

# Special Topics: Diversifying Conservation Biology Syllabus

## Department of Biology

### BIOL 4039.01 Winter 2024

*Dalhousie University acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.*

*Dalhousie University also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.*

#### Course Instructor(s)

Name	Email	Office Hours
Suchinta Arif	Suchinta.arif@dal.ca	Mondays 12PM-1PM in LSC 3089 (and/or online by appointment)

#### Course Description

This course will explore how the field of conservation biology can benefit from diverse worldviews, scientific methods, and knowledge and value systems that have historically been excluded in the field. Over the term, students will work in groups to explore aspects of diversifying conservation biology in depth, and then share their learning with their peers and the wider community.

#### Student Resources

Office hours will be held weekly on Mondays 1PM-2PM in person in LSC 3089. Students are also able to book online appointments throughout the week at a time that works for both Dr. Arif and the student.

#### Course Structure

##### *Course Delivery*

Lectures will be delivered in-person. Sessions will not be recorded but slides and additional resources (e.g., scientific papers) will be made available on Brightspace.

*Lectures*

Mondays from 5:35PM to 7:25PM in Kenneth C Rowe Management 1009.

**Course Materials**

All course materials (class slides and any relevant resources) will be posted on Brightspace prior to the start of the lecture.

**Assessment***Assignments*

Students will work in small groups (2-5 people per group) to write a book chapter on a topic of choice with respect to diverse perspectives in conservation biology; each *individual* will further create an infographic that can accompany their (group) book chapter. The group will also present an engaging 45 minute lecture on their chosen topic to the class. Peer feedback and participation and engagement will also be expected throughout the course. A mark breakdown on these assignments are found below.

Component	Weight (% of final grade)	Date
Infographic	10	Due March 4 <sup>th</sup>
Book Chapter	30	Due March 11 <sup>th</sup>
Oral Presentation	30	March 11 <sup>th</sup> or March 18 <sup>th</sup>
Peer Feedback	10	Ongoing throughout semester
Participation and Engagement	20	Ongoing throughout semester

*Other course requirements*

Attendance and engagement in lectures is expected. Lack of participation and engagement during the lecture discussion will result in a lower participation mark, worth 20% of the final grade.

Conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades follows the

Dalhousie Grade Scale

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (0-49)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

## Course Policies

This is an interactive and discussion-based course and students are expected to attend lectures at all times and contribute to class discussions, activities, and feedback.

- All assignments have a strict deadline; assignments will be docked 10% per day late; missed assignments will count 0%; with the following exceptions:
  - In case of illness, please use the Student Declaration of Absence (SDA) form for late or missed academic requirements. Late penalties will not apply if SDA is submitted prior to the due date. Maximum 2 uses of the SDA per term. Students who are ill for an extended period and thus miss multiple requirements should be referred to Patricia Laws, Assistant Dean (Student Affairs).
- In group projects, each student is required to contribute to the group's work, and the group will be assigned one grade.
- Plagiarism software will be used to check for the originality of each student's written assignments.

## Learning Objectives

- Learning about non-mainstream knowledge systems, methodologies, and approaches that can improve the field of conservation biology, such as Indigenous science and inclusive scientific outreach
- Learning how diverse perspectives in science and community engagement can generate better conservation outcomes for all
- Researching (in a small group) a current topic in diversifying conservation biology, and generating a book chapter synthesizing the state of knowledge, and best practice recommendations for increasing its application within the field
- Discussing diverse conservation topics in class and critically evaluating the science and societal discourse surrounding these topics
- Applying the lessons learned to your own daily life practices

## Course Content

Lectures will introduce students to inclusive (and often marginalized) knowledge systems, methodologies, and approaches that can improve the field of conservation biology. Lecture time will also be used to work on assignments (including the book chapter and associated infographic) and facilitate meaningful peer feedback. Students will present their group oral presentations near the end of term, and the entire class will participate in a future visioning exercise that will synthesize their collective knowledge to envision a better future for the field of conservation biology.

Date	Lesson Topic(s)
Jan 8	Introduction
Jan 15	Inclusive Scientific Outreach
Jan 22	Decolonizing Language in Science
Jan 29	Data Sovereignty
Feb 5	Community-Engaged Research
Feb 12	Indigenous Science
Feb 26	Peer Feedback
Mar 4	Protected Area Governance
Mar 11	Group Presentations
Mar 18	Group Presentations
Mar 25	Future Visioning
Apr 1	Reflections

## University Policies and Statements

### Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre at 1321 Edward St or [elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca). Additional information regarding the Indigenous Student Centre can be found at: [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/indigenous.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html)

### Internationalization

At Dalhousie, 'thinking and acting globally' enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders." Additional internationalization information can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/internationalization.html>

### Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Additional academic integrity information can be found at: [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

### Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Student Accessibility Centre ([https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/accessibility.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html)) for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro. For courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture, please contact the Student Success Centre in Truro (<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre.html>)

### Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

### **Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect**

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Additional diversity and inclusion information can be found at: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner - perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. The full Code of Student Conduct can be found at:

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html)

### **Fair Dealing Policy**

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. Additional information regarding the Fair Dealing Policy can be found at: [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html)

### **Originality Checking Software**

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Additional information regarding Originality Checking Software can be found at:

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/student-submission-of-assignments-and-use-of-originality-checking-software-policy-.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/student-submission-of-assignments-and-use-of-originality-checking-software-policy-.html)

### **Student Use of Course Materials**

Course materials are designed for use as part of this course at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.