

Biology 830—Special Topics in Biology Desert Biology (3 cr hrs)

Instructor: Dr. Keith Geluso

Lectures: Online Class. Some lectures will be prepared by Dr. Geluso and available for viewing via Voice Thread, but most of the class entails reading and preparing short (taped) mini-lectures and write-ups on areas of your interest regarding desert biology. As you will read below, this is **NOT** a lecture-driven class where you would be responsible for regurgitating large quantities of facts on exams. My graduate classes, especially special topic classes, were graduate-student driven; I will structure this class in such a manner.

Textbook: None. We will be reading and discussing journal articles in the primary literature, some that I select and most that you will select.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Overview: From plants to animals, from rivers that flow through arid lands to desert oases, from plant-animal interactions to ecosystem functions, from exotic species to keystone species, from climate to precipitation, we will survey different topics related to desert biology. I will select some topics but others will be of your interests. We will discuss potential topics in the first weeks of the class.

Course Objectives:

- Become familiar with different aspects of desert biology focusing on the American Southwest
- Demonstrate ability to use vocabulary needed to understand and converse about deserts
- Understand the role of humans in desert ecosystems
- Become readily familiar with finding papers in the primary literature
- Read, evaluate, discuss, and present information from journal articles
- Summarize information from primary literature with written and oral communication skills