

CONTACTS

Lab Teaching Assistants (TAs)

Your TAs are your primary lab contacts. Check the **Lab Sections** table to find the TAs for your lab section.

Name	Email
Doreen Chaussadas	doreen.chaussadas@uga.edu
Emma Spiegel	emma.spiegel25@uga.edu
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Jump to (click link)

- Lab Sections
- Topical Outline
- Lab Format
- Attendance and Make-Up Policy
- Lab Assignments & Grading

Virtual office hours/meeting times will be announced by each TA.

Lab Coordinator:

Dr. Kait Farrell

Email: kfarrell@uga.edu

Meetings by appointment: e-mail or visit <https://kfarrell.youcanbook.me/> to schedule.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Ecology Lab (ECOL 3500L) builds on lecture themes of population structure and dynamics, community organization and classification, and ecosystem nutrient and energy flows.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This lab will help you improve your ability to observe the natural world, develop your scientific writing, and provide practice formulating hypotheses about how and why things occur in nature and testing those hypotheses using data. This course uses inquiry-based learning, which seeks to provide a realistic experience conducting ecological research. During a semester-long project, you will work in teams to design an original ecological study, collect and analyze data, and present your results.

Specifically, this course is designed to provide you with experience in the following:

- Reinforcing ecological principles learned in lecture
- Communicating scientific knowledge and findings through writing
- Designing and implementing ecological studies
- Experiencing the benefits of collaboration and teamwork in science

Please see the **Topical Outline** for a list of topics this lab will cover.

Course Details

- Co-requisite: ECOL 3500 (Ecology lecture) and pre-requisites therein
- Required resources: A computer or tablet with videoconferencing capability
- Format: Hybrid in-person/synchronous online
- Location: In-person labs meet in **Science Learning Center 302**; Online instruction via Zoom

Key Dates

- Wed. Jan. 20: Drop/Add ends
- Mon. Jan. 25: Labs begin
- Tues. Mar. 23: Withdrawal deadline
- Mon. May 3: Classes end

COURSE POLICIES

Lab Format

Overview

UGA is following public health recommendations to help reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission; these include wearing a face mask and implementing social distancing. To meet these guidelines, our labs will be run in a hybrid in-person/synchronous online format.

Within your lab section, you have been assigned to a group (Group A or Group B) and groups will alternate each week between in-person and synchronous online lab activities. This will allow us to maintain social distancing when meeting in-person while providing the opportunity to interact regularly with your instructors and classmates. Your group assignment and weekly lab schedule is available on eLC.

Note that the lab format is subject to change in response to COVID-19 dynamics on campus and in the Athens community. The most up-to-date lab information on lab schedules and format will always be available through eLC.

Preparing for Lab

Labs are scheduled to run for 2 hours and 45 minutes. You will use this time to work on lab activities, discuss lab content with your classmates, and get support from your TA. You are expected to come to lab prepared to participate and actively engage in lab activities. Preparing for lab includes previewing each week's lab materials on eLC and brainstorming ideas and questions related to the lab topic to share with your classmates.

Synchronous Online Labs

Online labs will meet **synchronously** (at the same time as your regularly scheduled lab section) via Zoom. You can access your lab section's Zoom link via the eLC Course Information folder.

In-Person Labs

In-person labs will meet in the Science Learning Center (SLC) room 302 unless otherwise announced via eLC. If you are not comfortable participating in-person but do not have a DRC accommodation for remote attendance, you may request to participate online during weeks your group is meeting in-person. **Requests must be submitted before your lab meeting time** to avoid being marked absent.

Participation & Engagement

To earn full participation points each week, you should arrive to lab on time and participate in lab activities. Arriving late, leaving lab early without permission, not participating in lab activities and/or distracting from the learning environment are grounds for a loss of weekly participation points.

During online lab sessions, you are expected to participate and be engaged at the same level as if you were meeting in-person. Simply logging on to a Zoom session is not synonymous with participating. To facilitate engagement during online labs, we expect you to have your camera on whenever possible, as this is an important part of building community and authentically interacting with your classmates and TA. You are welcome to use a simple, non-distracting virtual background while connecting with video. If you anticipate problems connecting to Zoom with video, please contact the lab coordinator and your TA as soon as possible to discuss.

Collaborative work

Throughout the semester, lab work will include group activities. We encourage you to work closely with your classmates while completing this work. However, you must complete all written assignments **individually** unless otherwise indicated. If you ever have a question about whether you have crossed the fine line between group and independent work, ask your TA **before** you submit the assignment.

Additionally, in the sciences, all co-authors are responsible for the accuracy and originality of group work. Your name on a group assignment indicates that you take responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and academic integrity of the entire assignment. Group members should do their best to contribute equally to group assignments. Non-participation in group work could result in a lowered grade on group assignments. If you are experiencing problems with one or more group members, please contact your TA so that they can help your team address any issues.

Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Attendance is **required** each week, whether your lab group is meeting in-person or on Zoom. Since labs only meet once per week, missing even one session means you have missed a substantial amount of the course material. DO NOT schedule other appointments or activities that overlap with your scheduled lab section.

Excused Absences

Students with an excused absence are eligible to complete a make-up activity for credit. Confirmation of excused absences may require written/verifiable documentation that covers the date and time of your regularly scheduled lab. Excused absences include (but may not be limited to) personal illness, family emergencies, COVID-19 isolation or quarantine, religious holidays, or competing in a UGA varsity athletic event.

If you are absent from lab (in-person *or* online) with a valid excuse, you must submit a make-up request form within **48 hours** of your absence to be eligible for a make-up activity. Detailed instructions for submitting a make-up request are posted on eLC. Note that providing false statements regarding an absence is a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences include (but may not be limited to) work scheduling conflicts, sorority/fraternity or other club events, being out of town/on vacation, oversleeping/alarm not going off, or that you just did not feel like coming to lab or forgot your lab was meeting.

Unexcused absences are **not eligible** for make-up activities. As a result, you will earn **0 points** for the in-class or homework assignment associated with the lab you missed. You also will not earn participation points for that lab.

Athletics-Related Absences

If you are a member of a UGA varsity athletic team and will be out of town for a competition, you must provide your TA with documentation from the UGA Athletic Department of your schedule and participation **in advance** of any absence. Athletics-related absences are eligible for make-up activities.

Lab Assignments & Grading

Lab assignments will involve both group and individual work. Throughout the semester, you will work as a group to develop and complete an ecology project; we will also have weekly graded assignments and/or quizzes related to different ecological topics.

You can earn up to 300 points in lab. The planned breakdown of points is as follows:

- Semester-long project (group + individual assignments): 125 points
 - Group assignments: 55 points
 - Individual assignments: 70 points
- Lab assignments & quizzes: 150 points
- Participation & engagement: 25 points (2 points per lab meeting + 3 free points)

A list of assignments with point values and due dates is posted on eLC in the "Course Information" folder. Due dates are also embedded in the eLC calendar.

Your lab grade constitutes 30% of your overall course (ECOL3500) grade. Final lab grades will be calculated as your total points earned divided by 300. The resulting percentage will be **rounded to two decimals** and reported to your lecture instructor(s) for inclusion in your overall course grade.

If you have a question or complaint about a grade on an assignment or quiz, you must bring it to your TA's attention by submitting a grade dispute form, which includes a written explanation as to why you disagree with the grade, **within 5 calendar days** of the grade being posted to eLC.

Due Dates

Due dates for all graded activities are listed on eLC; quizzes and assignments must be submitted through eLC by the due date. Late submissions will incur a 10% per day penalty after the due date. Assignments and quizzes will **not be accepted** for credit more than 7 calendar days after the due date and will receive a grade of zero.

All assignments **must** be submitted as a Word document (.docx) or PDF file (.pdf) unless otherwise specified in the assignment guidelines. **Documents submitted in any other file format will not be graded.** It is your responsibility to review uploaded assignment files for accuracy and format. Submitted files that are blank, corrupted, or in an unsupported format will not be graded. Such assignments can be resubmitted but will be subject to the late work policy.

If you have an unavoidable circumstance that prevents you from turning in an assignment on time, you must contact your TA **before** the due date, to see if an extension or alternate due date may be possible. If you have an emergency that causes you to miss a due date, please contact your TA as soon as possible after the due date.

Access to Course Information, Syllabus, & Policies

All course information including a copy of the syllabus, assignment due dates, and policy information can be found on eLC. You are welcome to print off materials for completing the lab assignments. Announcements about the lab will be posted to eLC, as will any changes to the syllabus or lab schedule. You are responsible for checking eLC on a regular basis.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES & RESOURCES

Face Mask Policy

Per USG guidelines, all students and instructors are **required** to wear an appropriate face covering **at all times** while inside instructional buildings. For lab activities taking place outdoors, face masks are **required** if social distancing requirements cannot be maintained. If you have a DRC-documented health reason that you cannot wear a face covering, please contact your TA and the lab coordinator as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Masks must be worn over the nose **and** mouth. Anyone not wearing an appropriate face covering when required will be asked to put one on or immediately leave the lab. Students who refuse to comply with the face mask requirement may be reported to Student Affairs.

University Honor Code & Academic Honesty

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the UGA academic honesty policy, “A Culture of Honesty”, and the Student Honor Code (“I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.”). All academic work must meet the standards described in the [Academic Honesty Policy](#).

You are responsible for informing yourself about the university’s standards before performing any academic work. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. All instances of suspected or potential academic dishonesty, including plagiarizing, lying, cheating, falsifying data, obtaining unauthorized assistance, stealing, or other forms of academic dishonesty detailed as [Prohibited Conduct](#) in the Academic Honesty Policy, will be reported to the UGA Office of the Vice President for Instruction. Please ask before submitting your assignment if you ever have questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy.

DRC Accommodations

If you require a disability-related accommodation, it is essential that you register with the Disability Resource Center (Clark Howell Hall; <https://drc.uga.edu>; 706-542-8719 [voice]; 706-542-8778 [TTY]). If you are eligible for DRC accommodations, you should make an appointment to speak with your TA or the Lab Coordinator as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

Campus Mental Health and Wellness Resources

We are living through challenging times. The resources below are available through UGA to help you navigate struggles you may be experiencing in your academic and/or personal life:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs (706-542-7774 or <https://sco.uga.edu>). They will help you navigate difficult circumstances by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- UGA has several resources for a student seeking crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>) or mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/mental-health>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- If you need assistance with time management, test and performance anxiety, note-taking, motivation, text comprehension, test preparation, and other barriers to academic success at UGA, contact Academic Coaching (<https://dae.uga.edu/services/academic-coaching>).
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

FERPA Notice

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. To comply with FERPA, all communication that refers to individual students must be through a secure medium (UGAMail or eLC) or conducted in person. Instructors are not allowed to respond to messages that refer to individual students or student progress/grades in the course through non-UGA accounts, phone calls, or other types of electronic media. For details, please visit <https://apps.reg.uga.edu/FERPA>.

Syllabus Disclaimer

The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced to the class via eLC.

Lab Sections

CRN	Day	Lab Time	TA 1	TA 2
22890	Mon	9:10-11:55	Rebecca	Michael
22898	Mon	12:40-3:25	Rebecca	Michael
22887	Tues	8:00-10:45	Rebecca	Michael
56674	Tues	11:10-1:55	Doreen	Jeff
35514	Tues	2:20-5:05	Doreen	Jeff
22891	Wed	8:00-10:45	Megan	Jeff
22900	Wed	11:30-2:15	Megan	Doreen
22888	Thurs	8:00-10:45	Megan	Emma
50967	Thurs	11:10-1:55	Kerrie	Supraja
38005	Thurs	2:20-5:05	Kerrie	Supraja
56671	Fri	10:20-1:05	Kerrie	Supraja

Topical Outline

Labs will explore the following topics during the semester. See the Course Schedule on eLC for details about dates and associated assignments.

- Ecological observations
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Science of team science
- Experimental design
- Scientific writing and communication
- Trophic dynamics
- Stream ecology
- Population ecology
- Forest ecology
- Macrosystems ecology