1. **Who is my teacher?** Dr. Jaime L. Baxter-Slye

   Office: working remotely; otherwise normally I’m in ENV 325H

   Office hours: by appointment is best and you can email me with three times that you are available and I will pick one; otherwise, I will have zoom open on Monday 11am – 12pm and Tuesday 9am – 10am

   Email: *slye@unt.edu*

   **NOTE – DO NOT** email through Canvas. Use only the TA email address provided above.

2. **What are the objectives of this lab?**: Introduce students to general ecological concepts, methods, instruments, and equipment for applied field-based investigations of the biotic and abiotic components of various ecosystems. This lab will expose students to:

   A. Designing experiments
   B. Develop observational skills, learn field notebook techniques
   C. Data collection using basic field methods for forest, stream, prairie, and bird assessments
   D. Data processing, including identification to lowest possible taxonomic level
   E. Data analysis
   F. Individual report writing and group presentation

3. **How will I be graded?**: Use this table to figure out your grade. Do not go by what Canvas has listed as sometimes that is not being calculated correctly.

   | Field Trip Attendance | 50 |
   | Field Trip Entry | 100 |
   | PackBack (7 topics X 30 pts each) | 210 |
   | At Home Activities (5 topics x 100 points each) | 500 |
   | Individual Introduction & Materials and Methods | 100 |
   | Group Results | 100 |
   | Group Final Report | 100 |
   | Group Presentation | 100 |
   | **Peer-reviewed Participation** | 50, with the possibility of receiving a lower grade on the group results, final report and final presentation. If there is zero participation, the student will receive a zero for the participation grade, and a zero for the affected group assignments. |

**Total Possible Points** 1310

**Release of Grades:**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (1974), does not permit faculty or staff to report grades by phone or email. In addition, per University policy, grades cannot be posted. Do not request any information from your TA about grades unless it is in person. For Fall 2020, a Zoom meeting will be required to discuss grades.
4. **What materials do I need for the lab?:**

1. Blank page composition book/journal 8x10
2. Pen or pencil
4. Appropriate clothes for field trips (closed-toed shoes preferably hiking boots, long pants, tall socks, hat, etc)
5. Large water bottle and snacks to bring on field trips, sunblock, camera or phone with camera
6. PackBack (see PackBack in section 6)
7. Distributed take home supplies (see section 7)
8. Working device with audio and visual to zoom, manage CANVAS, submit assignments, etc.
9. Download the iNaturalist application on your smartphone and desktop.

5. **How will I know what I need to do each week?**

Weekly lab modules will be created on Canvas. There will be a list of items to complete each week. Modules will be made available at 9:45 am on Fridays, and you will have one week to complete each module. All weekly assignments will be due by 9:45am on the following Friday. Within each module you will find:

a) instructions for the week

b) Zoom meeting link for each Friday at 10am, unless a field trip is occurring. If a field trip is occurring, there will be a video to watch covering the instructions/announcements for the week.

c) Journal article or other reading material

d) PackBack assignment regarding the assigned reading material

e) Training videos if applicable

f) Lab activity assignment to complete on your own if you are not attending a field trip

g) Field trip assignment to be completed by those students that attend a field trip

6. **What are PackBack Assignments?**

In lieu of weekly quizzes, we have opted to have open discussions regarding assigned journal article reading on the PackBack platform. Your participation on Packback will count toward 16% of your overall course grade, or a total of 210 points.

There will be a Weekly Friday at 9:45AM CST deadline for submissions. In order to receive your points per week, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

- 1 open-ended Question per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50, each worth 10pts of each assignment grade
- 2 Responses per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 55, each worth 10pts of each assignment grade

Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.
How to Register on Packback:
An email invitation will be sent to you from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration. If you don’t receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below:

1. Create an account by navigating to https://questions.packback.co and clicking “Sign up for an Account”
   Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.

2. Then enter our class community’s lookup key into the “Looking to join a community you don’t see here?” section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.
   Community Lookup Key: f4edd741-24b4-4888-95c5-55f15b160823

3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

Packback may require a paid subscription. Refer to www.packback.co/product/pricing for more information.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team:
If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

7. What supplies is UNT providing?

There will be some activities that you will be conducting at your home. We will distribute the following supplies to you:
   a) binoculars
   b) measuring tape

Kaitlynn Davis or I will be available at the Environmental Science greenhouse (west side of the ENV SCI building in the parking lot) the following times to distribute supplies. If you cannot be available during these times, please email Dr. Slye for accommodations. You don’t need to park, just pull up in your car and we will hand them to you. Please wear a mask.

   a) 2:00 – 3:00 pm on Monday (8/31)
   b) 3:00 – 4:00 pm on Tuesday (9/1)
   c) 4:00 – 5:00 pm on Wednesday (9/2)
   d) 9:30 – 10:30 am Thursday (9/3)

8. What are the other assignments, besides PackBack, going to be?

   a. Weekly at home activity (unless it is your field trip week) Follow the instruction guidelines for completing the at home activities.

   b. Field trip check (only completed by students who go on a field trip for a given week)
   During the semester, students will attend a field trip instead of conducting an at home activity.
Students should fill out field notebooks with information obtained on the field trip. Field notebooks will be brought on field trips to record pertinent data. Points will be taken off for forgetting the notebooks, disorganized or sloppy entries, or for failing to write an entry. Please refer to the posted rubric for grading information.

c. **Individually written introduction and materials and methods to a group report** Each student will be assigned to the tree group, the aquatic group, the prairie group, or the bird group. After we complete a field trip, students will individually write an introduction to their group in which they belong. Students will write the introductions, as well as materials and methods, by themselves and receive detailed feedback in order to improve their writing skills. Please refer to the template and grading rubric on Canvas. After the completion of the individual introduction and materials and methods assignment, students will use their writings to combine into a group report.

d. **Group results rough draft** After students have received feedback on their individual writing assignment, the group will write the results section together. Feedback will be given to the group. Corrections will be made and incorporated into the group final report. Please refer to the template and rubric on Canvas. One student needs to act as editor to ensure the paper flows as is one person wrote the report.

e. **Group final report** After receiving feedback from individual introductions, materials and methods, and the group results rough draft, the entire group will generate a full final report. The report will be written as if it were going to be submitted to a scientific journal. Please refer to the template and rubric for this assignment on Canvas. One student needs to act as the editor to ensure the paper flows as if one person wrote the report. The components of the report will be:

   - title page
   - table of contents
   - abstract
   - introduction
   - materials and methods
   - results
   - discussion
   - recommendations
   - references

f. **Group Powerpoint Presentation** The group will work together to generate a 15 minute group Powerpoint presentation to be delivered via zoom during the “Semi-Annual Ecology Laboratory Symposium”. All students from the class will attend the symposium, along with invited guests such as other professors and stakeholders, like the grounds supervisor at UNT. Please refer to the template and rubric posted on Canvas. All group members must put in equal time and effort into making the presentation.
h. Participation Working effectively and appropriately in a group is a necessary skill in the field of ecological sciences. A peer-reviewed participation grade will be determined by all group members and count towards 50 points of the entire lab grade. The instructor and their peers will assess the level of participation throughout the semester. This includes data collecting and recording, writing and turning in quality introductions, materials and methods, results, discussion, and recommendations for the group paper. It also includes meeting with groups, providing feedback, help with editing, and working on the presentation.

All group members will have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor on all group members, as well as themselves. Any issues should be first handled within the group, but if need be can be addressed with the instructor as they occur.

11. EXTRA CREDIT:
Students can complete one extra credit assignment (optional). Completing this assignment can replace 1 zero obtained from a non-school-approved absence for the weekly at home activity and PackBack discussion for a total 130 points. If a student has turned in all assignments, the extra credit assignment may result in an increase in the overall lab grade. Extra credit opportunities will be posted throughout the semester and will usually consist of field work (bird banding with Dr. Bednarz, working at the Pollinative Prairie with Dr. Slye, Volunteering at LLELA, etc.). There may restrictions due to the current health situation that will reduce the number of activities approved for extra credit work. Details to follow.

12. ATTENDANCE:
We will not be taking attendance at the weekly zoom meetings. Your attendance is only for your benefit. You cannot expect to do well in this particular lab if you do not actively participate during the zoom meetings, at home activities, field trips, group writing assignments, and the final presentation symposium. Additionally, your group will achieve success if you actively interact with one another via apps like Group Me, Google Drives, etc. There will be a Group Me available for Fall 2020 Ecology lab. In addition, we recommend a GroupMe for individual groups.

13. LAB RULES:
• Wear a mask and physically distance with six foot spacing between you and other people during any field trip, extra credit trip, or if we are in lab for data processing.

• Be considerate of your group members. You are expected to fully participate with your group members.

• If you are ill or have another University approved excuse for missing assignments or field trips, you must email your instructor ASAP to schedule accommodations for any missed work.

• You must obtain and maintain a device that allows you to complete all assignments and participate in zoom meetings for the Fall 2020 semester.

14. POLICY ON INCOMPLETES:
Students may discuss this option with the Laboratory Supervisor, Dr. Jaime Baxter-Slye at slye@unt.edu. An incomplete (I) is a non-punitive grade, given only during the last one-fourth of a semester and only if a student is (1) passing the course; (2) has a justifiable reason why the class cannot be completed on schedule; and (3) arranges with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements that the instructor must list on the grade sheet turned in at the end of the semester. All work
must be completed within the time specified by the instructor (not to exceed one year after taking the course).

15. POLICY ON DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:
All ODA letters and accommodations must be discussed preferably during the first week of school with the Laboratory Supervisor, Dr. Jaime Baxter-Slye at slye@unt.edu. “The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.”

16. POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:
BIOL 2141 labs have a zero-tolerance policy for scholastic dishonesty. Students who are found to have committed scholastic dishonesty (all forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, copying from another student’s individual or group assignments) will fail this course.

The term ‘plagiarism’ includes, but is not limited to:
1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment;
2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. Examples: copying word for word or even a phrase from a publication, including web pages, without placing quotes around the phrase and citing the source.

Students suspected of scholastic dishonesty will automatically be assigned a grade of "F" until the matter is resolved through proper procedures. Students are expected to know their rights and responsibilities as put forth in the University of North Texas Undergraduate Catalog and the Student Guidebook.

Due to unexpected weather, the schedule may change. We will go on field trips in light rain. Check Canvas announcements for field trip schedule changes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>LAB TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td></td>
<td>First Zoom meeting at 10am. Zoom link will be posted on Canvas. Topic: Introduction, safety, group determination, expectations, and schedule. PackBack Assignment given and will be due 9/4 by 9:45am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| September 4<sup>th</sup> | • Obtain supplies from the ENV greenhouse (see section 7 above for times)  
• Complete PackBack by 9:45 am. | Zoom meeting at 10am. Topic: Survey of Plant and Animal Taxonomy and Identification techniques; biotic parameters measurement. Ecosystem Services PackBack and Taxa Scavenger Hunt At Home Assignment will be given |
| September 11<sup>th</sup> | • PackBack discussions about Ecosystem Services due by 9:45am  
• At home activity “Taxa Scavenger Hunt” due by 9:45am | Zoom meeting at 10 am. Topic: Site background, instrument introduction abiotic parameter measurement. Abiotic Conditions PackBack and At Home Assignments given |
| September 18<sup>th</sup> | • PackBack discussions about “Abiotic Conditions” due by 9:45am  
• At home activity “Abiotic Conditions” due by 9:45am | Pre-recorded Zoom meeting; no active Zoom meeting  
UNT Tree Survey Field Trip for the tree group members: Meet at the ENV pond in front of building. Wear a mask!  
All other students will be provided “Trees in my yard” At Home activity  
All students given “Forest Restoration” PackBack Assignment |
| September 25<sup>th</sup> | • All students PackBack discussions about Forest Restoration due by 9:45am  
Non-field trip students At home activity “Trees in my yard” due by 9:45am  
Tree Field trip entries due by 9:45am | Pre-recorded Zoom meeting; no active Zoom meeting  
Pollinative Prairie Bird Survey for bird group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!  
All other students will be provided “Birds in my yard” At home activity  
All students given “Tropic Assessment of Nesting Bird Videos” assignment in lieu of PackBack |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Non-field trip students</th>
<th>Pre-recorded Zoom meeting; no active Zoom meeting</th>
<th>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2nd</td>
<td>At home activity “Birds in my yard” due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bird Field trip entries due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All students Trophic Assessment of Nesting Bird Videos assignment in lieu of PackBack due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9th</td>
<td>Non-field trip students At home activity “Plants in my yard” due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plant Field trip entries due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All students Online Pollinative Prairie PackBack due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 16th</td>
<td>Non-field trip students At home activity “Bugs in my yard” due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Aquatic Field trip entries due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>All students Aquatic Assessment of the Trinity River” PackBack due by 9:45am</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 23rd</td>
<td>Individual Introduction and Materials and Methods due by 9:45</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 30th</td>
<td>Nothing due@</td>
<td>Pollinative Prairie Plant Assessment field trip for plant group members: Meet at the Pollinative Prairie. Wear a mask!</td>
<td>All other students will be provided “Plants in my yard” At home activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| November 6<sup>th</sup> | • Group Results due by 9:45am | Live Zoom meeting at 10am Topic: writing feedback, results organization, final report and presentation organization  
All groups will also receive Group Report and Presentation assignment templates due 11/20 |
| --- | --- | --- |
| November 13<sup>th</sup> | • Nothing due | Live Zoom meeting at 10am Topic: Group Report and Presentation organization  
All groups will be assigned Group Final Report and Group Presentation due 11/20 |
| November 20th | • Group Final Report and presentation due 9:45 | The Semi-Annual Ecology Laboratory Symposium  
All students will attend a live Zoom meeting.  
Groups will be presenting their group presentations. |