through a variety of assignments including in-class presentations, homework, written responses, and participation in discussions.

Class Project (20%): The class project will focus on the benefits that trees provide to our daily lives here at WSU. Our goal for the project will be to investigate the native and introduced tree species on campus. We will use the knowledge accumulated through this course to produce an educational resource to enrich the on-campus experience for the WSU community.

Classroom Environment
Please note the following classroom guidelines: a) Be mindful that when you are emailing, tweeting, texting, updating, surfing, etc. your attention is diverted from the classroom environment. Research shows, that despite our expectations, as a species we do not excel at multi-tasking. Paying attention and taking good notes will prove vital to your success in this course. b) Be courteous so that if and when you use digital devices you do not distract other students in the class. It is unlikely that compiling notes or googling course-relevant topics will be distracting. However, viewing epic fails videos or turning the classroom into a Pokémon gym will likely distract others. Complaints about inappropriate technology use during class will result in measures to curtail these activities. c) Be respectful and do not record, photograph, or otherwise publish information taking place during our class meetings without authorization from me (the instructor). Emphasis on social media platforms. d) Be honest and remember that digital devices are prohibited during exams and quizzes. e) Be honorable and treat every class member with equal dignity.

Syllabus
This syllabus represents an “agreement” between you the student and me as the instructor. It is not a legally binding contract. This document is designed to insure course integrity and fairness as well as provide you with a clear understanding of expectations. We will use the syllabus together as schedule and guide for the semester. Any deviation from this plan will be discussed and agreed upon by the instructor and students.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Please note that any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability as described under the ADA, must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

Campus Closure
In the event of a campus closure, course materials will be available online via Canvas and/or by email (jessemorris@weber.edu).
COURSE CALENDAR

**Week 1 / Aug 28**
**Topic:** Introduction to Forests and Society: What is a social-ecological system?
**Reading:** Syllabus, Holmgren & Scheffer (2016)
**Description:** This week will provide an overview of the course and introduce key terms. Also, follow @outofthewoodswsu on Instagram

**Week 2 / Sep 4**  No Class Mon (Labor Day)
**Topic:** Forests and Society: Arts and Literature
**Reading:** Wohlleben Ch. 1-6 (p. 1-36)
**Description:** How do trees inspire us? Students are asked to identify a work of art centered on trees that is important to them to share briefly with the class.

**Week 3 / Sep 11**
**Topic:** Forests and Society: Significance of Forests
**Reading:** Wohlleben Ch. 7-12 (p. 37-72)
**Description:** At global- to regional-scales, what ecosystem services do forests provide? Topics include carbon sequestration, recreation, air and water purification, among others.

**Week 4 / Sep 18**
**Topic:** Forests and Society: Places and Spaces for Trees
**Reading:** Wohlleben Ch. 13-18 (p. 73-112)
**Description:** Where are trees located? Which policies conserve them? How are these landscapes viewed and used by society?

**Week 5 / Sep 25**  No Class Wed & Fri
**Topic:** Forests and Society: Wood Products and Timber Wars
**Reading:** Wohlleben Ch. 19-24 (p. 113-154)
**Description:** We’ll discuss the economic benefits of timber harvesting and the so-called logging wars in the Pacific NW, USA and the Styx River valley in Tasmania, Australia.

**Week 6 / Oct 2**
**Topic:** Forests and Society: Forests as Natural Laboratories
**Reading:** Wohlleben Ch. 25-29 (p. 155-194)
**Description:** We’ll explore the function of Experimental Forests and Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) sites in the USA.

**Week 7 / Oct 9**
**Topic:** Forests and Society: Forests as Wilderness / *Midterm Exam*
**Reading:** Wohlleben Ch. 30-36 (p. 195-246)
**Description:** We’ll explore the function of National Parks, National Forests, and Wilderness Areas in the USA and beyond.
Week 8 / Oct 16  No Class Fri (WSU holiday)
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Climate and Proxies for Forests of the Past
Reading: Arno & Hammerly Ch. 1 (p. 11-56)
Description: We’ll discuss methods for reconstructing how trees responded to changing climates in the past, such as dendrochronology, lake sediments, and genetic analysis.

Week 9 / Oct 23
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Survival and Competition Through Time
Reading: Arno & Hammerly Ch. 2 & 3 (p. 57-85)
Description: How do trees compete with each other and which resources tend to be limiting factors?

Week 10 / Oct 30
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Forests of Pacific Margin in North America
Reading: Arno & Hammerly Ch. 5 (p. 95-147)
Description: We’ll discuss forest ecosystems found in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, and British Columbia.

Week 11 / Nov 6
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Forests of the Great Basin in the USA
Reading: Arno & Hammerly Ch. 6 (148-178), Hall (2001)
Description: We’ll discuss forest ecosystems found in Nevada and Utah.

Week 12 / Nov 13
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Forests of the Rocky Mountains of North America
Reading: Arno & Hammerly Ch. 7 (p. 179-237)
Description: We’ll discuss forest ecosystems found in Colorado, New Mexico, Idaho, Montana, Alberta, British Columbia, and Mexico.

Week 13 / Nov 20  No Class Fri (Thanksgiving)
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Global Perspectives
Reading: Arno & Hammerly Ch. 8-11 (p. 238-281)
Description: We’ll cover forests in high-latitude and high-elevation systems worldwide.

Week 14 / Nov 27
Topic: Forest Ecosystems: Disturbances pt. 1: Wildfire
Reading: TBA
Description: Fire! Fire! Fire!

Week 15 / Dec 4
Topic: Forest Disturbances pt. 2: Insects and Pathogens
Reading: Raffa et al. (2008)
Description: We’ll explore biotic drivers of tree death, including bark beetles and blights.

Week 16 / Dec 11