

# Sample Syllabus: Entomology 818

## Insect ID and Natural History

### Instructors:

Tom Weissling, Associate Professor of Practice and Online Education Coordinator  
Stephen Spomer, Research Technologist and Research Associate, Nebraska State Museum

### Contact Tom:

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**Office Location** Room 214, Entomology Hall

### Mailing Address:

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Room 103  
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**Office Hours** The best way to reach me is by email or text to my mobile. Expect a response within a few hours, although I sometimes take a little longer. If you call and I do not answer, leave a message and I will get back to you as soon as possible. I am on the computer a lot so we can also arrange chat times if you wish.

### Contact Steve:

Steve is available for questions about collecting, preservation and curation.

**Email:** [sspomer1@unl.edu](mailto:sspomer1@unl.edu)

### ABOUT THE COURSE

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the diversity and advanced biology of insects as well as explore their classification beyond the order level. The natural history of all orders will be discussed and key taxonomic characters of the major/common families will be explored. A collection is required.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

All students will be expected to:

1. Identify to **Order**, at sight, any common insect
2. Identify to **Family**, at sight and with the aid of keys, several members of common **Orders**
3. Correctly spell all **Family** names
4. For each taxon discussed in lecture:
  - a. name host, or habitat of adults
  - b. describe the general life history
  - c. name, or describe, any unusual characteristics shared with other taxa

- d. name taxa which share similar biological or morphological features
5. Define terms used in biology and taxonomy
6. Properly collect, preserve, and curate insects

## INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD

Blackboard will be used for delivery of all materials pertinent to this course (lectures, asynchronous discussions, assignments, and assessment materials). Power Point presentations will be used to deliver lectures, which will include text and images and will be strengthened by narration to emphasize key points. Asynchronous discussion threads will be used to assess student comprehension of lecture and reading materials.

## TEXTBOOKS

Required: Borror and DeLong's: Introduction to the study of insects....**7th ed.** There have been many changes between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> editions. For consistency, all need use the 7th.

Suggested: Borror and White, Peterson Field Guides: A Field Guide to Insects, America North of Mexico.1970. While this is an easy book to us and has some simple keys (e.g. Trichoptera, parasitic Hymenoptera), many of the names have changed, so do not use it as a source of final determination of order or family.

## MICROSCOPY

Some of you will have access to a microscope. If you don't, I encourage you to buy one. There are several dissecting scopes available for \$100 - 300. You can find digital scopes for under \$100. I recommend 10-40X.

## THE COLLECTION

- Students will collect a minimum of 100 ADULT insects. **Collections are due by October 1, 2015** but can be turned in earlier, even before the course is over if you wish. BUT please, please, please.....do not turn it in late. I'm begging you!
- If you plan of graduating this summer, please have the collection (and all other materials) completed by July 31.
- **Start collecting ASAP.** Seriously.
- The collection must contain specimens representing **15 orders** and **75 different families**. Specimens must be properly labeled, preserved, and curated. Additional information will be posted on BlackBoard.
- Collections will be returned to you unless you specify otherwise.

## INCOMPLETES

Reminder. I am in the process of migrating ENTO 818 from summer to spring semesters. Until I get the transfer fully completed and approved, the course will work like this....you will complete all lectures and exams/quizzes this spring, and you will have the summer of 2015 to collect insects for your collection. Collections will then be submitted by October 1. You will receive an incomplete grade until the collection is graded. If you need a grade before Dec. 2015 for reimbursement purposes, let me know and I will assign a grade of B. After the collection is graded, I can go back and change the final grade.

## ASSESSMENTS

**Qualifying Quiz:** Everyone will be expected to complete and pass a quiz over the syllabus and on the collection, curation and SHIPPING of your insect collection. All information on the quiz will be in provided documents. The quiz is worth 25 points. You must get at least 23 points before taking subsequent quizzes. If you get below this, I will return the quiz and ask for another attempt.

**Available: Jan. 15....Due Date: Jan. 18 (midnight)**

**Exams:** There will be 3 examinations, 2 during the semester and a final. Each will cover natural history, identification, taxonomy, systematics, collecting and curating. All will be open book, and each worth 100 points. Exams will be delivered by email, you will have 1 week to complete. Exams should be returned by email.

**Exam 1 available Feb. 18, Due Feb. 25**

**Exam 2 available April 6, Due April 13**

**Final available April 30, Due May 7**

**Weekly Review and Quiz:** At the end of each week (not week 1), you will review the orders and families we have gone over. An identification quiz will also be posted at the end of each week. You have 3 days to complete the quiz (due at midnight on the day listed). If you miss an identification, the quiz will be returned to you with additional hints, and you will be given a day to return it with a different answer. Each quiz will be worth 15 points.

- ID Quiz 1: Available Jan. 23, due Jan. 26**
- ID Quiz 2: Available Jan. 30, due Feb. 2**
- ID Quiz 3: Available Feb. 6, due Feb. 9**
- ID Quiz 4: Available Feb. 13, due Feb. 16**
- ID Quiz 5: Available Feb. 20, due Feb. 23**
- ID Quiz 6: Available Feb. 27, due March 2**
- ID Quiz 7: Available March 6, due March 9**
- ID Quiz 8: Available March 13, due March 16**
- ID Quiz 9: Available March 20, due March 30**
- ID Quiz 10: Available April 3, due April 6**
- ID Quiz 11: Available April 10, due April 13**
- ID Quiz 12: Available April 17, due April 20**
- ID Quiz 13: Available April 24, due April 27**
- ID Quiz 14: Available May 1, due May 4**

**Point Breakdown**

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Final	100 points
Qualifying Quiz	25 points
Weekly ID Quizzes (15 points each X 14)	210 points
Collection	300 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>835 points</b>

Letter grades will be assigned based on straight percentages of 100 - 90% A range, 89 - 80% B ranges,

etc. The department of entomology requires that graduate students must receive a **B or better grade** in order for the class to count towards graduation.

**Tentative Lecture Schedule (sorry, I can't provide specific dates)**

Lecture	Topic
-	Course Overview
1	Classification, Phylogeny, Nomenclature
2	Morphology
3	Collecting and curating
4	Using a dichotomous key
5	Protura
6	Collembola
7	Diplura
8	Microcoryphia
9	Thysanura
10	Ephemeroptera
11	Odonata
12	Orthoptera
13	Phasmatodea
14	Grylloblattodea/Mantophasmatodea
15	Dermaptera
16	Plecoptera
17	Embiidina
18	Zoraptera
19	Isoptera
20	Mantodea
21	Blattodea

22	Hemiptera
23	Thysanoptera
24	Psocoptera
25	Phthiraptera
26	Coleoptera (may continue into week 5)
27	Neuroptera
28	Hymenoptera
29	Trichoptera
30	Lepidoptera
31	Siphonaptera
32	Mecoptera
33	Strepsiptera
34	Diptera
	Catch-up and/or Review

**Additional Information:**

**PLEDGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL STANDARDS**

*Entomology instructors will provide our students a complete syllabus meeting all UNL standards, our classes will be based on current science and will follow published schedules and descriptions, and our instructors will be timely in returning grades and in responding to our students.*

**ADA STATEMENT**

*Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Christy Horn for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY (updated 8/20/07)*

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

*The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a policy about academic dishonesty, as indicated in the Student Code of Conduct (see Undergraduate Bulletin). As a student at UNL, you enjoy rights and protections under the code and are obligated to conduct yourself in compliance with the code.*

*As the Student Code of Conduct indicates, academic sanctions for misconduct subject to appeal are at the discretion of the instructor, and may include giving the student a failing grade for the course. In this course, the least penalty that will be imposed for misconduct is a one letter grade reduction in the course grade, but in most instances the penalty for cheating will be a failing grade in the course.*

*“Students are expected to adhere to guidelines concerning academic dishonesty as specified in Entomology policy (insert web link) in accordance with Section 4.2 of the University Student Code of Conduct (<http://stuaufs.unl.edu/ja/code/>).”*

**INFORMATION FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSES: Fire Alarm (or other evacuation)**

*In the event of a fire alarm: Gather belongings (Purse, keys, cellphone, N-Card, etc.) and use the nearest exit to leave the building. Do not use the elevators. After exiting notify emergency personnel of the location of persons unable to exit the building. Do not return to building unless told to do so by emergency personnel.*

**Tornado Warning:** *When sirens sound, move to the lowest interior area of building or designated shelter. Stay away from windows and stay near an inside wall when possible.*

**Active Shooter Evacuate:** *if there is a safe escape path, leave belongings behind, keep hands visible and follow police officer instructions. **Hide out:** If evacuation is impossible secure yourself in your space by turning out lights, closing blinds and barricading doors if possible. **Take action:** As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter.*

**UNL Alert:** *Notifications about serious incidents on campus are sent via text message, email, unl.edu website, and social media. For more information go to: <http://unlalert.unl.edu>.*

*Additional Emergency Procedures can be found here:  
[http://emergency.unl.edu/doc/Emergency\\_Procedures\\_Quicklist.pdf](http://emergency.unl.edu/doc/Emergency_Procedures_Quicklist.pdf)*