BIO 321

Term: SPRING 2016  Course No. & Section: BIOL 321-01

Course Title: URBAN ECOLOGY

Professor: DR. ERIC STRAUSS

Course Description (principal topics covered):

Objectives:

Students completing this course should:
- Understand how and why humans are critical and necessary components of ecosystems
- Synthesize the dynamic nature of cities with the various ways of studying urban ecosystems
- Possess a nuanced understanding of the scientific theories and practices driving the research of urban ecosystems
- Evaluate urban communities from a trans-disciplinary perspective that uses a wide variety of academic approaches
- Be able to gather pertinent evidence from published material to support arguments regarding theories in urban ecology
- Present technical information in a clear and concise manner, both written and orally, with all sources of information appropriately cited and referenced
- Develop a credible study design in urban ecology and present it to colleagues

Content:

Urban Ecology will explore the dynamic and integrated nature of urbanized landscapes. Working mostly from the original literature, the course will engage the current theories and practice of the research being conducted on the patterns and process of urban ecosystems – ranging from biodiversity and trophic dynamics, to public health and environmental justice. Using an active inquiry approach to the curriculum, students will critically evaluate existing research paradigms, design research projects and present findings to their peers.

Prerequisites/Recommended Background:

Introductory Biology and Ecology is recommended, although I encourage students from diverse majors to participate in the course.

Required Texts/References:

No textbook is required. The readings, multi-media and immersive experiences will be provided and archived on MyLMU Connect.

Course Work/Expectations:

Two exams
Paper/Small Group Presentation
Large Group Presentation
Class Participation Throughout the Semester