
BIOL 527

Paleolimnology and Global Environmental Change

Winter Term (2016-17)

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

The main aim of this course is to provide students with a background in studies of long-term environmental change, with a focus on research that is especially relevant to today's environmental problems. Key topics include: climatic change, lake pollution, atmospheric deposition of contaminants and related topics. Lake sediment analyses will be highlighted, but other approaches (such as ice cores, tree rings, corals) will also be explored.

RECOMMENDATION BIOL 335

SCHEDULE

Refer to SOLUS for timetabling details.

Instructor	John Smol
Instructor Contact	smolj@queensu.ca Phone: 613-533-6147
Office Hours	Before or after class; or by appointment
TA:	None
TA Contact Information	None
TA Office Hours	None

Learning Objectives

The overall goals of this course are to: i) provide an overview of the complexity of environmental issues we are facing today, and how long-term paleoenvironmental data can help inform many of these issues; and ii) provide the opportunity to improve your synthesis and communication skills. In order to be a successful scientist (and citizen), you must be able to assimilate information, organize information, and be able to present information effectively in both oral (seminars) and written (final paper) forms. We will try to develop these skills in this course.

Learning Hours

<i>Teaching method</i>		<i>Average hours per week</i>	<i>Number of weeks</i>	<i>Total hours</i>
In-class	Lecture	3	7	21
	Seminar	3	5	15
	Laboratory			
	Tutorial			

	Practicum			
	Group learning			
	Individual instruction			
Other	Online activity			
	Off-campus activity			
	Private study	8	12	96
Total hours on task				132

Course Outline

There is a growing realization that long-term data are vital for understanding many ecological and environmental problems. Unfortunately, such data are rarely available, and so indirect proxy methods must be used. One of the leading approaches for inferring long-term environmental trends is paleolimnology and related paleoenvironmental fields. Paleolimnology is a multi-disciplinary science that uses physical, chemical, and biological information preserved in sedimentary profiles from aquatic systems to reconstruct past environmental conditions. Paleolimnological reconstructions of environmental change are being used increasingly in a large number of projects around the world. For example, paleolimnology played a key role in recent international environmental problems, such as lake acidification, eutrophication, and climate change.

Textbooks/Readings

Smol, J.P. 2008. *Pollution of Lakes and Rivers: A Paleoenvironmental Perspective – 2nd Edition*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford. 383 pp.

The textbook is available at the Queen's Bookstore, in the basement.

<http://www.campusbookstore.com/Textbooks/Course/13120-BIOL527-2ND14>

Please see the BIOL527 website – <http://post.queensu.ca/~biol527>

Grading Scheme

Component	Weight (%)	Date
Seminar 1	15	See course website
Seminar 2	25	See course website
Participation	10	
Paper	50	See course website

Grading Method

• In this course, some components will be graded using numerical percentage marks. Other components will receive letter grades, which for purposes of calculating your course average will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science Letter Grade Input Scheme.

When letter grades are employed, the following scale will be employed for purposes of calculating your course average:

Arts & Science Letter Grade Input Scheme

Assignment mark	Numerical value for calculation of final mark
A+	93
A	87
A-	82
B+	78
B	75
B-	72
C+	68
C	65
C-	62
D+	58
D	55
D-	52
F48 (F+)	48
F24 (F)	24
F0 (O)	0

Your course average will then be converted to a final letter grade according to Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale:

Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale

Grade	Numerical Course Average (Range)
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	49 and below

Academic Integrity and Queen's Code of Conduct

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments and conduct conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1 - <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/regulations/academic-regulations>, on the Arts and Science website (see <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/undergraduate/academic-integrity>), and at Biology's website (<http://www.queensu.ca/biology/undergrad/integrity.html>) and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulations on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Accommodation Policy, Exam Conflicts, and Other Conflicts

Students who feel they need accommodations for disabilities or extenuating circumstances, or have a conflict between exams or other commitments should consult the Biology Department's website for details about how to proceed (<http://www.queensu.ca/biology/undergrad/integrity.html>). In general, the earlier a course coordinator is apprised of an extenuating circumstance, the more likely an accommodation can be made. Students are encouraged to be proactive in anticipating difficulties, when it is possible to do so.

Students may apply to write a make-up or deferred exam if they have an exam conflict as defined in the Academic Regulations of the Faculty (See Arts and Science Calendar Regulation 8 - <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/regulations/academic-regulations>). In this case, the student should report to the Exams Office first to verify that there is a genuine exam conflict. Biology professors will not consider your situation to be a conflict unless it meets the criteria set out by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Students may request a make-up or deferred exam if they have an exam conflict with off-campus travel associated with a field course (e.g BIOL-307/3.0 or 407/3.0) that is held during the fall or winter terms.

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Accommodation of Disabilities

Queen's University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office (DSO) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the DSO website at: <http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/>