

ENV 199, Biological Invasions – First Year Seminar

Department of Environmental Sciences, Fall 2018

I. COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor:	Prof. Patrick Della Croce
Instructor's Email:	pdellacroce@fus.edu
Office Hours:	Tue/Fri 11:30 – 13:00 (by appointment only) Thu 14:30 – 17:30 (first come – first serve)
Class location:	LAC 3 (North Campus)
Class meeting times:	Tue/Fri 13:00 – 14:15

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Human-mediated introductions of species outside of their native range have long been part of human history. While initially the introduction of non-native species to new habitats was seen mostly positively and even as advantageous for the local biodiversity, to date, biological invasions are widely recognized as one of the major threats to biodiversity and native species. Yet, the rate of introductions of non-native species worldwide is still increasing. Using, among others, the story of the introductions of rainbow trout in the United States and examples from Ticino and the Alps, this seminar will explore the history of human-mediated biological invasions; the reasons behind the introductions of non-native species; and the effects of non-native species on local species, local ecosystems, and us. Field trips, including possibly a weekend in the Alps, will be integral and required parts of the seminar. Like all First Year Seminars, this course will cultivate the fundamental critical and academic skills necessary for succeeding in college.

III. RATIONALE

The First Year Seminar is part of the First Year Experience that connects academic work with other aspects of Franklin such as orientation, advising, academic support, residential life, and co-curricular activities. A foundational piece in the university core, it is required for all incoming students, incoming study abroad students, transfer students with fewer than 30 credits and advanced bridge program students.

IV. COURSE GOALS

The broad goal of this course is to help students adapt to university-level academic expectations. It prepares students for a successful incoming year by introducing them to resources available on campus such as the library and the Writing and Learning Center and emphasizes the development of critical thinking and analytical skills. It also provides opportunities to attain general study and research skills that transfer to other classes both across and up the curriculum.

V. SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully pass this course will be able to demonstrate that they:

- can critically assess and discuss course readings and class materials;

- are familiar with multiple examples of invasive species from all over the world and their impact on native species, the receiving ecosystems, and on us;
- can actively participate in and constructively contribute to class discussions;
- can gather, summarize, and present in a clear and structured manner peer-reviewed information in written (e.g., research paper) as well as orally (e.g., presentations and debates);
- can apply the concepts learned in class to provide constructive criticism to improve classmates' research papers.

Moreover, successful students will actively and creatively contribute to the FYS showcase.

VI. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

An Entirely Synthetic Fish: How Rainbow Trout Beguiled America and Overran the World. By Anders Halverson

VII. ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

At the end of the semester students will receive a score between 0 and 100%, based on:

In-class participation	10%
Group projects	20%
Peer reviews	20%
Individual project paper and presentation	40%
Showcase	10%

Nonattendance may lower your final score as described below.

VIII. ASSESSMENT DETAILS

In-class participation:

This score will reflect: a) your behavior and participation during discussions and lectures; b) your ability to answer readings-related questions, and; c) your performance in quizzes and/or exams.

Group projects:

Throughout the semester you will be assigned several group projects including, but not limited to, the analysis and presentation of reading assignments and the preparation of a debate. Each group project will equally contribute to your final score in this category. All members of each group will receive the same score for a given assignment.

Peer review:

During the semester, each student will provide comments (peer reviews) on papers of fellow class mates. The quality of your peer reviews will determine your score in the category (see specific guidelines in Moodle).

Individual project paper and presentation:

These are the scores you will receive for your annotated bibliography (10%), your final project paper (50%) and your final project presentation (40%). See details on Moodle.

Attendance Policy:

A total of 2 absences will be tolerated during the course of the term as long as efforts are made by the student to make up all homework and missed in-class work. A third absence will automatically result in a grade reduction from the final grade (i.e. a B+ would drop to a B). Five unexcused absences will result in a report to the dean and the registrar.

Note that absences in off-class mandatory activities count as absences.

Assignments turn-in policy and late turn-in policy:

Late papers/written assignments will be penalized 10% per day without documented evidence of a major disruption to your work. No papers/written assignments will be accepted more than 5 days after the deadline, and will automatically be graded with an F. Note that all papers/written assignments must be formatted according to the instructions

provided in class or on Moodle. Failure to follow the formatting instructions will result in a one-time 10% grade reduction for the assignment.

Note:

The instructor reserves the right to supplement the mark given for any assignment with an oral interview.

IX. GRADING POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Excellent		A = 100% - 93%	A- = 92.9% - 90%
Good	B+ = 89.9% - 87%	B = 86.9% - 83%	B- = 82.9% - 80%
Adequate	C+ = 79.9% - 77%	C = 76.9% - 73%	C- = 72.9% - 70%
Inadequate	D+ = 69.9% - 67%	D = 66.9% - 63%	D- = 62.9% - 60%
Poor	F = below 60%		

Refer to Moodle (or the FUS Catalog) for a more detailed explanation of grades.

X. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE (POLICIES / REQUIREMENTS)

This course will consist of lectures, discussions of readings, presentations, and debates. It is therefore fundamental that you come prepared to classes. This means that you must complete your reading assignments and homework before class, and come prepared with questions and discussion points. The workload outside of class will vary throughout the semester and will require individual and group work.

Disruptive behavior in class or during group works will lower your grade. The use of personal computers, cell phones, and the like during classes is not allowed without prior instructor's consent. Failure to follow these policies will result in a warning or in dismissal from class and an automatic 5% reduction of the final grade.

Course updates, class readings, and schedule's changes may be posted on Moodle or announced per e-mail; please check your Franklin email and Moodle regularly.

XI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: STATEMENT ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

A student whose actions are deemed by the University to be out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives or the spirit of good conduct as fostered by the University and Swiss community, may be placed on Disciplinary Probation or become subject to dismissal from the University. Cheating is a dishonest action out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives and spirit of the University. Furthermore, cheating reflects negatively on one's personal integrity and is unjust to those students who have studied.

See the Academic Catalog for full statement (page 199):

https://www.fus.edu/images/pdf/FUS_ACADEMIC_CATALOG_2018_2020_web.pdf

XII. RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Franklin University Switzerland offers several resources that can help you succeed in this course, among which are:

- **Office hours:** these are dedicated times in the week during which the instructor is available to students for class or school business. Office hours are listed above. Office hours are on a first come first serve basis or by appointment. Note that outside of office hours the instructor cannot guarantee the same level of availability.
- **Academic Mentor (AM):** the AM is there to help students with course material and school related issues. However, remember that the AM is also a student and has other obligations besides those associated with being an AM. Please respect the AM's mentoring times.

- **Writing and Learning Center (WLC):** the WLC is a great resource for students to use when working on papers, assignments, or studying schedule. Students are strongly encouraged to visit and take advantage of the WLC.
- **Libraries:** there are two libraries on campus where students can study, research papers, or seek help for class assignments.
- **Accessibility Services:** if you have a documented learning disability, or think you may need to be tested for it, contact Accessibility Services at: accessibility.services@fus.edu.

XIII. COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change. See Moodle or class for changes)

Week	Day	Tuesday	Class Topic	Notes
	Thu	Aug 23th	Introductions and prep. for registration	
1	Tue	Aug. 28th	Course overview: syllabus, book, project(s)	
	Fri	Aug. 31st	The scientific method: hypotheses and predictions	
2	Tue	Sept. 4th	Basics of evolution, ecology, and species distributions	
	Fri	Sept. 7th	Library visit (part I)	Location: Grace Library
3	Tue	Sept. 11th	About trout: Introduction to the book	
	Fri	Sept. 14th	Library visit (part II) - How to read papers	Location: LAC 3
4	Tue	Sept. 18th	Introduction to biological invasions	
	Fri	Sept. 21st	Invasion paradox - Quiz	Project topic due
5	Tue	Sept. 25th	Local invasive plants	
	Fri	Sept. 28th	Effects on ecosystems (part I)	
6	Tue	Oct. 2nd	Effects on ecosystems (part II)	
	Fri	Oct. 5th	Writing papers and plagiarism workshop	Annotated bibliography due
Sat 6th or Sun 7th - Field trip (all day, mandatory) - Location TBD				
7	Tue	Oct. 9th	Book discussion (part I): what happen?	
	Fri	Oct. 12th	Book discussion (part II): was/is it right?	
8	Tue	Oct. 16th	Fish introduction case: preparation	
	Fri	Oct. 19th	Fish introduction case: presentations	Paper draft due
Oct 20th - Nov 3rd : Academic travel				
11	Tue	Nov. 6th	Introduction to biocontrol	
	Fri	Nov. 9th	Class debate	
12	Tue	Nov. 13th	Protection of native species (part I)	Reviews of drafts due
	Fri	Nov. 16th	Protection of native species (part II)	
13	Tue	Nov. 20th	Presentations workshop	
	Fri	Nov. 23rd	Thanksgiving break - no class	
14	Tue	Nov. 27th	Preparation of showcase	
	Fri	Nov. 30th	TBD	
15	Tue	Dec. 4th	Project presentations (part I)	Showcase preparation
	Fri	Dec. 7th	Project presentations (part II) / Course Evaluations	Evening: Showcase
16	Dec. 8th - 9th : Reading Days - Dec. 10th - 14th : Final Exams week			
	Dec. 14th , 11:00 - 13:00: Final Exam ENV 199 Biological Invasions (LAC 3)			

XIV. OFF-CLASS MANDATORY ACTIVITIES

In the context of the *Tutte Le Strade* events series, the following are mandatory events.

- **Convocation** Tue Aug. 28th 19:00 (Auditorium)
- **Alcohol Knowledge and Awareness** Mon Sep. 3rd 17:30 (Auditorium)
- **Sustainability Program** Mon Sep. 10th 17:30 (Falcon's Nest)
- **TBD**

Furthermore, your AM may organize a workshop as part of his/her duties as AM. The workshop is also mandatory.