

ENVS*6506 Course Outline S26

General Information

Course Code: ENVS*6506

Course Title: Forest Ecosystems

Course Description:

Students will master key concepts related to ecosystem structure and function in forest ecosystems, and will develop skills in forest inventory techniques through hands-on practice in the field as well as the analysis and interpretation of field data. Students will also explore current issues related to forest ecosystems locally and globally. Course content will be delivered through virtual Zoom sessions (always recorded for students to review on their own schedules if they can't take part synchronously) independent fieldwork and in-person field classes, readings, and independent literature research. In-person classes will be limited to one intensive 2-day session, and will take place in various forested settings on campus (such as the Arboretum). The course will run for the duration of the Spring 2025 semester (starting with a Zoom class on May 12th, and ending with final assignment due dates in early August). The timing of the in-person field days will be determined based on student availability.

Credit Weight: 0.5

Academic Department (or campus): School of Environmental Sciences

Campus: Guelph

Semester Offering: Spring

Class Schedule and Location:

Date	Activity
Week of May 12 th – week of June 29 th	Weekly 1-hour Zoom meetings; normally in the evenings, timing variable. Zoom classes will also be recorded for asynchronous viewing. Topics are as follows (some topics will carry over 2 lectures): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to forest ecosystems and Ontario's forest regions.• Introduction to tree identification.• Forest ecosystem structure and function.• Forest harvesting and management in Ontario's boreal region.• Forest restoration and the 'lost' forests of Southern Ontario.• Forest inventory techniques and data analysis.
In-person field classes Dates TBD (a weekend in late June or early July)	Field classes – we will normally meet at the Arboretum entrance. We will learn and practice forest inventory techniques and collect data for an assignment.
Late July and early August	Student presentations over Zoom (dates flexible). Informal Zoom help sessions for remaining assignments. All coursework must be completed by the end of the first week of August.

ENVS*6506 Course Outline S26

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Shelley Hunt
Instructor Email: shunt@uoguelph.ca
Instructor phone: 519-766-6505

Course Resources

Required Texts:

Course readings will be available as online book chapters and journal articles through the University of Guelph library, and/or posted to Courselink. Readings can be done at the student's own pace. Detailed information on readings will be available on Courselink.

Recommended Texts:

Any good tree identification field guide, preferably with a dichotomous key. **Trees in Canada by John Laird Farrar** is an excellent resource for students who wish to purchase a field guide. Online resources are acceptable. The instructor will provide suggestions.

Other Resources:

Other relevant resources such as websites and videos will be listed on the Courselink site.

Course Assignments:

Assignment	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark
Readings – written answers to study questions, and contributions to online discussions	Various; written answers to study questions are due by Aug. 7. Students must also contribute to online discussions of readings throughout the semester	Study questions: 10% Contributions to online discussion: 10%
Participation in field classes (intensive 2-day field session)	TBD; dates will be determined based on student availability	10%
Tree identification assignment – a photographic 'collection' of tree species	Friday July 24	30%
Forest inventory assignment – analysis of field data and written report	TBD; 2 weeks after the in-person field session	20%
Presentation and annotated bibliography: Zoom presentation on a forest ecology or forest management topic of your choice (with instructor approval), with an accompanying annotated bibliography. Based on scientific literature research. Students may propose an alternative final assignment.	Zoom presentation dates will take place during the last week of July and/or the first week of August	Presentation (zoom): 15% Annotated bibliography 5%

ENVS*6506 Course Outline S26

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes are as follows: 1) to develop an understanding of forest ecosystem structure and function; 2) to apply this knowledge to the analysis of current challenges faced by forests worldwide, e.g. climate change and biodiversity loss; 3) to develop basic knowledge of and appreciation for the techniques involved in field-based forest monitoring, and some relevant data analysis methods; 4) to develop familiarity with tree morphology and competence in applying this to the identification of common tree species native to Ontario.

This course embraces, as best it can, the 4 pillars of learner-centredness: self-reliant learning, research-teaching link, skill-development and experiential learning.

Course Policies

Grading Policies:

Due dates/deadlines for this course are flexible, to accommodate students' various situations and needs during this unusual time. All course assignments must be submitted at latest by Friday, August 7th, to allow time for the instructor to evaluate them prior to submitting final grades. It is strongly advised that students follow the suggested due dates for assignments whenever possible.

Course Policy on Group Work:

N/A

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor. Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the written permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

University Policies

Academic Consideration:

The University of Guelph is committed to supporting students in their learning experiences and responding to their individual needs and is aware that a variety of situations or events beyond the student's control may affect academic performance. Support is provided to accommodate academic needs in the face of personal difficulties or unforeseen events in the form of Academic Consideration.

ENVS*6506 Course Outline S26

Information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions, including categories, grounds, timelines and appeals can be found in [Section VIII \(Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures\) of the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

Academic Misconduct:

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Detailed information regarding the Academic Misconduct policy is available in [Section VIII \(Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures\) of the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

Accessibility:

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Student Accessibility Services (SAS), formerly Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD), as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email sas@uoguelph.ca or visit the [Student Accessibility Services website \(http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/\)](http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/).

Course Evaluation Information:

End of semester course and instructor evaluations provide students the opportunity to have their comments and opinions used as an important component in the Faculty Tenure and Promotion process, and as valuable feedback to help instructors enhance the quality of their teaching effectiveness and course delivery.

While many course evaluations are conducted in class others are now conducted online. Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) for more information.

ENVS*6506 Course Outline S26

Drop period:

The drop period for single semester courses starts at the beginning of the add period and extends to the Fortieth (40th) class day of the current semester (the last date to drop a single semester courses without academic penalty) which is listed in [Section III \(Schedule of Dates\) of the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

The drop period for two semester courses starts at the beginning of the add period in the first semester and extends to the last day of the add period in the second semester.

Information about Dropping Courses can be found in [Section VIII \(Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Procedures\) of the Undergraduate Calendar](#).