Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology

Undergraduate Study

Within the Biological Sciences, studies of ecology, evolution, and organismal biology are essential in understanding the complex relationships of life on Planet Earth. Ecology focuses on the interactions among organisms as well as the interactions between organisms and their physical environments. Evolutionary theory addresses the origins and interrelationships of species. Organismal biology studies both the diversity of biological organisms and the structure and function of individual organisms.

The EEOB Department offers several undergraduate majors with other departments. Students interested in the areas of ecology, evolution, and organismal biology should major in Biology, Environmental Science, or Genetics. The Biology Major is administered and offered jointly by the EEOB and GDCB departments. The faculty of EEOB, together with those in GDCB and BBMB, administer and offer the Environmental Science Major. Each of these majors is available through the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences or through the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Faculty in the EEOB Department also teach undergraduate courses at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory (see the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory listing).

The Biology Major, the Environmental Science Major, and the Genetics Major prepare students for a wide range of careers in biological sciences. Some of these careers include conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, human and veterinary medicine, and life science education. These majors are also excellent preparation for graduate study in systematics, ecology, biological diversity, physiology, and related fields. Faculty members in EEOB contribute to the undergraduate courses listed below. The titles and descriptions of these courses are in the Biology section of the catalog.

**Graduate Study**

The department offers graduate study leading to both Master of Science (M.S.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees. EEOB graduate students major in one of several interdepartmental majors including Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Environmental Science, Genetics, Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies, Neuroscience, and Toxicology. The EEOB faculty members are active in the interdepartmental graduate majors and teach a wide range of graduate courses. Faculty research programs cover a wide range of specializations including physiology and physiological ecology; Microbiology; animal behavior; evolutionary genetics of plants and animals; modeling of evolutionary and ecological processes; plant and animal systematics; neurobiology; developmental biology; aquatic and wetland ecology; functional, population, community, landscape, and ecosystem ecology; and conservation biology. For further information on faculty research interests check the EEOB web site (www.eeob.iastate.edu). Some EEOB faculty teach graduate courses at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory. Field Station courses are also available through the Gulf Coast Marine Laboratory and the Organization for Tropical Studies (see the Biology listing).

Prospective graduate students need a sound background in the physical and biological sciences, as well as in mathematics and English. Interested students should check the Graduate Program link from the EEOB web site for specific admission procedures and updates. The department and majors require submission of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) aptitude test scores. Subject area GRE scores are recommended. International students whose native language is other than English must also submit TOEFL or IELTS scores with their application.

Students who are enrolled in the interdepartmental graduate majors with EEOB affiliation are required to participate in departmental seminars, to participate in research activities, and to show adequate progress and professional development while pursuing their degree. For both the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees, it is expected that research conducted by the student will culminate in the writing and presentation of a thesis or dissertation. Requirements and guidelines for study are provided by the Graduate College, the EEOB faculty, and the individual student’s major professor and Program of Study Committee. General information about graduate study requirements can be found at the web site for the Graduate College and requirements for the interdepartmental majors can be
found by following the links from the EEOB web site above. Although not a formal requirement, the EEOB faculty recommends that students pursuing the Ph.D. include teaching experience in their graduate training.

Courses primarily for graduate students, open to qualified undergraduates:

**EEOB 501L. Freshwater Algae.** (Cross-listed with IA LL), Cr. 4. SS. Structure and taxonomy of freshwater algae based on field collected material; emphasis on genus-level identifications, habitats visited include lakes, fens, streams, and rivers; algal ecology.

**EEOB 507. Advanced Animal Behavior.** (3-0) Cr. 3. S. Prereq: BIOL 354, or permission of instructor. Analysis of current research in animal behavior. Topics covered may include behavioral ecology, mechanisms of behavior, evolution of behavior, applications of animal behavior to conservation biology, and applications of animal behavior to wild animals in captivity.

**EEOB 514. Evolutionary Ecology.** (3-0) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: EEOB 589, BIOL 315; graduate standing. Evolution of ecological adaptations at the individual, population, community and landscape levels. Emphasis is on evolutionary mechanisms and adaptive strategies; units and mechanisms of evolution, life history strategies, species interactions and organization of communities, behavior, and patterns of distribution, speciation and macroevolution.

**EEOB 531. Conservation Biology.** (Cross-listed with IA LL), Cr. 4. Alt. S., offered 2012. Prereq: EEOB 335 or IA LL 312, graduate standing. Examination of conservation issues from a population and a community perspective. Population-level analysis will focus on the role of genetics, demography, and environment in determining population viability. Community perspectives will focus on topics such as habitat fragmentation, reserve design, biodiversity assessment, and restoration ecology.

**EEOB 531L. Conservation Biology.** (Cross-listed with IA LL, A ECL), Cr. 4. Alt. Ss., offered 2012. Prereq: IA LL 312/ Population-and-community-level examination of factors influencing the viability of plant and animal populations from both demographic and genetic perspectives; assessment of biodiversity; design and management of preserves.

**EEOB 534. Endocrinology.** (3-0) Cr. 3. S. Prereq: BIOL 211, BIOL 212. Dual-listed with Biol 434. Chemical integration of vertebrate organisms. The structure, development, and evolution of the endocrine glands and the function and structure of their hormones.

**EEOB 535. Restoration Ecology.** (Cross-listed with ENSCI, NREM), (2-3) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: BIOL 366 or BIOL 474 or graduate standing. Theory and practice of restoring animal and plant diversity, structure and function of disturbed ecosystems. Restored freshwater wetlands, forests, prairies and reintroduced species populations will be used as case studies.

**EEOB 535I. Restoration Ecology.** (Cross-listed with A ECL, ENSCI, IA LL), Cr. 4. Alt. SS., offered 2012. Prereq: A course in ecology. Ecological principles for the restoration of native ecosystems; establishment (site preparation, selection of seed mixes, planting techniques) and management (fire, mowing, weed control) of native vegetation; evaluation of restorations. Emphasis on the restoration of prairie and wetland vegetation.

**EEOB 539. Environmental Physiology.** (3-3) Cr. 3-4, Alt. S., offered 2012. Prereq: BIOL 335 or A ECL 311, physics recommended. Dual-listed with Biol 439. Graduate study in conjunction with Biol 439. Physiological adaptations to the environment with emphasis on vertebrates.


**EEOB 542B. Introduction to Molecular Biology Techniques: Protein.** (Cross-listed with B M S, GDCB, GDCB, FS HN, HORT, NREM, NUTRS), Cr. 1. Repeatable. S.SS. Prereq: Graduate classification. Techniques includes fermentation, protein isolation, protein purification, SDS-PAGE, Western blotting, NMR, confocal microscopy and laser microdissection, Immunophenotyping, and monoclonal antibody production. Sessions in basic molecular biology techniques and related procedures. Offered on a satisfactory-fail basis only.


**EEOB 542E. Proteomics.** Includes two-dimensional electrophoresis, laser scanning, mass spectrometry, and database searching. (F). (Cross-listed with B M S, BBMB, FS HN, GDCB, HORT, NREM, V MPM, VDPAM), Cr. 1. Repeatable. F.S.SS. Prereq: Graduate classification. Sessions in basic molecular biology techniques and related procedures. Offered on a satisfactory-fail basis only.

**EEOB 542F. Techniques in Metabolomics.** Includes metabolomics and the techniques involved in metabolite profiling. For non-chemistry majoring students who are seeking analytical aspects into their biological research projects. (Cross-listed with B M S, BBMB, FS HN, GDCB, HORT, NREM, V MPM, VDPAM), Cr. 1. Repeatable. F.S.SS. Prereq: Graduate classification. Sessions in basic molecular biology techniques and related procedures. Offered on a satisfactory-fail basis only.

**EEOB 542G. Introduction to Molecular Biology Techniques: Genomic.** (Cross-listed with B M S, GDCB, FS HN, GDCB, HORT, NREM, V MPM, VDPAM), Cr. 1. Repeatable. S. Prereq: Graduate classification. Offered on a satisfactory-fail basis only.

**EEOB 551. Plant Evolution and Phylogeny.** (Dual-listed with EEOB 451L). (Cross-listed with EEOB), (3-3) Cr. 4. F. Prereq: BIOL 315 or equivalent. Survey of land plant evolution; phylogenetic comparison of anatomical, reproductive, and life history specializations. Relationships among bryophytes, lycophytes, pteridophytes, gymnosperms, and angiosperms emphasizing significant evolutionary changes documented by paleobotanical, morphological, and molecular studies.


**EEOB 555. Bryophyte and Lichen Biodiversity.** (Dual-listed with EEOB 456). Cr. 3. Prereq: BIOL 212, BIOL 212L. Introduction to the biology and ecology of mosses, liverworts, and lichens. Emphasis on identification and diversity of local representatives of these three groups of organisms. Required field trips and service-learning.

**EEOB 557. Herpetology.** (Dual-listed with EEOB 457). (Cross-listed with A ECL), (2-3) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: A ECL 365 or BIOL 351. Biology, ecology, and evolution of amphibians (salamanders, frogs, caecilians) and reptiles (lizards, snakes, tuatara, turtles, crocodilians). Emphasis on structure, physiological adaptation to different environments, behavior, reproduction, roles of amphibians and reptiles in ecosystems, and conservation. Laboratory focus on survey methods, identification, relationships, distribution, habits, and habitats of amphibians and reptiles.

**EEOB 558. Ornithology.** (Dual-listed with BIOL 458). (Cross-listed with A ECL), (2-3) Cr. 3. S. Prereq: A ECL 365 or BIOL 351. Dual-listed with BIOL 458. Biology, ecology, evolution, and taxonomy of birds. Emphasis on structure, physiology, behavior, communication, navigation, reproduction, and conservation. Laboratory exercises complement lecture topics, emphasize identification and distribution of Midwest birds, and include field trips.
EEOB 559. Mammalogy. (Dual-listed with BIOL 459). (Cross-listed with BIOL). (2-3) Cr. 3. S. Prereq: BIOL 351 or A ECL 365
Biological, ecological, and evolution of mammals. Emphasizes on structure, physiological adaptation to different environments, behavior, reproduction, roles of mammals in ecosystems, and conservation. Laboratory focus on identification, distribution, habits, and habitats of mammals.

EEOB 560. Resource Ecology. (2-3) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2012. Prereq: BIOL 212, BIOL 212L, BIOL 312; STAT 101 or STAT 104 or graduate standing
Ecological and economical management of sustainable biological resources. Unifying current management concepts and models in wildlife, fisheries, water quality, forestry, recreation, and agriculture. Research problems.

EEOB 562. Evolutionary Genetics. (3-0) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2013. Prereq: Permission of instructor
Seminar/discussion course covering the genetic basis of evolutionary processes in multicellular organisms.

EEOB 563. Molecular Phylogenetics. (2-3) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: BIOL 313 and BIOL 315
An overview of the theory underlying phylogenetic analysis and the application of phylogenetic methods to molecular datasets. The course emphasizes a hands-on approach to molecular phylogenetics and combines lecture presentations with computer exercises and discussion of original scientific literature.

EEOB 564. Wetland Ecology. (Cross-listed with ENSCI, 3-0) Cr. 3. S. Prereq: 15 credits in biological sciences

EEOB 564I. Wetland Ecology. (Cross-listed with ENSCI, IA LL). Cr. 4. SS. Prereq: la LL 312!
Ecology, classification, creation, restoration, and management of wetlands. Field studies will examine the composition, structure and functions of local natural wetlands and restored prairie pothole wetlands. Individual or group projects.

A comprehensive overview of the theory and methods for the analysis of biological shape with emphasis on data acquisition, standardization, statistical analysis, and visualization of results. Methods for both landmark and outline data will be discussed.

EEOB 566. Molecular Evolution. (3-0) Cr. 3. Alt. F., offered 2012. Prereq: Permission of instructor
Seminar/discussion course covering the fundamentals of molecular evolution. Emphasis is placed on original scientific literature and current topics, including rates and patterns of genetic divergence; nucleotide and allelic diversity; molecular clocks; gene duplications; genome structure; organelle genomes; polyploidy; transposable elements; and modes and mechanisms of gene and genome evolution.

EEOB 567. Empirical Population Genetics. (3-0) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: Permission of instructor
An overview of fundamental population genetic theory and the ecological and evolutionary factors underlying the distribution of genetic variation within and among natural populations. Emphasis on the analysis of inbreeding, breeding systems, parentage, relatedness, spatial autocorrelation, effective population size, hierarchical population models, and phylogeography.

EEOB 568. Advanced Systematics. (Cross-listed with ENT). (2-3) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2013. Prereq: Permission of instructor
Principles and practice of systematic biology; taxonomy, nomenclature and classification of plants and animals; sources and interpretation of systematic data; specialization; fundamentals of phylogenetic systematics.

EEOB 569. Biogeography. (3-0) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2012. Prereq: BIOL 315 or equivalent; permission of instructor
Principles underlying the geographic distribution of organisms throughout the world; biological influences of geological history and tectonic movements; role of climate, migration, dispersal, habitat, and phylogeny on past and present organismal distribution patterns; biogeographic methods.

EEOB 570. Landscape Ecology. (Cross-listed with A ECL). (2-3) Cr. 3. Alt. F., offered 2012. Prereq: Permission of instructor: EEOB 588; a course in calculus
The study of ecological and evolutionary processes within a spatial context with emphasis on behavior, population, and community dynamics.

EEOB 573. Techniques for Biology Teaching. (Cross-listed with IA LL, A ECL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

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EEOB 573B. Techniques for Biology Teaching: Plant Biology. (Cross-listed with IA LL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

EEOB 573C. Techniques for Biology Teaching: Fungi and Lichens. (Cross-listed with IA LL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

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EEOB 573G. Techniques for Biology Teaching: Limnology. (Cross-listed with IA LL, A ECL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

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**EEOB 573J. Techniques for Biology Teaching: Biology of Invertebrates.** (Cross-listed with IA LL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

**EEOB 573K. Techniques for Biology Teaching: Non-invasive Use of Living Organisms.** (Cross-listed with IA LL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

**EEOB 573W. Techniques for Biology Teaching: Project WET.** (Cross-listed with IA LL, A ECL). Cr. 1-2. Repeatable. SS.
The development and implementation of laboratory exercises suitable for inclusion in elementary, middle, high school, and community college biology and environmental courses. Exercises will be built around common organisms and ecosystems in Iowa. Field trips.

**EEOB 575I. Field Mycology.** (Cross-listed with IA LL). Cr. 4. Alt. SS., offered 2012.
Identification and classification of the common fungi; techniques for identification, preservation, and culture practiced with members of the various fungi groups.

**EEOB 576. Functional Ecology.** (3-0) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2013. Prereq: BIOL 312
Dual-listed with BIOL 476. The nature of adaptations to physical and biotic environments. Biophysical, biomechanical, and physiological bases of the structure, form, growth, distribution, and abundance of organisms.

Readings and discussion of influential ideas in ecological and evolutionary theory, with an emphasis on how models are used as conceptual tools for building synthetic paradigms. Topics are chosen according to student interests; may include spatial ecology, behavioral theory, chaos, community assembly and biodiversity, and others.

**EEOB 578. Foundations of Theoretical Ecology and Evolution.** (3-0) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2014. Prereq: 1 semester of calculus or permission of instructor.
Quantitative exploration of classic models and results in ecological and evolutionary theory. Introduction to conceptual, mathematical, and programming tools needed to build and analyze models.

**EEOB 580I. Ecology and Systematics of Diatoms.** (Cross-listed with IA LL). Cr. 4. SS.
Field and laboratory study of freshwater diatoms; techniques in collection, preparation, and identification of diatom samples; study of environmental factors affecting growth, distribution, taxonomic characters; project design and execution including construction of reference and voucher collections and data organization and analysis.

**EEOB 581. Environmental Systems I: Introduction to Environmental Systems.** (Dual-listed with BIOL 381). (Cross-listed with BIOL, ENV S, MICRO). Cr. 3-4. F.
Prereq: 12 credits of natural science including biology and chemistry
Introduction to the structure and function of natural environmental systems. Emphasis on the analysis of material and energy flows in natural environmental systems and the primary environmental factors controlling these systems.

**EEOB 584. Ecosystem Ecology.** (Cross-listed with ENVSCI) (3-0) Cr. 3. Alt. S., offered 2012. Prereq: Combined 12 credits in biology and chemistry
Introduction to the study of ecosystems and the factors that influence their properties and dynamics. Conceptual foundations for ecosystem studies. Quantitative analyses of accumulations, transformations, and fluxes of nutrients, water, and energy within and among ecosystems.

Factors controlling species diversity, species abundance, and the structure and function of communities in space and time. Relationships between species diversity and ecosystem process rates and community stability.

**EEOB 586. Aquatic Ecology.** (Dual-listed with EEOB 486). (Cross-listed with ENVSCI). (3-0) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: ENVSCI 301 or ENVSCI 312 or ENVSCI 381 or ENVSCI 402
(Dual-listed with Biol 486.) Structure and function of aquatic ecosystems with application to fishery and pollution problems. Emphasis on lacustrine, riverine and wetland ecology.

**EEOB 586L. Aquatic Ecology Laboratory.** (Dual-listed with EEOB 487). (Cross-listed with ENVSCI). (0-3) Cr. 1. F. Prereq: Concurrent enrollment in EEOB 586
(Dual-listed with Biol 486L.) Field trips and laboratory exercises to accompany 586. Hands-on experience with aquatic research and monitoring techniques and concepts.

**EEOB 587. Microbial Ecology.** (Dual-listed with EEOB 487). (Cross-listed with ENVSCI, MICRO). (3-0) Cr. 3. F.
Prereq: Six credits in biology and 6 credits in chemistry
(Dual-listed with Biol 487.) Introduction to major functional groups of autotrophic and heterotrophic microorganisms and their roles in natural systems.

**EEOB 589. Population Ecology.** (Cross-listed with A ECL). (2-2) Cr. 3. F. Prereq: BIOL 312, STAT 101 or STAT 104, a course in calculus, or graduate standing
(Dual-listed with Biol 489.) Concepts and theories of population dynamics with emphasis on models of growth, predation, competition, and regulation.

**EEOB 590. Graduate Independent Study.** (Cross-listed with ANTHR, A ECL, IA LL). Cr. 1-4. Repeatable. SS.
Prereq: Graduate classification and permission of instructor

**EEOB 590A. Special Topics: Current Topics in Ecology.** Cr. 1-3. Repeatable. Prereq: 10 credits in biology, permission of instructor

**EEOB 590B. Special Topics: Current Topics in Evolutionary Biology.** Cr. 1-3. Repeatable. Prereq: 10 credits in biology, permission of instructor

**EEOB 590C. Special Topics: Current Topics in Organismal Biology.** Cr. 1-3. Repeatable. Prereq: 10 credits in biology, permission of instructor

**EEOB 590I. Special Topics: Graduate Independent Study.** (Cross-listed with A ECL, ANTHR, IA LL). Cr. 1-4. Repeatable. SS.
Prereq: Graduate classification and permission of instructor

**EEOB 596. Ecology and Society.** (Dual-listed with BIOL 496). (3-0) Cr. 3. Prereq: Graduate classification in biological or environmental sciences/studies with at least one course in ecology
Analysis of conceptual and methodological debates in ecology. Historical development of competing research traditions and philosophies. Topics include i) methodological issues in ecological science, ii) conceptual issues in theoretical ecology, iii) conceptual issues in applied ecology, iv) relation of ecology to environmental and social issues.

**EEOB 599. Creative Component.** Cr. arr.
Research toward nonthesis master’s degree.

**Courses for graduate students:**

**EEOB 611. Analysis of Populations.** (Cross-listed with A ECL). (2-2) Cr. 3. Alt. F., offered 2011. Prereq: BIOL 312; STAT 401; a course in calculus
Quantitative techniques for analyzing vertebrate population data to estimate parameters such as density and survival. Emphasis on statistical inference and computing.

**EEOB 679. Light Microscopy.** (Cross-listed with MICRO, GDCB). (2-9) Cr. 5. Prereq: Permission of instructor
Current theories encompassing light optics and their applications for specimen preservation, paraffin and resin sectioning, general staining, histochemistry, cytophotometry, immunochemistry, autoradiography, image digitization, processing and presentation, and digital macro- and micrography. Limit of 10 students.

**EEOB 680. Scanning Electron Microscopy.** (Cross-listed with MICRO, GDCB). (2-9) Cr. 5. Prereq: Permission of instructor
Current theories encompassing scanning electron optics and their applications for high and low vacuum microscopy, specimen chemical and cryopreservation methods, x-ray microanalysis, backscattered and topographic imaging, image digitization, processing and presentation. Limit of 10 students.
(Cross-listed with MICRO, GDCB). (2-9) Cr. 5. Prereq: GDCB 679 and permission of instructor
Current theories encompassing electron optics and their applications for chemical and physical specimen preservation, ultramicrotomy, general staining and cytochemistry, immunocytochemistry, autoradiography, negative staining and shadowing, x-ray microanalysis, image digitization, processing and presentation.

EEOB 698. Seminar.
Cr. 1. Repeatable.
Meetings of graduate students and faculty to discuss recent literature and problems under investigation.

EEOB 699. Research.
Cr. arr. Repeatable.
Research for thesis or dissertation. Offered on a satisfactory-fail basis only.

EEOB 699I. Research.
(Cross-listed with A ECL, ANTHR, IA LL, GDCB). Cr. 1-4. Repeatable.