

Fall 2014

Instr: Dr. D. Duffus  
DTB B113a

Geography 303  
Conservation and Ecology of Whales

**Course Objective**

In this course we will examine a broad range of information about cetaceans. Basic taxonomy and biology will provide the basis for an investigation into the somewhat controversial ecology of the whales, dolphins and porpoises. Their history and current status cannot be understood with reference to the millennia long relationship with humanity that has run the gamut from wholesale slaughter to reverence. Thus, the objective of this single course is to create a foundation of information, and skills, so the student may integrate material from other sources and build a critically enhanced body of knowledge about cetaceans.

**Teaching/Learning Method**

In a class of this size, routes of interaction are limited. Lecture periods will usually begin with a short discussion of newsworthy topics from the world of the cetacea. A smattering of guest lectures, should suitable speakers swim by, will break the monotony, and give other perspectives from the field. **The use of cell phones, tablets and laptops is not permitted during lectures.**

There is no single text that covers this material, as the course is a general introduction to the topic, yet it is at a third year level. Suggestions may be made throughout the class as to where other useful reading material may be found.

**Assessment**

Students will be given two tasks to define their comprehension of the lecture material. A shorter in-class midterm will be given, followed later by a comprehensive final exam. A debate assignment will complete the assessment process. Please note the grading policy outline below.

Each student grade will be a sum of the following proportions:

Mid Term Exam	40%
Final Exam	60%

## Undergraduate Grading

<i>Passing Grades</i>	<i>Description</i>
A+ 90% - 100% A 85% - 89% A- 80% - 84%	<b>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent</b> performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ 77% - 79% B 73% - 76% B- 70% - 72%	<b>Very good, good and solid</b> performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ 65% - 69% C 60% - 64%	<b>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory.</b> These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D 50% - 59%	<b>Marginal</b> Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F 0% - 49%	<b>Fail</b>

**Office hours** will be held from 6-6:30 on Tuesday evening before class or until 10:00 after class in DTB 113A.

“The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.”

### **Course Experience Survey (CES)**

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.