Expedition Alaska

This is a draft syllabus and is subject to change. A final syllabus will be posted on Blackboard prior to the start of the course.

Course:	SC 11000 B01 Natural History of Alaska
Semester:	Fall Block 2023
Credit Hours:	4
Meeting Times:	August 21-25, 9:00am-5:00pm, On APU Campus
	August 27-September 6: In the field on the Yukon River
	September 6-7: Return to APU Campus (camp in Healy on the 6th)
	September 8: on APU campus time TBD
	September 11-15, 9:00am-5:00pm, On APU Campus and field trips
Course Fee:	no fee
Instructors:	Nathan Anderson
Email:	nanderson@alaskapacific.edu

Course Description:

This is an introduction to the animals, plants, and geology of Alaska's terrestrial and coastal ecosystems. Natural history is generally understood as the study of the non-human world. It is all-encompassing, including cosmology, atmosphere, tectonics, chemistry, fungi and plants, invertebrates and vertebrates, classification and processes. This course will limit that field to Alaska, especially places easily accessed from Anchorage. Satisfies SI Physical/Biological Scientific Inquiry for Foundational Studies. Offered: Fall.

Course Format:

The course spends the first five days on the APU campus, approximately 9am – 5pm. These days will include preparation for the field section and introduction to the natural environment of Alaska.

During week two and three the block class will travel to Eagle, AK and float the Yukon River, in rafts, to Circle, AK. Each day of the trip will consist of a combination of lecture, lab, exercises, and travel. We will camp each night using tents, sleeping bags, and pads and share meals cooked by the group.

Following the river trip, we will return to the APU campus. The last week of block will include lectures, labs, field trips, and final student presentations.

Competencies: This course will introduce you to APU's Core Competencies. They are:
- Effective communication (EC): demonstrating ability to get one's point across in writing, presentations, and organizations in order to share information and foster collaboration.
- Critical thinking (CT): demonstrating ability to compute, analyze, make sense of information or data, and reach reasoned conclusions cognizant of possible bias, perspective, and fallacies.
- Cultural and historical perspective (CH): demonstrating ability to effectively consider tradition and heritage in relation to decision-making in a world shaped by diverse cultures and abiding histories.
- Scientific Inquiry (SI): demonstrating ability to reach verifiable conclusions based on documented observations and recognized methods in order to know how things work in our world.
- Ethical engagement (EE): demonstrating ability to raise needed questions, frame problems effectively, and apply ethical problem-solving to make things better.

Learning Objectives: Students will:
- Develop an understanding of the geological history and geomorphology of much of Alaska (SI)
- Learn the taxonomies of pertinent floral and faunal communities (SI)
- Be able to tell 'histories' of various biomes through understanding ecological processes (SI)
- Learn techniques in field investigation and research (SI, CT)
- Learn observation and recording techniques by keeping a detailed field journal (SI, EC)
- Appreciate the human history and use of Alaskan landscapes (CHP)
- Practice presentation skills through student-led teaching opportunities (EC)
- Begin engaging in ethical understandings of land use issues (EE)

Active Learning
Active learning refers to the process of deep understanding that come from interactive and reflective education rather than rote memorization and information recall.

Attendance & Participation
Attendance is required in a block course. Showing up and being actively engaged are a significant portion of your overall grade for this course.

Communications Expectations
All official communication regarding the course and APU information goes through APU email. Students are expected to be reading email prior to the course starting and for any portion of the course where meetings are held on campus. If you have questions or concerns prior to the course, email is the best way to get ahold of me.

For the field portion of the course, there are different expectations regarding communications, which will be established prior to leaving the campus.

Technical Requirements & Applications
For technical assistance with APU's Blackboard, MyAPU, the Student Portal, contact the IT Helpdesk: 907.564.8350, ithelpdesk@alaskapacific.edu

UAA/APU Consortium Library
Developing the essential competency of Critical Thinking, APU students are challenged to grow their information literacy, analyzing and evaluating sources for truth claims, methodologies, and perspectives. The Consortium Library contributes significantly to the information literacy of our community with rich collections and references, as well as expert staff and online services.
- Website: http://lib.uaa.alaska.edu/ Phone: 907-786-1871
- Ask-a-Librarian: http://lib.uaa.alaska.edu/research/ask/
- To activate your library privileges (for both online and onsite access), contact the IT Department.

Disability Support Services
In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is the policy of Alaska Pacific University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If a student with a disability needs reasonable accommodations, the student must notify the Assistant to the Dean of Students in a timely manner. Once the student notifies the Assistant to the Dean of Students, processes, and procedures for documenting a disability will be provided to the student upon request. Once the student provides the required documentation to the Assistant to the Dean of Students, the interactive process for developing reasonable accommodations will begin; this process involves the Assistant to the Dean of Students meeting or talking with the student about his or her needs prior to providing the student with a reasonable accommodation approval or denial letter. Students will be notified, in writing, by the Assistant to the Dean of Students when the request for reasonable accommodations is approved or denied. It is the student's responsibility to present the approval letter, documenting the approved reasonable accommodations with respect to the University course, to the faculty member.

To receive reasonable accommodations with respect to a university course, a student must follow the process described above. Faculty members are not expected to make reasonable accommodations for students who have not been officially approved for reasonable accommodations by the Assistant to the Dean of Students. The Assistant to the Dean of Students will not discuss reasonable accommodations for any student with a faculty member, without prior written consent from that student.

For more information, please contact Kaili Martin, Assistant to the Dean of Students (kamartin@alaskapacific.edu; 907-564-8287).

Honor Policy
APU is a community of learners in which all enjoy freedoms and privileges based upon mutual trust and respect as well as a clear sense of responsibility. Students are expected to do all work assigned, to do it honestly and with integrity.

We assume your personal integrity and honesty, and that you will adhere to APU's Honor Policy as defined in the Catalog and Student Handbook. Understand plagiarism and don't commit it. Course instructors have latitude in addressing plagiarism, including giving a course grade of F. We expect you to use many sources to inform your learning; cite them, and all will be well.

Risk Management
Travel: This course travels in a remote wilderness setting where medical services and communication with civilization are not readily available. Students on this course are expected to act in a professional manner. They will be expected to understand, be aware of, and avoid the hazards of the area. If an incident does occur the group will act as a team to provide the best care for the patient as possible. Independent student travel is a possibility if weather, route, and student abilities allow.

Emergency Contact: For family emergencies only families can contact APU's intown coordinator at 907-562-0791. APU will then assist the family in contacting the course.

Group Dynamics: Students understand that we will be working together in close proximity for and extended time. Each person will do their best to take care of themselves and others, being aware of their behavior in order to be respectful traveling companions. Good expedition behavior requires that each individual take care of themselves so in order to better take care of others in a selfless way.

Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, Phones: We aim to have as safe a course as possible. To this end no alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or phones/musical listening devices are allowed.

Insurance: All students must show proof of major medical insurance (insurance card and/or fill out and send in Student Insurance application) and sign a waiver before being allowed on the course.

Grading
Successful completion of this course includes fulfillment of the assignments and preparing for class participation. See the assignment sheets for specific details on these.

Course grades will be based on the following:
Participation   30%
Field journal   30%
Labs/Assignments   10%
Student presentation on river   10%
Field guide & final presentation   20%

Grading policies

      100-90 %   A range

Note our definition of an A grade: "Superior mastery of facts and principles; demonstrated clear evidence that stated course objectives and requirements were met by the student."

      89 – 80 B range

      79 – 70 C range

      69 – 60 D range

      59 - F range

An incomplete grade (I) is possible if conditions beyond your control impede your conclusion of the course, and you have been making satisfactory progress. Receipt of an incomplete involves negotiation with me.