SPRING 2026

WildFL: Applied Research, Mapping & Planning

LAA 4905 Special Topics

EB

Dr. Eve Bohnett
LEAD INSTRUCTOR

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Tue/Thu 3:00 - 4:45 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

WildFL is a hands-on, applied research course offered through the **Center for Landscape Conservation Planning (CLCP)**. Students participate as junior researchers in interdisciplinary, faculty- and partner-mentored "incubator pods," where they investigate timely questions related to land use, landscape connectivity, and conservation planning.

Designed as a **Course-based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE)**, the course emphasizes the development of core research competencies. Students gain practical experience conducting literature-based research, acquiring and managing spatial and non-spatial datasets, performing data analysis, synthesizing results, and communicating findings effectively.

By the end of the semester, students produce a suite of professional research outputs, including a student-led research paper, spatial analyses and maps, and public-facing decision-support products such as visual briefs and policy-oriented summaries. These portfolio-ready materials are intended to inform real-world conservation and planning efforts, contribute to ongoing research initiatives, and support students' preparation for careers or graduate study.

CORRIDOR CONTEXT & KEY SPECIES

The Florida Wildlife Corridor, indicating conserved lands and unconserved opportunity areas that require future protection.

Puma concolor coryi

Ursus americanus floridanus

APPLIED RESEARCH TRACKS

1

Corridor Bottlenecks & Green Gap Analysis

Identify spatial and ecological “pinch points” within the Florida Wildlife Corridor. Teams will analyze development pressure, land ownership, and connectivity models to pinpoint vulnerabilities and explore targeted conservation scenarios. Participate in the "Mind the Gaps" Workshop with the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation.

2

Wildlife Crossings & Infrastructure Barriers

Examine road segments linked to wildlife-vehicle conflicts. Students will integrate transportation, species, and land-use data to propose crossing interventions, assess planning gaps, and develop recommendations for stakeholders. Deploy 22 camera traps and 3 acoustic recorders in the Osceola-Ocala (O2O) corridor and analyze these datasets.

3

Trail and Corridor Co-location Opportunities

Explore synergies and tensions between ecological connectivity and public access. Teams will investigate how recreational infrastructure may align or conflict with conservation goals along key segments of the Florida Wildlife Corridor. Identify opportunities to balance public use with habitat protection.

4

Local Planning Strategies for Corridor Connectivity

Examine municipal and county plans to identify ordinances and policies that support corridor connectivity. Working with the Land Use Planning Department of FWC, teams will highlight existing statewide approaches and develop practical language counties can adopt to advance greenway and wildlife protection goals.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **Critically Review Scientific Literature**
   Analyze and synthesize peer-reviewed research using the C.R.E.A.T.E. framework, demonstrated through annotated bibliographies and structured reviews.

2. **Identify Research Gaps & Formulate Objectives**
   Develop meaningful, testable research questions addressing conservation challenges such as corridor connectivity.

3. **Design Research Plans & Milestones**
   Translate research questions into feasible workflows, including spatial data acquisition and GIS-based analysis.

4. **Apply Interdisciplinary Methods**
   Integrate geospatial, ecological, and planning approaches to investigate applied conservation questions.

5. **Analyze, Visualize, and Synthesize Data**
   Process and interpret geospatial and ecological datasets to produce maps, figures, and models.

6. **Develop Decision-Support Tools**
   Create accessible communication products—such as visual briefs and StoryMaps—tailored to planners and agencies.

7. **Evaluate Conservation Implications**
   Reflect critically on the ecological, social, and political dimensions of conservation strategies and planning trade-offs.

COURSE ROADMAP

WK	DATE	SESSION	MILESTONES
W1	Jan 13	LECTURE **Course Intro & Florida Wildlife Corridor Overview** Lead: Hoctor, Bohnett	
W1	Jan 15	WORKSHOP **Research tracks & team formation** Lead: All Research Track Leads	TRACKS FINALIZED
W2	Jan 20	LECTURE **Lit review, Zotero, Academic manuscript format, AI research tools** Lead: Bohnett	CONN. 101 PT 1
W2	Jan 22	LECTURE **Road Ecology & Crossings** Lead: Smith	LIT INTRO (3 CITATIONS)
W3	Jan 27	WORKSHOP **Introduction to GIS & data types** Lead: Bohnett	CONN. 101 PT 2
W3	Jan 29	WORKSHOP **EcoCon Viewer orientation & AGOL** Lead: Lockhart (CLCP)	TEAM CHARTERS
W4	Feb 3	LECTURE **Trail Co-Location** Lead: Guttuso Browne	GIS TUTORIALS COMPLETED
W4	Feb 3-4	FIELD **Camera Trap & Acoustic Recorder Setup** Lead: Medo	
W4	Feb 5	WORKSHOP **Mind the Gaps Workshop Intro** Lead: Allyn Childress, Dylan Rigsby, FLWCF	LIT REVIEW OUTLINE SUBMITTED
W5	Feb 10	LECTURE **Field Research & Archbold Observatory** Lead: Guthrie	FIRST MAPS (ECOCON)
W5	Feb 12	LECTURE **City and County Land Use Planning** Lead: Hannan (FWC)	
W6	Feb 17	WORKSHOP **Fieldwork planning** Lead: Bohnett	FINALIZE FIELD PLANS
W6	Feb 19	COACHING **Coaching Session** Lead: Bohnett	REFLECTION 1 DUE
W7	Feb 24-26	COACHING **Intensive Coaching Sessions** Lead: Bohnett	
W8	Mar 3	WORKSHOP **Team Project Direction Discussions** Lead: Bohnett	
W8	Mar 4	FIELD **Mind the Gaps Workshop: Citrus & Hernando Counties** Lead: Bohnett, FWCF Partners	
W8	Mar 5	COACHING **Coaching session** Lead: Bohnett	
W9	Mar 10	COACHING **Coaching session** Lead: Bohnett	INTERIM REPORT DRAFT
W9	Mar 12	WORKSHOP **Next Steps & Map Expansion** Lead: Bohnett	
W10	*Mar 17-19*	HOLIDAY ***Spring Break*** *Lead: No Class*	
W11	Mar 24	WORKSHOP **Progress Discussion & Mapping** Lead: Bohnett	
W11	Mar 25	OPTIONAL **1000 Friends of Florida: 2026 Florida Legislative Wrap Up** Lead: 1000 Friends of Florida (Webinar)	EXTRA SESSION FOR STATE GOV INTERESTS
W11	Mar 26	WORKSHOP **Scientific Posters & PPT Templates** Lead: Bohnett	
W12	Mar 31	WORKSHOP **Poster Preparation and Report Writing**	

WK	DATE	SESSION	MILESTONES
		Lead: Bohnett	
W12	Apr 2	PRESENTATION **Poster Presentation** Lead: Bohnett	
W13	Apr 7	OPTIONAL **Undergraduate Research Symposium** Lead: Students	
W13	Apr 9	WORKSHOP **K-12 Materials Preparation using AI website creation tools** Lead: Bohnett	REFLECTION 2 DUE
W14	Apr 14	WORKSHOP **K-12 Materials Development** Lead: Bohnett	
W14	Apr 16	LECTURE **StoryMaps & Scientific Communication** Lead: Zanardi	K-12 FINAL
W15	Apr 21	WORKSHOP **Peer Review & Final Consultation** Lead: All Research Track Leads	FINAL TOOLKIT DUE

COURSE TECHNOLOGY & RESOURCES

Canvas

Primary hub for course updates, assignment submissions, readings, and other materials.

CANVAS SITE

Zoom

Online class meetings. Keep microphone muted; camera on if possible.

JOIN MEETING

UF CLCP Hub

Tools, data, and partnerships supporting Florida conservation and connectivity science.

CLCP HUB

Connectivity 101

Online course on ecological connectivity (Time: 2.5–5 hours).

START COURSE

GIS Training (LinkedIn)

Foundations of Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

LINKEDIN LEARNING

GIS Training (Esri)

Introduction to GIS Using ArcGIS.

ESRI TRAINING

Camera Traps and Acoustic Recorders

22 camera traps and 3 acoustic recorders available for field research. Teams design and implement monitoring projects in the Osceola-Ocala Corridor.

IN-FIELD EQUIPMENT

Field Trips & Applied Data Collection

Structured field trips provide hands-on experience collecting real-world ecological and spatial datasets.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Social Media & Science Communication

Handheld DJI Osmo cameras are available to support science communication, outreach, and documentation of field activities.

OUTREACH TOOLS

INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH & TEAM ACCOUNTABILITY

APPROACH & MENTORSHIP

This course blends lectures, workshops, and studio-style coaching. Faculty act as research mentors, providing real-time feedback during our scheduled coaching sessions.

DIRECT COMMUNICATION

Correspondence should include **"CLCP CURE"** in the subject line. Expect professional responses within **48 business hours**.

STRUCTURE & CHARTER

Teams will codify roles and norms in a **Team Charter**. This document serves as our framework for interdisciplinary collaboration and group expectations.

INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

While work is collaborative, grading accounts for individual contribution through reflections, documented progress, and structured peer feedback cycles.

EVALUATION

20%	**Team Research Contribution** Active participation in meetings, data analysis, collaboration, and project development.	240 pts
10%	**Connectivity 101 & Lit Review** Completion of Connectivity 101 Certification (70 pts) and structured literature review with citations (50 pts).	120 pts
25%	**Reflection** Two 500-word reflections focused on learning, research process, and collaboration; weekly time accounting.	300 pts
10%	**Presentation** Contribution to mid-semester and final presentations summarizing research progress and findings.	120 pts
20%	**Maps / Engagement Products** GIS outputs, maps, and engagement-oriented products produced by teams.	240 pts
25%	**Final Visual Brief / Toolkit** Clear, actionable tools designed for partners and decision-makers.	300 pts

BONUS OPPORTUNITY

*Up to **50 bonus points** may be earned through attendance and presentation at the UF Undergraduate Research Symposium. Bonus points do not increase total course points beyond 100%.*

COMPREHENSIVE WEIGHT
100% of Final Grade

TOTAL POINTS
1200

GRADING STANDARDS & COURSE POLICIES

GRADE DISTRIBUTIONS

Grade	Range (%)	GPA
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	88-89	3.33
B	83-87	3.0
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	78-79	2.33
C	73-77	2.0
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	68-69	1.33
D	63-67	1.0
D-	60-62	0.67
E	<60	0.0

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Active participation is essential. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. More than two unexcused absences may affect grades.

LATE WORK POLICY

Assignments should be submitted on time. Modest penalties may apply for minor delays, with more significant penalties for work submitted more than one week late. Communicate anticipated issues as early as possible.

SELECTED READINGS

Hoctor, T. S., et al. (2025). *"Refining the Florida Ecological Greenways Network for Improved Landscape Planning and Conservation Prioritization."* Landscape Ecology.

Bohnett, E., et al. (2024). *"Consolidating Diverse Modeling Methods for Multispecies Connectivity Modeling and Spatial Prioritization."* Frontiers in Conservation Science.

IUCN Connectivity Specialist Group (2025). *"Integrating Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Into Local Government Planning: Examples, Recommendations, and Resources for U.S. Towns and Counties."*

Hilty, J., et al. (2020). *"Guidelines for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors."* IUCN Corridor Connectivity Group.

Crooks, K. R., & Sanjayan, M. (Eds.) (2006). *"Connectivity conservation (Vol. 14)."* Cambridge University Press.

Damschen, E. I., et al. (2006). *"Corridors increase plant species richness at large scales."* Science, 313(5791), 1284-1286.

Fletcher Jr, R. J., et al. (2018). *"Is habitat fragmentation good for biodiversity?."* Biological conservation, 226, 9-15.

Hilty, J. A., et al. (2019). *"Corridor ecology: linking landscapes for biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation."* Island Press.

Keeley, A. T., Beier, P., Creech, T., Jones, K., Jongman, R. H., Stonecipher, G., & Tabor, G. M. (2019). *"Thirty years of connectivity conservation planning: An assessment of factors influencing plan implementation."* Environmental Research Letters, 14(10), 103001.

Keeley, A. T., Beier, P., & Jenness, J. S. (2021). *"Connectivity metrics for conservation planning and monitoring."* Biological Conservation, 255, 109008.

McRae, B. H., & Beier, P. (2007). *"Circuit theory predicts gene flow in plant and animal populations."* Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 104(50), 19885-19890.

Theobald, D. M., Keeley, A. T., et al. (2022). *"Connectivity is a central concept in conservation biology."* Conservation Biology.

VI. REQUIRED POLICIES

Official University of Florida academic policies and campus resources.

VIEW FULL POLICIES

ACADEMIC POLICIES

- Class Attendance
- Make-up Exams
- Assignments
- Accommodations/DRC
- Grading Policies
- Course Evaluations
- Constructive Feedback
- UF Honesty Policy
- In-Class Recording

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- E-learning Tech Support
- Career Connections Center
- Library Support
- Tutoring & Study Skills
- Writing Studio
- Academic Complaints
- Enrollment Complaints
- Student Success Initiative

HEALTH & WELLNESS

UF Whole Gator Resources

Resources designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.