

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a survey of natural wetland and forest ecosystems and associated plant communities found in central Ontario. A range of vascular and non-vascular wetland and terrestrial plants and lichens will be identified with a focus on indicator species. Identification of these organisms combined with hands-on experience in describing soils in the field will be used to classify a range of local ecosystems using current Ontario Ecological Land Classification tools at the Ecosite and Vegetation-Type level.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:

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

1. Identify vascular and non-vascular plants and lichens.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- identify woody and herbaceous plants from previous courses NRT101 and NRT133
- identify selected flowering, vascular wetland plants (floating-leaved, submergent, emergent and other associated plants)
- identify selected ferns, horsetails, club-mosses, liverworts, mosses, and lichens and describe morphology and associated terminology specific to each taxonomic group
- identify, describe and compare the fruiting structures and vegetative features of selected grasses, sedges and rushes using appropriate terminology and demonstrate effective use of dichotomous keys
- identify, describe and compare the reproductive structures and processes characteristic of ferns, club-mosses, mosses and lichens

This learning outcome will constitute approx. 50% of the course grade

2. Identify and digitally photograph taxonomically important features of selected vascular and non-vascular plants and lichens.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- identify a minimum number of selected vascular and non-vascular plants and lichens in the field using available resources
- acquire digital images of a minimum number of taxonomically important identification features for each specimen identified
- present images in a digital herbarium format using PowerPoint or comparable software

This learning outcome will constitute approx. 18% of the course grade

3. Classify a range of local ecosystems using current Ontario Ecological Land Classification tools at the Ecosite and Vegetation-Type level.

Potential Elements of the Performance:

- competently apply basic field skills and techniques specific to the Ecological Land Classification system
- ❖ Ecosite
 - competently dig a soil pit and use a soil auger
 - describe a mineral soil profile from a soil pit and extracted soil auger samples by competently delineating soil horizons and reliably collecting soil parameters (e.g., depth, textural class, coarse fragment classification) to enable classification to an ecosite using decision keys in *Ecosites of Ontario*
 - describe an organic soil profile (e.g., von Post scale of decomposition) from extracted soil auger samples and identify wetland indicator plants to enable classification to an ecosite using decision keys in *Ecosites of Ontario*
 - describe the composition and structure of ecosystem conditions through the use of ecosite fact sheets
- ❖ Vegetation-Type
 - reliably collect vegetation data to allow classification of Vegetation-Type (V-type) using the central Ontario site classification system (Chambers et al. 1997)
 - using the V-type, find the ecosite 'best match' to determine the approximate value of the site(s) to featured Ontario wildlife species

This learning outcome will constitute approx. 32% of the course grade

III. REQUIRED RESOURCES/ TEXTS/ MATERIALS:

- Hardhat, reflective vest, rubber boots, safety boots, rain gear, clipboard, pencils
- *Wetland Plants of Ontario* (Newmaster et al.) recommended
- *Forest Plants of Central Ontario* (Chambers et al.) recommended
- *Fern Finder* (Hallowell and Hallowell) provided by college on loan
- *Ecosites of Ontario* (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources) – draft copy provided by college on loan

IV. EVALUATION PROCESS/GRADING SYSTEM:

Identification tests and assignments	50
Field labs and associated assignments	32
Photo collection assignment	18
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Overall	100 points

The following semester grades will be assigned to students:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 - 100%	4.00
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.	

V. SPECIAL NOTES:Conduct:

- Any student who in the judgement of the instructor behaves inappropriately in scheduled classes or copies the work of another student without the instructor's permission, will be subject to all the terms and conditions in the student's rights and responsibilities hand book and may after, reviewing the situation with the instructor, be asked to leave the course with an F grade.
- Smoking will only be allowed in assigned locations during field labs. Smoking is not allowed while conducting field work.

Evaluation:

- Field labs are held rain or shine – please be prepared! Students will not be allowed to participate in a field lab if the proper safety gear and/or clothing are not worn.
- To be eligible to make up for a missed ID test, the instructor must be contacted via phone or email ASAP to discuss make-up options. **Students not contacting the instructor prior to a missed class or within a day afterwards will get a zero except under extenuating circumstances; e.g., doctor's note.**
- Late assignments will be deducted 10% per day and will not be accepted after 5 days past the due date except under extenuating circumstances; e.g., doctor's note.
- The instructor cannot guarantee responses to questions in the 24-hour period prior to assignment deadlines and tests via phone message or email.