

What's A Wolf?

Syllabus – Fall 2008

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Office location: Forestry and Environmental Science, Rm 184

Office hours: T, Th; 12:45 pm – 1:30 pm, or by appointment

Tentative Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Your Preparation for Class
1	9/2	Course introduction	None
		Umwelts	Read <i>A View From The Oak</i>
	9/4	Wolf umwelt Web site assignment	Read <i>A View From The Oak</i> None
2	9/9	Wolf umwelt Web site assignment due	Read <i>A View From The Oak</i> Will discuss web articles in class
	9/11	Library instruction/tour	Meet at the library reference desk on the second floor
3	9/16	Study skills	None
	9/18	Summary essay of <i>Automata and Animal Rights</i> due Historical view of wolves and wildlife	None Read <i>Animals as Automata</i> Read <i>The Case for Animal Rights</i>
		Formal writing #1 topic due	Decide on a topic
4	9/23	Historical view of wolves and wildlife Summary essay of Ch. 12 due	Read Ch. 12 (Fritts et al.) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i> None
	9/25	Historical view of wolves and wildlife Summary essay of <i>Thinking Like A Wolf</i> due	Read <i>Thinking Like A Wolf</i> None
5	9/30	Rough draft of formal writing #1 due Wolf ecology	Prepare rough draft Read Ch. 4 (Peterson & Cuiccu) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i>
	10/2	Wolf ecology Summary essay of Ch. 5 due	Read Ch. 5 (Mech & Peterson) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i> Read Ch. 5 (Mech & Peterson) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i>
6	10/7	Wolf communication Summary essay of Ch. 3 due	Read Ch. 3 (Harrington & Asa) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i> None
	10/9	Wolf communication Formal writing assignment #1 due	Read Ch. 3 (Harrington & Asa) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i> None
7	10/14	Pack dynamics Summary essay of <i>Collared Wolves</i> due	Read <i>Movements of Collared Wolves....</i> None
	10/16	Pack dynamics Summary essay of Ch. 1 due	Read Ch. 1 (Mech & Boitani) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i> None
8	10/21	Wolf Behavior Summary essay of Ch. 2 due	Read Ch. 2 (Packard) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i> None
	10/23	Wolf Behavior	Read Ch. 2 (Packard) in <i>Wolves: Behavior.....</i>
9	10/28	Animal learning/intelligence/emotions Summary essay of <i>Elephant Crackup</i> due	Read <i>An Elephant Crackup?</i> None
	10/30	Animal learning/intelligence/emotions	Read <i>Traumatic Stress Observed in a Wolf....</i>

10	11/4	Captivity – video Summary essay of Traumatic Stress due	Read <i>Traumatic Stress Observed in a Wolf...</i> None
	11/6	Captivity – video	None
11	11/11	Conservation and recovery Summary essay for Ch. 13 due	Read Ch. 13 (Boitani) in <i>Wolves: Behavior....</i> None
	11/13	Informal writing assignment	Will write in class; bring dictionary Read <i>A View From The Oak</i>
12	11/18	Wolf management Summary essay of Wolf Abundance due	Read <i>Wolf Abundance in Michigan</i> None
	11/20	Rough draft of formal writing #2 due Wolf management – video	None None
13	11/25	Thanksgiving recess	None
	11/27	Thanksgiving recess	None
14	12/2	Wolf research and techniques Summary essay of Michigan Wolf due	Read <i>Science Relevant to Michigan Wolf Management</i> None
	12/4	Formal writing assignment #2 due Paper presentations	None None
15	12/9	Paper presentations	None
	12/11	Paper presentations	None
16	Finals week		

Course goals

“What’s a wolf?” This seemingly simple question has been difficult for our culture to answer. Although wolves have impacted human culture for thousands of years, our perception of these animals has often produced a great deal of emotion and polarized views. Therefore, the major goals of this course are to practice and improve communication skills through accurate and efficient writing, calm and logical discussions, and utilization of critical thinking skills. Consequently, this course involves a good deal of reading so please “stay on top of it.”

We will also cover a broad range of topics in this class that often require different methods of "thought" and approaches. This will demand diverse and good study skills on your part. If this is a problem, here is your chance to obtain study habits that are required to do well in a four-year school. You'll be provided with techniques on how to deal with scientific information and how to make your studying a little easier. I will also be available to help you if necessary during office hours. If you can't make it, please make arrangements with me to meet at an alternate time.

This course consists mostly of discussions rather than lectures. We could possibly find other subjects we would like to explore or alter how we look at a current one. Therefore, the class schedule listed above is a tentative one. It could change slightly throughout the semester depending upon the needs of the class and instructor.

If you have problems with the material or meeting assignment deadlines, please see me so that I can help you meet the criteria set for this class. I want to make sure you understand as much of the material as possible so please do not hesitate to see me if you are having a problem!

Required purchases

1. Mech, L. D. & Boitani, L. 2003. *Wolves: Behavior, Ecology, and Conservation*. Chicago, IL: The

University of Chicago Press.

2. Kohl, J. & Kohl, H. 2000. *The View from the Oak*. New York, NY: The New Press.
3. Either the blue or green test booklets for informal writing assignments. You can purchase them at the bookstore, and you'll need at least two.
4. Any copies you make of required course readings that have been placed on reserve at the MTU library or downloaded from the internet.

Location and access to additional required reading

In addition to the two books you must purchase, you will have other required reading throughout the semester. These are listed in the class schedule according to when you'll need them for class. You can access them in one of two ways:

1. Michigan Tech Library.

For each of the articles listed below, there will be several copies available at the circulation desk (front entrance) of the library. You can check them out for a short period of time to read or make personal copies then return them to the circulation desk. Please do not mark on them or keep them for yourself. Remember that the entire class must have access to these articles at some point.

- a. Thinking like a wolf.
- b. Animals as automata.
- c. The case for animal rights.
- d. An elephant crackup?

2. Online.

From my web site, you can download the articles listed below as pdf files. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to read them. If you do not have this application a link will be provided so that you can download this free software to your computer, or use the library computers. To access the articles, go to <http://www.wolfandwildlifestudies.com>. You will see a menu for the site on every page. Simply click on *MTU Students* and a page with links to the articles will appear. Follow the instructions to download the articles and Adobe Acrobat Reader if necessary.

- a. Movements of radio collared wolves and their significance on pack assembly.
- b. Traumatic stress disorder observed in an adult wild captive wolf (*Canis lupus*).
- c. Estimating wolf abundance in Michigan.
- d. Review of social and biological science relevant to wolf management in Michigan.
- e. A copy of the class syllabus will also be available to download should you need it.

Evaluation process (600 points throughout the semester)

1. Informal writing (**38%** of final grade, 225 points total).

These are writing assignments to help you understand and comprehend the articles you must read before coming to class to discuss them. Therefore, they will help you organize your thoughts so that you can participate constructively in the classroom discussions. You must provide a summary of the information you read, as well as your thoughts about the material. You will also have a one-time in-class writing assignment that will pertain to your book *The View from the Oak*.

2. Formal writing (**33%** of final grade, 200 points total).

These are written papers that require some research on your part, therefore, they are not part of our time in class. However, we will discuss in class the requirements for both formal and informal writing and how to prepare these papers.

3. Occasional assignments (**4%** of final grade, 25 points total).

These include internet assignments that you will bring to class for discussion.

4. Participation, cooperation, and attendance (**25%** of final grade, 150 points total).

Some of the subjects we will cover in this course can be controversial and often raise the emotional level of the class. This makes for some "lively" discussions which are encouraged. Nevertheless, please respect the following:

- a. During these discussions, please do not compete with each other for "air time." Allow each person – one at a time - to give their opinion. In other words, please do not talk while someone else is talking. Use common courtesy.
- b. Whether a discussion is occurring or not, please refrain from talking to your "neighbor" during class. You have plenty of time to discuss things before and after class. Not only is it rude, but every student has paid for the right to hear the information. Consequently, many students find it irritating when someone's talking disrupts this process. Because all of you have paid money to receive information about wolves, "talkers" will be asked to leave the class for that day and/or their grade will drop. So, unless you are participating in a discussion, please do not talk in class.
- c. Please show up on time for class. I understand that sometimes "life" can make you late. But some students habitually arrive late to class and disrupt lectures, discussions, and everyone's concentration. For these people, if you cannot be in class on time don't come to class.
- d. Please turn off your cell phone during class time. If it goes off in class or if you answer it, you will be asked to leave class for that day and/or your grade will drop.
- e. Class attendance is mandatory. If you must miss class due to illness, emergencies, or approved university functions, you will need to inform me ahead of time, or in the case of emergencies, promptly thereafter. You can call and leave a message on my office phone or use email. You are allowed one unexcused absence that will not impact your grade. After that, your final grade will drop.

For mature students these rules are common sense. For those who have bad attitudes or no common sense, you'll lose 25 points for each transgression.

Grading

Final grades will be determined using the following curved (fixed) scale:

90 - 100%	=	A
85 - 89%	=	AB
80 - 84%	=	B
75 - 79%	=	BC
68 - 74%	=	C
60 - 67%	=	CD
50 - 59%	=	D
below 50%	=	F

Writing Center

This course requires you to have good reading and writing skills. Should you need assistance, I can certainly help. The Michigan Tech Writing Center, however, is a valuable resource designed specifically to help students increase their reading and writing comprehension. Staff members can help you with planning and organizing research papers, proofreading, library research, and other necessary academic skills. The Center is located in Walker Hall, Room 107, (906) 487-2007.

Special needs

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Dean of Students (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action office (487-3310).

Useful and necessary web sites

Perspective classes: scheduling and descriptions

(<http://www.bio.mtu.edu/courses/bl447/persp/skd/sked.htm>)

Michigan Department of Natural Resources/Gray Wolf

(http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10370_12145_12205-32569--,00.html)

Michigan Tech University home page

(<http://www.mtu.edu/>)

Michigan Tech Writing Center

(<http://www.hu.mtu.edu/wc/>)

Wolf & Wildlife Studies

(<http://www.wolfandwildlifestudies.com>)