

Introductory Lecture
WL 220 Introduction to Wildlife and Fisheries Management
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- A. Many students in this course are freshmen or transfer Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences majors; however, this lecture also pertains to freshman and sophomore non-majors. For those of you who are upper class students in other majors this message can still have utility.
1. **The Department wants you to recognize and understand why you and the faculty are here.**
 2. **We also want you to know and understand the importance of a variety of curricular and human relationship issues.**
- B. **“Why are you here?”**
1. There are many reasons why you might be here, they vary by person.
 2. For whatever reasons you are here **it is your responsibility to learn.**
 3. This involves both in classroom and out of classroom learning.
- C. **“Why are faculty here?”**
1. **Teaching and advising** are responsibilities of all faculty in our Department.
 - a. Assist students in learning.
 - b. Prepare students for careers.
 - c. Prepare students for life and to be good citizens.
 2. Department faculty also have contractual responsibilities other than teaching and advising – *i.e.*, **research and service**.
 - a. Faculty must balance all of their responsibilities.
 - b. All are paid for and evaluated on research and service, and these activities directly and greatly benefit all students in the program.
 3. Where our funding comes from.
 - a. Approximately 25% of the total Department budget is from the “University” (a portion of which is from tuition and fees that you pay). This 25% is to a large extent directed toward teaching and advising.
 - b. The other 75% is **faculty generated** and is primarily directed at research and service. Many things that benefit all students, including undergraduates, accrue from these research and service activities.
- D. What employers tell us about students and what students who graduated 5 to 10 years ago tell us about their education.
1. Graduates are very competent in areas relating to wildlife and fisheries.
 - a. They generally know what should be known about organisms, habitat, and the human dimension (three parts of a fishery or wildlife system).
 - b. The technical background of our students is very sound.
 - c. This does not mean that we cannot improve; we continue to evaluate and make changes in our curriculum where needed.

2. Usually identified deficiencies are in particular areas, including:
 - a. communications skills (written, oral, and listening),
 - b. critical thinking/problem solving skills, and
 - c. teamwork/leadership skills.
 - d. Some others are mentioned, but these seem to always be the top three for **all** university graduates, not just Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences majors and not just SDSU students.
 - e. The Department has always made continuous curricular changes directed at improving these and other areas. We have been successful, but we must continue to strengthen these skills.
 - f. There has been a lot of change in what is expected of students, this has also required adjustments. It has also added stressors to students and faculty. Areas such as statistics, computer usage, and human dimensions are additive.

- E. How we (students and faculty) in the Department try to address these problem areas and education in general.
 1. How faculty address the problem.
 - a. The curriculum and its development and interconnectedness are important. (Attached) (**Also see our Undergraduate Handbook on our Home Page <http://wfs.sdstate.edu>.**)
 - (1) You take courses.
 - (2) You must recognize that they are not separate.
 - (3) You cannot take and forget, they build on one another.
 - (4) A lot of effort is put into curriculum development; it is not just an arbitrary collection of courses.
 - (5) Input is obtained from agencies, professional organizations, peer departments, faculty, alumni, graduating seniors, and others.
 - (6) Constant curricular modification is a result of our efforts to keep you on the cutting edge of employment opportunities as employers change their expectations.
 - b. Our communications, critical thinking, statistics, ethics, computer, global competency, and teamwork/leadership skills matrices are important. They represent a portion of our attempt to address the skills deficiencies mentioned. (On our Home Page.)
 - (1) We know who does what in the classes that we teach.
 - (2) We pinpoint areas for modification in this way.
 - (3) We assign particular responsibilities by course.
 - (4) Every course cannot address every skill.
 2. How students address the problem.
 - a. Covered by your responsibility to learn.
 - b. Covered by your understanding of curriculum interconnectedness.
 - c. Covered by your understanding of what we are trying to do.
 - d. Covered by your using your mental resources as close to capacity as possible.
 3. **We take our curriculum seriously, so should students.**
 - a. We have an excellent national and international reputation.
 - b. Our reputation depends on faculty and student performance.

- c. Our students' future employment prospects (this is you) depend to a great degree on performance of alumni and the faculty.
- e. Future students will depend on your and our success.
- f. You are not in competition with students from Northern State or Black Hills State; you are in competition with students from Iowa State, Oregon State, etc.

F. Scientific method.

- 1. This is an underpinning of what you will do in your future jobs.
- 2. It is imperative that you understand the scientific method.
- 3. Despite newspaper and TV statements, science can neither prove nor disprove things.
- 4. When data obtained using the scientific method supports a hypothesis, it cannot be concluded that the hypothesis is true, only that it has not been rejected.
- 5. Also remember that rejection or nonrejection of a hypothesis is usually based on some level of statistical significance – an arbitrary decision.
- 6. The potential correctness of a hypothesis or theory increases as alternate hypotheses are rejected.
- 7. **Thus, hypotheses such as the law of gravity, natural selection, theory of relativity, and global warming are only hypotheses that can never be proven or disproven using the scientific method.**
- 8. All one can say is that based on current information something appears to be the case, and as more information is obtained the hypothesis is either strengthened or weakened.
- 9. You must be ready to change your mind as new information is obtained.
- 10. You must also understand the difference between belief and knowledge.

G. People are all different – this is a strength. It also requires **tolerance**.

- 1. All students are different.
 - a. Different ways of learning.
 - b. Different and changing reasons for continuing your educations.
 - c. Different personalities.
 - d. Different likes and dislikes.
 - e. Different backgrounds.
 - f. Different career and life goals.
 - g. Different mental resources (some must study harder than others).
 - h. Being exposed to differences has benefits, it diversifies your outlook.
- 2. All faculty are different.
 - a. Different responsibilities.
 - b. Different teaching styles.
 - d. Different backgrounds.
 - e. Different personalities.
 - f. Different areas of interest.
 - g. Different strengths and weaknesses.
 - h. Different approaches to students.
 - i. Different levels of experience.
 - j. Again, faculty members being different has benefits to you.

3. Faculty are not always right and students are not always right. Do not be afraid to question.

H. Learning modes and styles.

1. Passive versus active learning.
 - a. Much of your past education involved passive learning.
 - b. Students and faculty must move to a more active mode; this requires change. Change is often difficult.
 - (1) Classroom interactiveness.
 - (2) Out of class interactiveness.
 - (3) Improved communications, critical thinking, and teamwork/leadership skills result from active learning.
 - c. Passive learning is not participatory, active learning is.
 - d. More is learned in an active learning mode. It also requires more effort and thought on the part of a student and the faculty member.
 - e. The more advanced the course level, the greater the need for an active learning style.
 - f. Some learning requires memorization (you cannot use a dictionary until you have memorized the alphabet).
2. Learning styles.
 - a. Auditory and visual are the two most common learning styles. There are others, including tactile, but I will only address the two.
 - b. You must explore and find what works best for you and stylize your study to that mode.
 - c. **This results in more effective learning, greater retention, and improved time efficiency.**
 - d. For example, if you are an auditory learner:
 - (1) be especially attentive during class,
 - (2) read your class notes and text assignments out loud,
 - (3) audio tape your own notes and those of others from which to study,
 - (4) audio tape your reading assignments, and
 - (5) study with sound.
 - e. For example, if you are a visual learner:
 - (1) take excellent notes,
 - (2) recopy,
 - (3) incorporate other students' notes,
 - (4) draw pictures or figures to help you visualize the material, and
 - (5) write answers – study with sight.
 - f. Determine if you are a morning, midday, afternoon, or night person.
 - g. Determine if you do best while studying in quiet, noisy, or background noise situations.
 - h. Also things like lighting, body position, temperature, etc. are important.
 - i. Waiting until the last minute to study for exams reduces retention and is not an effective study mode. Cramming is usually the result of poor time management.
 - j. Study part of the time in groups, especially for tests.
 - k. Remember – **It is the student's responsibility to learn.**

3. One of major mistakes students make is not attending class at all times and not being alert and attentive in class. Sleep at home.
 - a. Do reading assignments before lecture-discussion-laboratory of that topic.
 - b. Review past notes before class.
 - c. Be well rested.
 - d. Eat right.
 - e. Doing poorly because you do not like a course, a portion of it, the instructor, or for some other reason is not an adequate or very logical excuse.
 - f. A good part of your future success will depend on your performance in disliked tasks – you will not be able to tell your supervisor that you did a bad job on an assignment because you did not like it.

I. Academic Dishonesty.

1. The Department has a specific policy on academic dishonesty.
2. You will receive this policy in every course you take in our Department (with the course syllabus). It is also on our Home Page.
3. There are also University procedures for academic dishonesty; ours is intended to be more “student friendly”.
4. This is a serious issue for you and your future and often students are unsure of what is or is not academic dishonesty.
5. Some forms of academic dishonesty are obvious, a few examples follow.
 - a. Copying from someone else’s test paper.
 - b. Using books or notes during an exam where they are not allowed.
 - c. Copying someone else’s term paper or report in any fashion.
6. Some other forms of academic dishonesty are just as bad, and students are at times unaware that they represent dishonest actions, a few examples follow.
 - a. Not citing other people’s work when you use their information.
 - b. Not using quotation marks (and a citation) when something is used verbatim (word for word) from another person’s work.
 - c. Modifying another person’s report and submitting it as your own.
 - d. Working collectively on assignments when the instructor has specified individual work.
7. If you are unsure if some action is unprofessional or academically dishonest, ask the instructor or your academic advisor.
8. Academic (professional) honesty and ethics are two different things.
 - a. Ethics are a personal choice issue based on individual belief; ethically you can answer for yourself such questions as “do I agree with hunting” or “is the animal rights philosophy something with which I agree”?
 - b. Academic honesty is not an ethical issue that each person chooses for themselves, it is a code of conduct for all (if they are professional and honest).