

Tropical Vertebrate Zoology

Summer I, 2007

3100:495 Class# 34644 Section 603

<http://www2.uakron.edu/londraville/tfb.htm>

3 Credits. Course requires travel to Moorea, French Polynesia.
Course Fee \$2250

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Itinerary

May 30 Leave Cleveland 12:35 PM

Arrive LAX 2:23 PM

Leave LAX 6:10 PM

Arrive Tahiti 11:40 PM

June 9 Leave Tahiti 10 PM

Arrive LAX 9:15 PM, June 10

Leave LAX 3:05 PM

Arrive Cleveland 10:20 PM June 10

Course Description:

Tropical Vertebrate Zoology is a field course designed to give students experience doing field research on vertebrates in the tropics. Students will work in groups to investigate a discrete research question with intensive effort over a relatively short amount of time. During the course of their research, students will learn to appreciate the tropical environment, and problems associated with doing field research in the tropics.



Goals and Objectives:

Students will complete a well-defined research project centered on a discrete hypothesis. They will relate their findings to those found in the scientific literature, and will use appropriate statistical analyses to interpret their results. Students will present their findings in a research-style final paper.

Course Policies:

Grading

- **70% group grade**
 - **Group proposal**
 - **Group final paper**
- **30% individual**
 - **1 Natural History presentations (at night)**
 - **blog**

Proposal- A description of experiments you want to perform, complete with relevant scientific literature citations. No specific length or numbers of citations-you should include what you need to explain your proposal in full.

Final Paper- A final research paper written in scientific paper style. No specific length or numbers of citations-you should include what you need.

Natural History presentations- a short (~10 minute) presentation to the class about many aspects of the natural history of your study organism.

Blog- We will maintain a class blog of the trip, with 2 people assigned to each night.

<https://www.blogger.com/start> who is hosting our blog
<http://uatfz.blogspot.com/> the address to give to friends and family

Effort- 1 credit during a summer session is equivalent to 45 hours of lab time, therefore 3 credits is 135 hours. For a lecture class, this is 45 hours of class time. This class is more lab than class. If we subtract class time in Akron, this equates to about 10 hours per day devoted to the course while we are in Tahiti. Typically we will start at 8 AM, and work into the night (breaking for meals). Some of your projects will definitely require times when your group needs help (e.g. collecting animals)-and in those cases everyone is expected to help. We don't necessarily expect your project to work, but we do expect you to make every effort to make it work. While there are no specific points awarded toward effort, we will use individual effort to adjust grades in the categories above.

Plan Ahead- You will have access to the internet at Criobe; however, if you need research articles to interpret your data (and you do)-you will need to bring these with you on the trip.

Civil Behavior- Please remember you are representatives of the University of Akron traveling in a foreign country. Loud, obnoxious, drunken, illegal behavior will not be tolerated, and you may be sent home at your expense.

Tips-

- "Swim Ear" is an over-the-counter remedy for water buildup in the ear (highly recommended).
- You may want 2 towels-one for the truck and one for the shower. Multiple swim suits are also handy.
- 50 sunblock and a good hat are essential.
- A water bottle and maybe a backpack are useful.
- Everyone absolutely must have a waterproof watch.
- You will need study shoes (good sole) that can get wet. You will not be able to go barefoot all the places where you will be in the water.
- Pack light. 1 duffle bag. There is laundry at the station.
- You will want some bug spray.
- You must be able to swim. This means staying in the water for 1+ hours at a time in slight swell while snorkeling. The ocean is not a pool, and it is unlikely it will be flat calm.
- We will not put you in dangerous situations. Some field work is uncomfortable (hot, sticky)-that's part of the deal and we expect you to make an effort to contribute. However, if you are uncomfortable with what we are doing (or your skill level with what we are doing) it is your obligation to TELL US, and we will make every effort to make you comfortable.
- You will have internet access in the labs and in your dorm. You will also have a phone. You can call out using a phone card. You can also use a free program called SKYPE, which allows you to talk with anyone who has cable internet access.

Schedule: (may change due to weather/circumstances)

5/30- Leave Akron-Arrive Tahiti

5/31- Arrive Moorea

Belvedere and public beach snorkel

Night walk

6/1-

Ray swim AM

Waterfall PM

6/2-

Coconut Grove

White House Reef

Finalization of Research Proposals (taking into account all constraints learned in Days 1-2)

6/3-6/9

Groups work independently on projects

Night-data analyses

6/9-Leave for States PM

6/10-Arrive in Cleveland PM