

Nearshore Ecology Field Course
MSL 423 Spring 2027

2 Credits

Discussion; 2-4 Thursday Arctic Health & Research Bldg 1W09

Fees: \$300*

This covers: Lodging and food during spring break

*This does not cover transportation to the lab (including water taxi... about \$80).

Instructor: Brenda Konar

bhkonar@alaska.edu

office phone: 474-5028;

cell: 388-6745

Office hours – 11-12 on Mondays or email for appointment. We can also zoom.

Learning Objectives: This course allows students to conduct an undergraduate-level research project based on a question or hypothesis of their choice involving nearshore systems in Kachemak Bay and then present their results as a poster presentation.

Course Description: *Students in this course will propose a question or hypothesis that they will develop in the first two months of the semester and then experimentally test during a one-week field trip (during Spring Break) to the Kasitsna Bay Lab. Projects may be intertidal, subtidal (if the student is a current AAUS diver) or ?*

Associated with their question or hypothesis, they will develop a short written proposal, a short (i.e., 10 minute) proposal presentation, a field schedule, and a materials list. The proposal presentation will be given to the class prior to turning in the written proposal. The presentation will also be given to the students of MSL 220 during Spring Break. Field work cannot occur until a satisfactory written proposal, field schedule, and materials list is complete. After finishing the fieldwork, students will present their findings in a poster.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of a 200 level marine biology, ecology, or equivalent course

If the student wants to dive as part of their project, they *must* be AAUS divers with current CPR, First Aid, O2 Administration certifications, and have a current AAUS medical physical.

This course includes a **mandatory** field trip over Spring Break at the Kasitsna Bay Laboratory. **If you are not feeling well, please let the instructor know and delay your arrival to the lab.**

-If the student is not a US citizen, there is a bit of paperwork that must be completed 45 days before the field trip because we will be staying at a NOAA Lab. Please see the instructor about this asap.

Grading:

Grading will be apportioned as follows:

Oral presentation of proposal:	20%
Written proposal:	30%
Field schedule:	10%
Field organization:	10%

Final presentation/poster: 30%

Absolute scores will be used to determine final grades, which will be on the +/- scale.

A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%	
B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
D+ = 67-69%	D = 63-68%	D- = 60-62%
F = 59% and lower		

-No incompletes will be given for this course since it involves a field trip.

Course Detail:

Written Proposal: Arial 10 font with line spacing at 1.5 lines is required. Figures can be added but do not count towards the page count. This proposal will include 1) a title, 2) a brief introduction, which will introduce the reader to the general topic, 3) a general rationale explaining why the proposed question/hypothesis is scientifically interesting, 4) a detailed methods section, including a site description, and 5) a reference cited section. Proposals should be 2-3 pages and must cite at least five papers (from peer-reviewed journals, not websites or books) in the introduction and/or methods sections. **A proposal should have enough detail so that someone can replicate the study.**

Oral Proposals: Oral proposals will be done in Powerpoint. They should be about 10 minutes long with 5 minutes for questions. They should include a title slide, 3-4 slides that introduce the topic (i.e., what is known about this subject and why should we care), one slide that states the question/hypothesis, and then 4-5 slides clearly explaining the methods (include a study site slide). The presentations will also be given to MSL 220 the first night of the field course field trip to orient those students to your projects. If the project is subtidal, MSL 220 students will be available to you to assist with scuba diving.

Posters: Posters should follow a typical conference poster style (see the many posters in the halls of the ONL building or the Kasitsna Bay Lab for examples). Posters should have a short introduction and methods section (including a study site figure). The bulk of the poster should be a results/discussion section. Remember: the best posters have less text and more images (graphs, etc...) but also remember that some text is needed to explain results so do not show many result graphs with no associated text. No abstract is needed.

Posters should specifically include:

- Title
- Your name, affiliation, and email address
- Introduction section (i.e., why is this interesting and why should we care)
- State your question/hypothesis
- Study site map
- Section on Methods
- Section on Results with graphics
- Section on Conclusion/Implications
- Acknowledgments (who helped?)

Powerpoint Presentations should specifically include:

- A title slide
- Your name, affiliation, and email address

- Approx 3-4 slides on background/introduction..
i.e., why is this interesting and why should we care
- 1 slide specifically stating your objective/hypothesis
- 1 slide showing your study site(s)
- 2-3 slides on methods
- 1 slide on expected outcomes (or 3-4 on results and implications of the results if it is the final presentation)
- Acknowledgments (who helped?)

SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC
Jan 13	Orientation, paperwork, requirements.
Jan 20	Discuss project ideas (Observation and Question)
Jan 27	Discuss project ideas Present Observation, Question, Hypothesis, and Objectives
Feb 3	Discuss project ideas Present refined Question, Hypothesis, and Objectives Preliminary Experimental Design
Feb 10	Discuss project ideas Final Question, Hypothesis, and Objectives Refined Experimental Design
Feb 17	Present Proposals (oral Powerpoint) Presentations should be 10 minutes with 5 minutes for questions field schedule and materials list due
Feb 24	Written proposal due (by 5pm) Get sampling gear!
Mar 3	No class
Mar 6-14	SPRING BREAK at KASITSNA BAY LABORATORY
April 14	Posters due. Turn in by 5pm (email is fine if small)
TBD	Graduate student talks

Course readings/materials: Students are expected to do literature searches and outside reading of the primary literature as related to their class project. Organism keys and field guides will be provided while at the Kasitsna Bay Laboratory. All students who are diving must be familiar with the Scientific Diving Manual:

<http://www.sfos.uaf.edu/dive/manual/contents.html>

Boating: Any student wanting to use boats for their project must take the on-line boating class prior to spring break and bring their completion certificate with them to the lab. A practical exam and orientation will be given at the lab. A minimum of two people are required to be in boats that are taken out. You may not check out boats by yourself.

<http://www.boatus.org/onlinecourse/Alaska.asp>

Course policies: Attendance is expected unless there is a good reason for the absence (illness or research-related travel). Students must contact the instructor prior to a planned absence. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. Any paper that contains plagiarized material will receive a grade of zero, and may possibly be grounds for flunking the class. Be sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism. For an explanation of what constitutes plagiarism see:

<http://www.uaf.edu/library/instruction/handouts/Plagiarism.html>

Turning in late assignments will result in the reduction of the grade by one full grade (A becomes B) for each 2 days that it is late.

Student protections statement: UAF embraces and grows a culture of respect, diversity, inclusion, and caring. Students at this university are protected against sexual harassment and discrimination (Title IX). Faculty members are designated as responsible employees which means they are required to report sexual misconduct. Graduate teaching assistants do not share the same reporting obligations. For more information on your rights as a student and the resources available to you to resolve problems, please go to the following site:

<https://catalog.uaf.edu/academics-regulations/students-rights-responsibilities/>

Disability services statement: I will work with the Office of Disability Services to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.

ASUAF advocacy statement: The Associated Students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the student government of UAF, offers advocacy services to students who feel they are facing issues with staff, faculty, and/or other students specifically if these issues are hindering the ability of the student to succeed in their academics or go about their lives at the university. Students who wish to utilize these services can contact the Student Advocacy Director by visiting the ASUAF office or emailing asuaf.office@alaska.edu.

Student Academic Support:

- Communication Center (907-474-7007, uaf-commcenter@alaska.edu, Student Success Center, 6th Floor Room 677 Rasmuson Library)
- Writing Center (907-474-5314, uaf-writing-center@alaska.edu, Student Success Center, 6th Floor Room 677 Rasmuson Library)
- UAF Math Services (907-474-7332, uaf-traccloud@alaska.edu)

Drop-in tutoring, Student Success Center, 6th Floor Room 677 Rasmuson Library)

1:1 tutoring (by appointment only), Chapman 210

Online tutoring (by appointment only) available

<https://www.uaf.edu/dms/mathlab/>, available at the Student Success Center

- Developmental Math Lab (Gruening 406, <https://www.uaf.edu/deved/math/>)
- The Debbie Moses Learning Center at CTC (907-455-2860, 604 Barnette St, Room 120, <https://www.ctc.uaf.edu/student-services/student-success-center/>)
- For more information and resources, please see the Academic Advising Resource List <https://www.uaf.edu/advising/students/index.php>

Student Resources:

- Disability Services (907-474-5655, uaf-disability-services@alaska.edu, 110 Eielson Building)
- Student Health & Counseling [free counseling sessions available] (907-474-7043, <https://www.uaf.edu/chc/appointments.php>, Whitaker Building 2nd floor)
- Office of Rights, Compliance and Accountability (907-474-7300, uaf-orca@alaska.edu, 3rd Floor, Constitution Hall)
- Associated Students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks (ASUAF) or ASUAF Student Government (907-474-7355, asuaf.office@alaska.edu, Wood Center 119)

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For more information, contact:

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