

Field Trips Policy

Field trips are an integral component to many of the courses offered by the Biology Department. These field trips may be designed to highlight specific species, communities, or ecosystems, or they may be an opportunity to make observations, collect data, or obtain samples for further study in the lab. Other field trips may take you into the community to interact with K12 students or other stakeholders as part of a community-engaged learning opportunity. Whatever the specific purpose, these experiences are designed to reinforce the learning objectives for the course. They also can be a lot of fun!

Preparation for Field Trips

It is essential that you come prepared and well rested for field trips. If you will be working outdoors, keep track of weather predictions and dress for the field; wear proper footwear (never flip-flops or sandals). It is advisable to avoid wearing cotton clothing when in the field. Bring dry clothes, extra layers, fleece jacket, insect repellent, bug hats, mittens and wool cap, sun protection, etc. as needed. The Biology Department has a selection of boots and other gear (e.g. rain ponchos, bug spray, sunscreen, etc.) should you prefer to borrow. Please don't hesitate to ask for gear. Being prepared also means bringing appropriate food (if needed) and a water bottle.

Attendance Policies

Attendance policies surrounding field trips vary depending on whether they occur as part of a core course required for the major, a course with multiple sections (e.g., BIO 195), or an elective course. Generally it is not possible to "make up" a missed field trip, so you should consult the course syllabus for the dates of any field trips and plan accordingly.

Core courses (BIO 202, 204, and 206): Any required field trips in these core courses will occur during the regularly scheduled course meeting time. If any field trips are scheduled outside of the regularly scheduled meeting time, attendance will be optional; however, you may be asked to complete an alternative assignment if you are unable to attend an optional field trip.

BIO 195: The Biology Department offers several sections of BIO 195 each year. Some sections of BIO 195 require field trips that occur on weekends or that otherwise occur outside of the

regularly scheduled course meeting time. BIO 195 sections with these required field trips are clearly marked in the course description in the Catalog and on the Biology Department's website, and the dates for these field trips will be noted on the course syllabus and made available no later than the first day of class. If you anticipate a conflict between one or more of the required field trips and another commitment (e.g., athletics, performing arts, debate, etc.), you should register for a different section of BIO 195 or you should plan to prioritize attending the field trip(s) over your other commitments; missing one or more of these required field trips may impact your course grade. There may be optional field trips as well; you may be asked to complete an alternative assignment if you are unable to attend an optional field trip.

Upper-level electives and Short Term courses: Some of our upper-level elective courses (200 and above) and Short term courses require field trips that occur on weekends or that otherwise occur outside of the regularly scheduled course meeting time. These courses are clearly marked in the course description in the Catalog and on the Biology Department's website, and the dates for these field trips will be noted on the course syllabus available no later than the first day of class. For Short Term courses that require overnight travel, the dates you will be away from campus are also noted in the class schedule on Garnet Gateway. If you have other commitments (e.g., athletics, performing arts, debate, etc.) that conflict with one or more of the required field trips, enrolling in these courses means that you will prioritize attending the field trip(s) over your other commitments; missing one or more of these required field trips may impact your course grade. There may be optional field trips as well; you may be asked to complete an alternative assignment if you are unable to attend an optional field trip.

Unplanned absences: Although many scheduling conflicts (e.g., athletics, performing arts, debate, etc.) can be anticipated prior to the start of the semester, you may need to miss a field trip due to illness, injury, or personal emergency. Each course syllabus will describe how to handle these unplanned absences, but generally you will be asked to document the reason for your absence and reach out to your instructor as soon as possible. If these unplanned absences are excused, missing the field trip will not affect your course grade. However, you may be asked to complete an alternative assignment and you will be responsible for the information covered during the missed field trip.