STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: The primary goal of this course is to give an overview of methods used in conducting field research on mammals. Students will receive lecture and field lab instruction on survey methods, including sampling strategies for establishing mammalian fauna of an area, collecting methods for various orders of mammals, indirect methods for assessing populations, such as remote camera use, and preparation of voucher specimens for natural history collections. Students also will be trained in data collection, preparation of field notes, and use of keys. The class will travel to multiple areas of Costa Rica for study of mammals in several ecosystems.

METHODS OF ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Knowledge of Student Learning Outcomes will be assessed as multiple choice, fill-in, or discussion questions on examinations.

Pre-Trip topics covered:

Introduction to Costa Rica
Itinerary and planning for the trip; what to bring; currency
What are mammals; mammal diversity
Introduction to systematic collections and methods for collecting scientific specimens
Importance of field notes
biodiversity sampling for mammals

DATE

6 JULY  Pre-trip lectures, final orientation, and exam 1

7 JULY  Depart San Angelo – 2:20 pm American Airlines 3843 to Dallas; AA 986 4:35 pm – arrive in San Jose 7:45 pm; immigration, customs, hotel

8 JULY  Visit Universidad de Costa Rica Museum; city tour

9 JULY  Travel to Sarapiquí. Check in and lunch at Tirimbina Field Station.

10-11 JULY  Field work at Tirimbina. mist-netting, frogs, birds; white water rafting.


14 JULY  Travel to Puntarenas and by ferry to Paquera; check-in at Curu Wildlife Refuge.

15-17 JULY  Mammal sampling and other field work at Curu Wildlife Refuge; coral reef visit, Tortuga Island

18-20 JULY  Travel by ferry to Dominical; boat trip on Tarcoles River; Marino Lodge, Uvita. Whale-watching trip; Marino Ballena National Park; visit Barú Rainforest Reserve
21-22 JULY  Travel to San Vito, and check in at Hotel El Ceibo; tour at Wilson Botanical Garden. Lunch at Las Cruces Field Station and afternoon walk at Las Cruces forest.

23-24 JULY  Departure to Alturas Field Station on the border of La Amistad International Park; field work with mammal sampling.

25-28 JULY  Travel to San Gerardo de Dota; visit Paramo; hike in cloud forest; field work and mammal sampling. Savegre Lodge

29 JULY  Travel to Turrialba; Espino Blanco.

30-31 JULY  Early departure for Tortuguero via Pavona. Boat trip through Tortuguero National Park. visit Turtle Museum and night visit to observe Green Turtles nesting.

1 AUG  Travel to Pavona by boat and then on to San Jose for farewell dinner.

2 AUG  Depart Costa Rica with very early trip to SJO airport for flight; AA 2436 – 6:44 a.m. to Dallas; immigration/customs and then AA 3681 – 4:45 pm arriving in San Angelo 5:46 p.m.

3 AUG  1:30 P.M. FINAL EXAM – CAV 123

COURSE POLICIES

GRADING: The course grade will be based on two exams (40%), grades on project reports (25%) and field notes (25%), and participation, cooperation, and effort in the field (10%). Project reports and field notes will be due Monday, 6 August at 5 pm. Details on project and field note requirements will be given in class.

Final course grade will be based on the following:
A = >90%  B = 80% – 89.9%  C = 70% – 79.9%  D = 60% – 69.9%  F = < 60%

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in the web version of the Student Handbook. My policy for cheating on an exam is to give a grade of zero on the exam and to provide your name and details of the incident to the department head. You should understand that your loss of credibility on any future (or past) work is the worst penalty for cheating on an exam.

DISABILITIES: Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request and to implement academic accommodations.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAY: A student who intends to observe a religious holy day during the semester should make that intention known in writing to the instructor during the first week of the semester and one week prior to the absence. If this submission is completed, a student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take make up missed exams or assignments scheduled for that day in accordance with syllabus policy.

PERSONAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS COURSE: As with many courses in biology, field methods in mammalogy has many inherent risks. Because you will have the opportunity to work with live and dead animals, and to participate in field work, there will be risks not encountered in many other courses at Angelo State University. I will make every effort to minimize the risks and provide information to minimize exposure to hazards; however, you should be aware that hazards exist in this course. You will be asked to sign a release waiver to fully participate in the course. Additional information concerning this will be provided in class.