

**SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY**

**SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO**



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**COURSE TITLE:** AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM SURVEYS

**CODE NO. :** NET200 **SEMESTER:** 3

**PROGRAM:** FISH & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT TECHNICIAN/TECHNOLOGIST

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**DATE:** MAY 2015 **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:** MAY 2014

**APPROVED:** "Colin Kirkwood" **July 2015**

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**TOTAL CREDITS:** 3

**PREREQUISITE(S):** NONE

**HOURS/WEEK:** 3

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**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This is a field course designed to provide students with practical, hands-on instruction to assess the physical, chemical and biological parameters of lake and stream ecosystems. Surveys conducted will follow provincial protocols such as the Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network (OBBN) and the Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol (OSAP) to assess ecosystem condition. In addition, students will conduct a creel survey to determine fishing pressure on the St. Marys River during the Salmon run. Various Ontario index netting programs will be discussed as methods of providing an unbiased index of abundance as well as collecting biological information on important fish species. A freshwater invertebrate collection of 20 identified specimens is required for submission.

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will demonstrate the ability to:

**1. Prepare a field map of a lake to be surveyed**Potential Elements of the Performance:

- using appropriate maps, determine the location data for the study lake including local name, topographical map name, district, township, lot & concession, elevation, GPS coordinates, watershed code and access
- accurately determine lake perimeter, surface area and percentage of crown vs patent land
- create a 1:10 000 scale lake basin outline on mylar including inlets, outlets, trails, roads, power lines, buildings, access point(s), area conversion factor (A.C.F) and north arrow to be used in the field

*This learning outcome will constitute approximately 5% of the course's grade*

2. **Conduct a stream survey using standard equipment and methodology**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- demonstrate in the field the effective and safe use of a backpack electro-fishing unit in sampling fish communities in streams as outlined in the Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol (OSAP)
- discuss the effect on fish physiology, the mechanics and safety considerations when operating an electro-fisher
- properly process and document fish samples
- correctly conduct point-transect sampling for channel structure, substrate and bank conditions using the Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol (OSAP) under test conditions
- conduct an Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network (OBBN) survey including sampling processing and identification of invertebrates to the minimum required taxonomic detail
- demonstrate the effective use of the Travelling-Kick-and-Sweep-Transect-Method as a sampling method to collect aquatic invertebrates

*This learning outcome will constitute approximately 20% of the course's grade*

3. **Document, display, analyze and interpret survey field data including lake bathymetry**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- construct a lake physical features map based on shore cruise data using ArcMap
- construct a lake contour map based on lake bathymetry data using Arc/Info
- calculate volume, mean depth and shoreline development factor (S.D.F.) for the study lake
- determine habitat suitability indices for specific indicator species based on field data
- correctly complete Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network (OBBN) and Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol (OSAP) standardized field forms
- compile all lake survey field data including fish vital statistics, water chemistry and shore cruise data into a comprehensive technical report including summary statistics

*This learning outcome will constitute 40% of the course's grade*

4. **Conduct a creel survey and estimate sports fishing pressure and harvest rates by species.**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- explain the objectives of conducting a creel/survey and describe the two design types and the calculation differences for each in determining C.P.U.E. and harvest
- properly interview anglers, process fish, complete field records and input data as part of a creel survey

*This learning outcome will constitute 10% of the course's grade*

5. **Document, process and correctly identify 20 freshwater invertebrates for presentation.**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- properly collect, preserve and document aquatic invertebrates
- use effectively a binocular microscope and reference keys to correctly identify 20 aquatic invertebrates to Family
- submit an invertebrate collection as outlined with specimen collection records, index and references included

*This learning outcome will constitute 10% of the course's grade*

6. **Describe various methods used in Ontario to assess the status of a fish population.**

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- describe common fish tagging and marking techniques and their limitations in estimating species abundance
- discuss the indicators of over exploitation
- describe Ontario's provincial index netting standards (Spring Littoral Index Netting, Brook Trout Index Netting, Fall Walleye Index Netting, Nearshore Community Index Netting, Summer Profundal Index Netting and NORDIC Index Netting) to assess relative abundance

*This learning outcome will constitute approximately 15% of the course's grade.*

**III. TOPICS:**

**Note:** These topics sometimes overlap several areas of skill development and are not necessarily intended to be explored in isolated units or in the order below

1. Lake Pre-field Work
2. Stream Survey
3. Creel Survey - objectives and design
4. Fish Tagging, Marking and Capture
5. Index Netting
6. Freshwater Invertebrate Collection

**IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES/ TEXTS/ MATERIALS:**

Bouchard, R.W., Jr. 2004. Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest **on line**:

<http://wrc.umn.edu/outreach/vsmp/edmaterials/index.html>

Volunteer Stream Monitoring Interactive Verification Program (VSM-IVP) **on line**:

<http://www.entomology.umn.edu/midge/VSMIVP.htm>

Jones, C., K.M. Somers, B. Craig, and T.B. Reynoldson. 2007. Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network: Protocol Manual. OMOE, Environmental Monitoring & Reporting Branch. Dorset, Ontario (**ON LINE**)

Stanfield, L. (Editor) 2005. Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol. Version 7, Fish and Wildlife Branch. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Peterborough, Ontario. 256 pages. (**ON LINE**)

Voshell, J. Reese. 2002. Guide to Common Freshwater Invertebrates of North America. McDonald and Woodward Publishing Company. Blacksburg, Virginia

**REQUIRED GEAR/EQUIPMENT**

Chest Waders  
 Mylar sheets  
 20 Vials

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:**

**MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTING**

Exams	45%
Assignments / Tests / Quizzes	15%
Freshwater Invertebrate Collection	15%
Lake Survey Report	15%
Participation	<u>10%</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**NOTE:**

1. Attendance during field trips is **MANDATORY**. Students missing field trips without a valid, documented reason will **risk repeating the course**.
  - a. **First missed field outing will result in a 5% loss to your final grade**
  - b. **Second missed field outing will result in a 15% loss to your final grade.**
  - c. **Third missed field outing will result in an 'F' Grade for the course.**
2. **ALL** submissions must be made for a passing grade
3. Second Year Field Camp (NRT 251 or NET 201) provides an opportunity for data collection fundamental to mapping exercises and analysis in Aquatic Ecosystem Surveys (NET 200). Failure to receive a satisfactory (S) grade in Field Camp may seriously hamper success in this course.

**Late Assignments:**

Ten percent (%) will be deducted from the total value of the assignment for every day late.

**Late Equipment:**

Ten percent (10%) may be deducted from the total value of the assignment for chronic lateness in returning signed out equipment from the Tech Office

**The following semester grades will be assigned to students:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<i>Grade Point Equivalent</i>
A+	90 – 100%	
A	80 – 89%	4.00
B	70 - 79%	3.00
C	60 - 69%	2.00
D	50 – 59%	1.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	0.00
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.	
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.	

## **VI. SPECIAL NOTES:**

### Attendance:

Sault College is committed to student success. There is a direct correlation between academic performance and class attendance; therefore, for the benefit of all its constituents, all students are encouraged to attend all of their scheduled learning and evaluation sessions. This implies arriving on time and remaining for the duration of the scheduled session.

## **VII. COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDUM:**

The provisions contained in the addendum located on the portal form part of this course outline