

<b>Course ID:</b>	<b>Course Title:</b>	<b>Winter 2019</b>
<b>ECOL 319</b>	<b>Terrestrial Communities and Ecosystems</b>	<b>Prerequisite:</b> <b>BIO 213, BIO 310</b>
		<b>Credits:</b> <b>3</b>

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
<b>Days:</b>	Wed/Fri	<b>Instructor:</b>	Matthew Morris, PhD	<b>First day of classes:</b>	Thu, Jan 3
<b>Time:</b>	9:45-11	<b>Email:</b>	Matthew.Morris@ambrose.edu	<b>Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:</b>	Sun, Jan 13
<b>Room:</b>	A2212 (class and lab)	<b>Phone:</b>	403-410-2000 ext. 6932	<b>Last day to request revised exam:</b>	Mon, Mar 11
<b>Lab/ Tutorial:</b>	3	<b>Office:</b>	A2158	<b>Last day to withdraw from course:</b>	Fri, Mar 22
	Mon, 11-2	<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment	<b>Last day to apply for coursework extension:</b>	Fri, Mar 29
<b>Final Exam:</b>	Wed April 10 9-12, A2141			<b>Last day of classes:</b>	Fri, Apr 5

### Course Description

This course will explore patterns and processes that influence biotic interactions in terrestrial systems. Topics including succession, productivity, diversity, disturbance, and nutrient dynamics will be discussed as they relate to conservation and management.

Students will require a laptop for this class with an installed version of the free statistical software environment R (<https://www.r-project.org/>), with an installed data visualization package *ggplot2* for R (<https://ggplot2.tidyverse.org/>).

### Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of the class, students will be able to:

1. Define state factors and interactive controls, and understand their roles in shaping differences among Earth's biomes in terms of soil processes, energy flow, and nutrient cycling
2. Demonstrate competency in their understanding of terrestrial ecosystem processes and patterns
3. Interpret ecological data and graph it appropriately using *ggplot2* in R
4. Critique past and present land use practices for their impact on ecosystem services, and propose management strategies that mitigate harmful ecological effects

## Textbooks

Chapin III FS, Matson PA, Vitousek PM (2011) *Principles of Terrestrial Ecosystem Ecology Second Edition*. Springer.

Additional scientific papers may be assigned.

## Course Schedule – note: subject to change

Monday (lab)	Wednesday	Friday
		Jan 4 – Introduction to <i>terra firma</i>
Jan 7 – No lab	Jan 9 – The big picture (Ch 1)	Jan 11 – Biomes
Jan 14 – Ecology of Ambrose	Jan 16 – Climate (Ch 2)	Jan 18 – Evolution and Drift
Jan 21 - ggplot2 tutorial	Jan 23 – Soil: formation and transformation (Ch 3)	Jan 25 – Hydrologic cycle (Ch 4)
Jan 28 – Biomes	Jan 30 – Gross Primary Productivity (Ch 5)	Feb 1 – Net Primary Productivity (Ch 6)
Feb 4 - Measuring productivity	Feb 6 – Soil ecology I (Ch 7)	Feb 8 – Soil ecology II (Ch 7)
Feb 11 – MIDTERM	Feb 13 – Plants and nutrients (Ch 8)	Feb 15 – Nutrient Cycling I (Ch 9)
Feb 18 – READING BREAK	Feb 20 – READING BREAK	Feb 22 – READING BREAK
Feb 25 – Ambrose’s aquatic terrestrials	Feb 27 – Nutrient Cycling II (Ch 9)	Mar 1 – Trophic dynamics (Ch 10)
March 4 – Winter ecology	Mar 6 – Species effects on ecosystems (Ch 11)	Mar 8 – Time (Ch 12)
March 11 – TBA	Mar 13 – Landscape ecology (Ch 13)	Mar 15 – Are the Earth’s ecosystems changing? (Ch 14)
March 18 – TBA	Mar 20 – Urban biome	Mar 22 – Urban biome
March 25 – Data presentations	Mar 27 – ARC – NO DAYTIME CLASSES	Mar 29 – Urban biome
April 1 – Open review	Apr 3 – Managing ecosystems (Ch 15)	Apr 5 – Review

## Requirements:

Midterm – 20%

Final exam – 40%

In-class activities/homework – 10%

Labs – 30%

Ambrose ecology data presentation/interpretation – 12%

Tutorial – 2%

Biomes – 3%

Productivity – 5%

Aquatic terrestrials – 2%

Winter ecology – 2%

TBA – 2%

TBA – 2%

## Attendance:

Although attendance to lectures is not mandatory, it will be tracked. Missed lectures will result in deductions from your “in-class activities” grade. Assignments done in class cannot be made up if missed.

Attendance *is* compulsory for all laboratory exercises and exams; **missing two or more labs results in automatic failure of the course.**

## Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

Grad	Percent	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	96-100	4.00	Outstanding
A	92-96	4.00	Excellent - superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	88-92	3.70	
B+	83-88	3.30	
B	78-83	3.00	Good-clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
B-	73-78	2.70	
C+	68-73	2.30	
C	64-68	2.00	Satisfactory – basic understanding of the subject matter. Grade point average below 2.00 is not sufficient for promotion.
C-	60-64	1.70	Minimum grade required if needed as a prerequisite course
D+	55-60	1.30	
D	50-55	1.00	Minimal pass – marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
F	<50	0	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

## Other:

### Late assignment policies

Homework or lab assignments cannot be submitted late without cause and approval from the professor. Homework assigned during lecture is **due at the start of lecture** for which it is due, or at the **end of the lecture** for which it was assigned; anything else will be considered late. Lab assignments **are due at the beginning of lab**; anything after the start of the lab will be considered late. The penalty for late homework or lab assignments are as follows:

- 5%/day for late assignments that have been communicated to the professor ahead of time.
- 10%/day for late assignments if the professor has to track you down to find out what is going on.
- 0% on any assignments passed in one week after the due date, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. *These assignments will still be “graded” so that you can have feedback before the exam, even if your official grade is 0.*

**If your name is not on the assignment, it will not be graded and you will receive a grade of 0 for failing to submit an assignment.**

Missed midterms or final exams, without cause, cannot be made up. The only acceptable reason for missing an exam is illness, for which a doctor’s note will be required. Give yourself plenty of time to get to school on exam days. Traffic or weather is no reason for missing an exam.

### Plagiarism policy

Some lab assignments will be submitted as a single copy per lab group. It is expected that all members of the group contribute equally to the assignment. This is a good opportunity to help your fellow students understand concepts they may be struggling with. Please ensure all members of the group are named on such assignments. **Group members whose names are not on the submitted assignment will receive a grade of zero.**

All other assignments will be submitted as one original piece of work per person. If you submit an assignment with only your name on it, it is assumed that you are the sole contributor of the work.

See below for Ambrose’s statement defining plagiarism and outlining its consequences. In brief, it is your responsibility as a citizen of Ambrose to be aware of the policies of Ambrose and abide by them. Ignorance is no excuse. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited, to:

1. Copying an assignment from someone else and submitting it as your own work.
2. Working with a friend and writing down identical answers, whether you understand the content or not, and submitting the assignments separately.
3. Quoting directly from a source without supplying quotation marks or a citation.
4. Quoting directly from a source without supplying quotation marks, even if it is referenced.
5. Copying nearly word-for-word from a source, changing only the occasional word, without providing quotation marks, even if it is referenced.

6. Submitting an assignment in which >30% of the content is properly quoted; that is, at least 70% of the words in an assignment need to be your own. A general rule of thumb: for every line quoted, there should be three lines of your own material explaining that quote.
7. Submitting the same or similar assignment for more than one class, or more than one iteration of the same class.
8. Not citing illustrations used in a paper.

A tutorial explaining some of the above can be found at:

<http://library.acadiau.ca/sites/default/files/library/tutorials/plagiarism/>

### **Penalties for plagiarism**

For a first offense in any one of my classes, a zero on the assignment with no chance of rewriting it, and a note in your academic file.

For a second offense in any one of my classes, a zero in the class, and recommendation for a note on your transcript.

For a third offense in any one of my classes, a zero in the class and a recommendation for expulsion from the university.

Note that Ambrose has an appeals process in place if you feel that allegations of plagiarism are unfounded; these are for final marks only, and not for individual assignments.

Note that my record of a student's past plagiarism does not reset with each semester.

### **Classroom Etiquette:**

It is expected that students will take an active role in the learning process. This includes: (a) regular class and lab attendance, (b) reading course material in advance of class or labs, and (c) engaging in discussions during class or labs.

In respect to the professor and to your fellow students, we ask that you:

- a) Turn your phone off during class and that you don't use it for texting during lecture or lab;
- b) Not have conversations with the people beside you during lecture – it is very distracting to the people around you;
- c) Use your laptops for lecture material and assignments only – that you are not using the internet or Facebook during class time;
- d) Arrive to lecture and lab on time;
- e) Don't listen to music in class or lab.

These will help to maximize the learning experience for you and your fellow students (and will keep your professor in a good mood).

## Ambrose University Academic Policies:

### Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

### Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

### Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

### Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a

laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

### Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at [privacy@ambrose.edu](mailto:privacy@ambrose.edu).

### Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

### Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

### Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

**Note:** Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.