



## RENr 365 – Fall 2023

### Ecology and Conservation of Northern Landscapes

In Fall 2023, RENr 365, *Ecology and Conservation of Northern Landscapes*, is being offered at Yukon University as part of the Northern Environmental and Conservation Sciences, B.Sc. Program. All students registered in RENr 365 must adhere to the requirements outlined in this course syllabus and must also be aware of, and adhere to, the University of Alberta's Code of Student Behaviour, referenced in the outline.

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**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Fiona Schmiegelow ([fiona.schmiegelow@ualberta.ca](mailto:fiona.schmiegelow@ualberta.ca))

Professor, Univ. of Alberta / Dean, Applied Science and Management, Yukon U

**TEACHING ASSISTANTS:**

Kim Lisgo, Research Coordinator ([klisgo@ualberta.ca](mailto:klisgo@ualberta.ca))

Maegan Elliot, MSc Candidate ([maeganelliott@ualberta.ca](mailto:maeganelliott@ualberta.ca))

**OFFICE HOURS:** By Appointment

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**CLASS DAYS & TIMES:** Monday, 1:00-4:00 pm

**CLASS LOCATION:** C1440 *except* on Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> and Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, when classes will be in A2202

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Landscape ecology focuses on the relationship between pattern, process and scale and its relationship to broad-scale ecological and management issues. Modification of landscape properties is a critical issue in the conservation of biodiversity. A landscape perspective can inform strategies to address these issues by improving understanding of how landscape conditions affect ecological flows, including the movement, distribution and persistence of organisms and the processes they depend on. Topics highlighted in this course include:

- landscape components and their dynamics

- spatial and temporal change in landscape properties
- issues of scale
- movements of organisms and disturbances across landscape mosaics
- conservation planning and stewardship in a landscape context

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Prerequisite(s): Registration in Yukon University/University of Alberta B.Sc. in Environmental and Conservation Sciences degree program. Introductory ecology course and a GIS course as pre- or co-requisite, or consent of instructor.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Understand landscape ecology concepts as applied to northern landscapes.
- Apply a landscape ecological approach to evaluating drivers of change affecting northern landscapes.
- Consider approaches to landscape conservation and stewardship appropriate to northern landscapes.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

### **Weekly breakdown of instructional hours**

Students should expect to spend a minimum of 3-4.5 hours per week outside regularly scheduled class time on required readings, assignments and the term project. During weeks when there are not classes (because of statutory holidays that fall on Mondays), the missed lecture time will be additive to this. Completing the term project requires that you stay on top of required components throughout the term. The midterm exam will require additional preparation.

### **Delivery format**

The course will be primarily lecture-based, with instructor, guest lecture and student contributions. Students are required to attend all sessions on-campus and complete supplementary activities throughout the term. The term project will require considerable time outside class hours to complete.

## **EVALUATION**

The course grade will be determined as follows:

	<b>Percent</b>
Assignments	25%
Midterm Exam	25%
Term Project	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Further information on the assignments and term project will be provided in class, during the first two weeks of term. The midterm exam will be in take-home format.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance in this course is mandatory, and student participation forms an important component of the learning experience. Please notify me well in advance if you have any conflicts with scheduled classes.

### **Assignments**

Assignments will consist of assigned readings, student presentation of associated materials, and independent research on assigned topics.

The term project forms a major component of this course and will be woven into class and supplementary activities throughout the term.

A detailed marking scheme and due dates will be provided for the assignments and term project during the second class.

### **Exams**

There is a single mid-term exam that will be in take-home format and is mandatory. There is no final exam in this course.

### **Due Dates and Late Assignments**

The assignments, mid-term exam and term project components all have hard deadlines. Late submissions will not be accepted as the course flow and your success relies on you meeting these timelines. Planning for these throughout the term is thus critical.

### **Assignment of grades**

The total numerical score will be converted to a grade on the following letter grading system:

<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A+	95-100
A	90-94
A-	85-89
B+	79-84
B	75-78
B-	71-74
C+	67-70
C	64-66
C-	60-63
D+	55-59
D	50-54
F	0-49

### **COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION**

Students should refer to the UAlberta calendar for important dates ([calendar.ualberta.ca](http://calendar.ualberta.ca)).

### **TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS**

All required readings will be provided to students in digital or hard-copy format. These will be drawn from a variety of sources, including textbooks, scientific articles and reports. Students may also be required to view on-line recordings of class materials that require reliable Internet access. The term project also requires reliable internet access and a computer. Necessary software will be provided and arrangements can be made for computer lab time, as required.

### **COURSE WEBSITE**

eClass (<https://eclass.srv.ualberta.ca/portal/>)

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

#### **Yukon University Academic Standards and Regulations**

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 refer to YukonU Academic Regulations & Procedures for further details about academic standing and student rights and responsibilities.

### **University of Alberta Academic Integrity and Code of Student Behaviour**

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

All students at the University of Alberta are subject to the Code of Student Behaviour, as outlined at:

<http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx> Please familiarize yourself with it and ensure that you do not participate in any inappropriate behavior as defined by the Code. Key components of the code include the following statements.

30.3.2(1) No Student shall submit the words, ideas, images or data of another person as the Student's own in any academic writing, essay, thesis, project, assignment, presentation or poster in a course or program of study.

30.3.2(2) c. No Student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as the Student's own work.

### **PROFESSIONALISM AND CLASSROOM RULES OF ENGAGEMENT**

Students are expected to attend all lectures and labs, be engaged and courteous in all course activities, and to be on time for class. Please do not use cellular phones during class. Laptops are permitted for note taking and in-class work; however, please do not use laptops in class for non-class-related activities. While in computer labs, students are expected to refrain from using the computers to engage in non-class-related activities (e.g., Facebook, etc.).

## **RECORDING OF LECTURES, LABS, ETC.**

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Classes may be recorded using web conferencing software, and links to recordings may be posted on the class website.

## **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](https://www.yukonu.ca/student-life/learning-matters/accessibility-services) (<https://www.yukonu.ca/student-life/learning-matters/accessibility-services>) for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: [access@yukonu.ca](mailto:access@yukonu.ca).