GULF COAST RESEARCH LABORATORY
Summer Field Program 2018
Learning

The Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL) Field Program offers a unique, hands-on field experience. Our classes focus on studies of plants and animals in their natural habitats and on physical processes in marine and coastal environments. Courses are designed to provide students with an unrivaled academic experience in a marine lab setting. Classes are small to enhance the experience and allow students the opportunity to work side-by-side with experts in the marine field.

Classes are extremely intense and will immerse students in the subject matter. Most classes are conducted in a focused laboratory and field setting. Courses that include heavy fieldwork utilize the GCRL fleet of research vessels to explore the Mississippi Sound and barrier islands. In addition to local boat and field trips, some classes take overnight trips to other areas of the Gulf of Mexico. Students fully embrace the beautiful gulf and the unique habitats in our area.

In order for you to really experience the field, you have to get out there, get on the water, and get your hands dirty. So... are YOU ready to learn?

Living

Room and board is available for students selecting on-campus housing. Dorm rooms come with WiFi access and free laundry facilities. Meals are served in the GCRL dining hall, located adjacent to the dorms. The GCRL campus has many amenities for students, including kayaking in the bayou, a fire pit, sand volleyball, basketball and pier access. Make sure to pack your fishing pole; fishing off the pier shouldn't be missed! Most importantly, the local beach and Gulf of Mexico are steps away from GCRL.

While you’re not in class or studying, take advantage of our central location and enjoy all the amenities of South Mississippi. Sandy beaches, water sports, fishing, golf, tennis, biking and hiking are among the local opportunities for recreation. GCRL is in Ocean Springs, a picturesque town with many activities to entice any outdoor enthusiast. Our quaint town also offers great night life, restaurants, shopping and other activities.

Coastal living, the science life, and earning college credit all add up to an experience of a lifetime!
BARRIER ISLAND ECOLOGY
This field course will familiarize students with concepts of coastal ecology with emphasis on the diversity of plant and animal communities unique to the northern Gulf of Mexico barrier island ecosystem. Field excursions to barrier islands off Mississippi and Florida coasts will be conducted during this course and will cover topics such as marsh and barrier island vegetation, aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates, mammals, birds and reptiles, brackish pond and lagoon communities, submerged seagrass communities, intertidal and shallow subtidal communities, and geologic processes of island dynamics. Prerequisites: 3 semesters of science or permission of instructor. COA 448/448L: Barrier Island Ecology, 4 credit hours (2/2)

COASTAL HERPETOLOGY
The coastal plain of the Southeast boasts an outstanding diversity of amphibians and reptiles, making the region an excellent place to study these often reclusive and elusive creatures. This course provides students with an introduction to herpetology through lectures, discussions of original research papers, and a class project. Topics covered include the ecology, evolution, life history, diversity, behavior and conservation of amphibians and reptiles. There will also be field excursions highlighting the methods and techniques for capturing and studying amphibians and reptiles. Prepare to get wet and muddy while exploring the marshes, pine woods, bayous and other habitats, as we search for and learn about the amphibians and reptiles of the northern Gulf Coast. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 412/512: Field Exercises in Coastal Herpetology, 4 credit hours

DOLPHIN AND WHALE BEHAVIOR
Students will learn tools and techniques used in the systematic observation and documentation of delphinid behavior in the wild. Course includes both classroom lecture and field studies focused primarily on dolphins of the Mississippi Sound. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 444: Cetacean Behavior, 4 credit hours

FIELD AND LAB TECHNIQUES IN MARINE FISHERIES
This course will introduce students to the principles of fishery survey design, field techniques and laboratory procedures. The course will consist of lectures, field trips in estuarine and marine environments, and laboratory exercises to provide students with hands-on experience in marine fisheries science. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 417/517: Field and Laboratory Techniques in Marine Fisheries Sciences, 4 credit hours

SEAGRASS BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY
This course offers an in-depth study of the biology and ecology of seagrasses and seagrass ecosystems. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the unique aspects of seagrasses that allow their proliferation in the marine environment and the functional role that seagrasses play in nearshore environments. Students will engage in research projects and field trips to the many unique seagrass habitats along the northern Gulf of Mexico coast. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 490/590 Special Topics – Seagrass Biology and Ecology, 4 credit hours

*Summer intersession classes will be taught in a hybrid format. The first week of the session, May 14-19, will be conducted online. Instructors will utilize email and USM’s online learning platform (Canvas) to deliver lectures, course materials, conduct video chats, or administer quizzes and tests. Access to a computer and reliable Internet connection are required to complete the first week of the course. The remaining two weeks of the course, May 20-June 1, will be conducted face-to-face at GCRL.
MARINE BIOLOGY
An ecological approach is taken to understand the biology of marine systems with emphasis on local organisms, their habitats, life cycles and survival strategies. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 301/301L: Marine Sciences II – Marine Biology, 5 credit hours (3/2)

MARINE CONSERVATION
This course will introduce students to conservation biology and ecology with a focus on marine and coastal ecosystems. Topics may include biodiversity, marine ecosystem processes and threats, conservation of habitat and species, and human impacts, solutions and policy. The course will consist of lectures, field trips and laboratory exercises designed to provide students with hands-on experience in marine conservation biology. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 450/550, 450L/550L: Marine Conservation, 5 credit hours (3/2)

MARINE ECOLOGY
This course will study marine organisms and their relationships to the environment, including such topics as primary production, populations and communities, biogeochemical cycles, trophic ecology, larval ecology and human influences. Laboratory involves weekly quantitative studies implemented as class projects. Prerequisites: 4 semesters of science or permission of instructor. COA 446/546, 446L/546L: Marine Ecology, 5 credit hours (3/2)

MARINE INVERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY
This is a concentrated study of the marine and estuarine invertebrates from the Mississippi Sound and contiguous continental shelf of the northeastern Gulf of Mexico. Emphasis is on structure, classification, phylogenetic relationships, larval development and functional processes. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 428/528, 428L/528L – Marine Invertebrate Zoology, 6 credit hours (3/3)

OCEANOGRAPHY
This course provides a multidisciplinary foundation in oceanography, specifically the terminology, principles, processes, relationships and phenomena pertaining to three of its traditional sub-disciplines: physical, geological and chemical oceanography. The importance of the interaction of biotic and abiotic processes in the ocean will be addressed through exploration of timely issues in ocean science. Prerequisites: college algebra; 1 semester chemistry; 1 semester biology or permission of instructor. COA 300/300L: Marine Science I – Oceanography, 5 credit hours (3/2)

SHARK BIOLOGY
This specialized course will provide students with an overview of elasmobranch (sharks, skates and rays) biology, ecology and taxonomy. Lectures will cover such topics as evolution, anatomy and physiology, sensory systems, behavior and ecology. Students will be introduced to the diversity of elasmobranchs and will learn how to identify species. Special emphasis will be given to species common to the Gulf of Mexico. Laboratory work will consist of several inshore and offshore collecting trips, as well as dissections. Prerequisites: 3 semesters of biology, including marine biology or permission of instructor. COA 422/522, 422L/522L: Elasmobranch Biology, 5 credit hours (3/2)

“Amazing marine biology experience!” – 2017 Student
Session II  

**MARINE ANIMAL BEHAVIOR**

This specialized course will provide an in-depth exploration of animal behavior in marine organisms, including the physiological and ecological aspects of behavior. The course will introduce students to techniques for observing animal behavior in the field and laboratory, designing and conducting behavioral experiments, and collecting and analyzing behavioral data. The course will consist of lectures, field trips and laboratory projects designed to provide students with hands-on experience in marine animal behavior. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 442/542, 442L/542L - Marine Animal Behavior, 5 credit hours (3/2)

**MARINE BIOLOGY**

An ecological approach is taken to understand the biology of marine systems with emphasis on local organisms, their habitats, life cycles and survival strategies. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 301/301L: Marine Sciences II - Marine Biology, 5 credit hours (3/2)

**MARINE ICHTHYOLOGY**

Marine Ichthyology is an intensive marine biological field course which engages students to collect and identify marine fishes in numerous habitats in the Gulf of Mexico. Students experience a variety of land-based and vessel-based collection techniques, such as seining, cast netting, hook and line fishing, trawling, trolling, dip netting and many others. Students must work effectively alone and in teams and participate in field expeditions to complete the course objectives. Successful students gain an appreciation for taxonomic identities of fishes and the synergism between abiotic and biotic factors that drive marine fish distribution and faunal diversity in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology and permission of instructor. COA 421/521, 421L/521L: Marine Ichthyology, 6 credit hours (3/3)

**MARINE MAMMALS**

An overview of the biology of marine mammals (cetaceans, pinnipeds, sirenians, sea otters and the polar bear), this course includes their classification, evolutionary history, anatomy, physiology, behavior, conservation and management. Prerequisites: 3 semesters of biology. COA 443/543, 443L/543L: Marine Mammals, 5 credit hours (3/2)

**PARASITES OF MARINE ANIMALS**

Parasites of Marine Animals is an intensive laboratory and field-oriented course that introduces students to the extensive biodiversity of coastal and marine parasitic animals (viruses, protozoans, helminths, some obscure worm-like groups and crustaceans). The course is intended to give an appreciation for the fantastic evolutionary success of parasitism evidenced by the extraordinary diversity and natural abundance of parasites all around us. The course provides the rare opportunity for students to collect and observe live parasites. Students will learn techniques for preserving and preparing specimens, as well as how to identify parasites from major groups to the generic level. Lectures emphasize parasite interrelationships, taxonomy, life histories, ecology, and importance in aquaculture. The course is intended for students interested in ecology and evolution at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Prerequisites: 2 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 453/553, 453L/553L: Parasites of Marine Animals, 6 credit hours (3/3)

**RESEARCH STUDY PROGRAM**

Available in both Session I and II, this Research Study Program allows upper-level undergraduate students an opportunity to gain valuable experience in designing a research project, sampling, analyzing data and presenting research findings. Research options encompass a broad spectrum of disciplines in coastal sciences that include marine aquaculture, marine biodiversity, marine biomedicine, marine ecology, marine education, marine fisheries, marine pathology and marine toxicology. This course could easily form the basis of a senior or honors project. Prerequisites: 4 semesters of biology or permission of instructor. COA 492: Special Problems - Research. One to 6 hours of credit are available and assigned by the instructor.
CALENDAR
The summer field program runs May 14–June 1 (Intersession), June 4–29 (Session I) and July 2-30 (Session II). A student may enroll in only one course each session. Students should not take classes at other campuses while taking field courses at the GCRL.

ACADEMIC CREDIT
All courses are offered through The University of Southern Mississippi’s Gulf Coast Research Laboratory in the Division of Coastal Sciences and are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Upon completion, a transcript request must be submitted to transfer credit hours to the home institution.

The Marine Education Center and Gulf Coast Research Laboratory are part of USM’s School of Ocean Science and Technology.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS/PROCESS
Undergraduate Students
Apply to the GCRL Summer Field Program at usm.edu/GCRL-apply.

1. $40 non-refundable application processing fee for undergraduate students (fees not applicable to current USM students)
2. Official transcript (electronic transcripts preferred, send to margaret.firth@usm.edu)
3. Copy of immunization records

Graduate Students
To apply, contact Margaret Firth for admission instructions at 228.818.8852 or margaret.firth@usm.edu.

ADMISSION DEADLINE
All application materials should be submitted by APRIL 13, 2018, or until classes are filled.

QUESTIONS?
gcrlsfp@usm.edu
gcrl.usm.edu/summer_field
228.818.8852

Official transcript can be sent electronically to margaret.firth@usm.edu or mailed to the

OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES
Division of Coastal Sciences
Gulf Coast Research Laboratory, Attn: Margaret Firth
703 East Beach Drive • Ocean Springs, MS 39564
Due to the intensity of each course, students may enroll in one course per session. All fees are subject to change without notice.

### UNDERGRADUATE

Please Note: (1) A non-refundable application processing fee of $40 is required to process application materials. If you are applying for multiple sessions, only a single application fee is required. (2) You can only enroll in one course per session, and the chart represents the costs associated with each course. If taking multiple courses, add the total cost for each course.

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<th>Capital Improvement Fee ($2.92/hour; $35 max per term)</th>
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Fees do not include books, supplies, parking fees, etc. ($75-200, depending on course)

More information on the GCRL Summer Field Program can be found at gcrl.usm.edu/summer_field.
GRADUATE

Please Note: (1) A non-refundable application processing fee of $60 is required to process application materials. If you are applying for multiple sessions, only a single application fee is required. (2) You can only enroll in one course per session, and the chart represents the costs associated with each course. If taking multiple courses, add the total cost for each course.

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ROOM AND BOARD FEES

All fees are subject to change without notice.

Room and board is optional. The fee includes a shared room in a GCRL housing facility and meals in the GCRL dining hall during the course dates. Please indicate your interest in room and board on your application and the GCRL Housing and Residence Life coordinator will contact you for more details. If you have specific questions about GCRL housing, please contact Katie Weldon (katie.weldon@usm.edu; 228.818.8824).
MISSISSIPPI – Alcorn State University, Lorman; Belhaven College, Jackson; Delta State University, Cleveland; Jackson State University; Millsaps College, Jackson; Mississippi College, Clinton; Mississippi State University, Starkville; Mississippi University for Women, Columbus; Mississippi Valley State University, Itta Bena; Rust College, Holly Springs; The University of Mississippi, Oxford; The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg; William Carey University, Hattiesburg; ALABAMA – Auburn University, Auburn; ARKANSAS – Arkansas Tech University, Russellville; Hendrix College, Conway; Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia; University of Arkansas at Ft. Smith; University of Arkansas at Little Rock; University of Arkansas at Monticello; University of Central Arkansas, Conway; University of the Ozarks, Clarksville; FLORIDA – University of Tampa; GEORGIA – Berry College, Rome; Shorter College, Rome; ILLINOIS – North Central College, Naperville; Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; INDIANA – University of Evansville; IOWA – Drake University, Des Moines; Iowa State University, Ames; Wartburg College, Waverly; KENTUCKY – Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond; Morehead State University; LOUISIANA – Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond; Xavier University of Louisiana, New Orleans; MICHIGAN – Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant; MISSOURI – Central Methodist University, Fayette; Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville; Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau; Missouri State University, Springfield; Truman State University, Kirksville; NEW YORK – State University of New York, Potsdam; OKLAHOMA – Northeastern State University, Tahlequah; Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford; SOUTH CAROLINA – Presbyterian College, Clinton; TENNESSEE – Belmont University, Nashville; Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City; Christian Brothers University, Memphis; Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro; Rhodes College, Memphis; Tennessee State University, Nashville; Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville; Tennessee Wesleyan College, Athens; Trevecca-Nazarene University, Nashville; University of Memphis; University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; University of Tennessee at Martin; WISCONSIN – University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire; University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point

RESIDENT FACULTY - Division of Coastal Sciences

PATRICK BIBER, Ph.D.
Marine Botany, Associate Professor

REGINALD B. BLAYLOCK, Ph.D.
Fish Diseases and Aquaculture, Associate Research Professor

ZACHARY DARNELL, Ph.D.
Marine Invertebrate Biology, Assistant Professor

KEVIN S. DILLON, Ph.D.
Chemical Oceanography, Associate Professor

ROBERT GRIFFITT, Ph.D.
Toxicology, Associate Professor and Division Chair

JAY GRIMES, Ph.D.
Marine Microbial Ecology, Professor

LEILA HAMDAN, Ph.D.
Marine Microbial Ecology, Associate Professor

RICHARD W. HEARD JR., Ph.D.
Invertebrate Zoology and Ecology, Professor Emeritus

FRANK J. HERNANDEZ, Ph.D.
Fisheries Oceanography and Ecology, Associate Professor

ROBERT T. LEAF, Ph.D.
Fish Population Dynamics, Assistant Professor

ERVIN OTVOS, Ph.D.
Geology, Professor Emeritus

ROBIN M. OVERSTREET, Ph.D.
Marine Parasitology and Pathobiology, Professor Emeritus

MARK S. PETERSON, Ph.D.
Fisheries Ecology, Professor Emeritus

ERIC N. POWELL, Ph.D.
Population Dynamics Modeling, Professor

CHET RAKOCINSKI, Ph.D.
Benthic Ecology, Professor

ERIC SAILLANT, Ph.D.
Aquaculture and Conservation, Associate Professor

JOYCE SHAW, Ph.D.
Librarian and Professor

WEI WU, Ph.D.
Landscape Ecology, Associate Professor

VISITING FACULTY

PETER ADAM, Ph.D.
Northwest Missouri State University

MICHAEL ANDRES, Ph.D.
Southern Miss, GCRL

MATTHEW CHATFIELD, Ph.D.
Unity College, Maine

STEPHEN S. CURRAN, Ph.D.
Southern Miss, GCRL

KELLY DARNELL, Ph.D.
Southern Miss, GCRL

JESSICA KASTLER, Ph.D.
Southern Miss, GCRL

JILL HENDON, M.S.
Southern Miss, GCRL

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Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College

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Southern Miss, GCRL

JESSICA KASTLER, Ph.D.
Southern Miss, GCRL

JEFFREY SIEGEL, M.S.
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BRENT THOMA, Ph.D.
Jackson State University

JAMES T. WETZEL, Ph.D.
Presbyterian College, South Carolina

CHRISTY PHILIPPOFF, Ph.D.
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JESSICA KASTLER, Ph.D.
Southern Miss, GCRL

JILL HENDON, M.S.
Southern Miss, GCRL

JAMES T. WETZEL, Ph.D.
Presbyterian College, South Carolina
“Time of my life. Courses are fun and intense. I feel like GCRL has bettered my life!”
— 2017 Student

A premier marine laboratory on the Gulf of Mexico, The University of Southern Mississippi’s Gulf Coast Research Laboratory is home to the Division of Coastal Sciences, Marine Education Center, Center for Fisheries Research and Development and the Thad Cochran Marine Aquaculture Center.