Instructor: Robert Froese, PhD RPF CF

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TA: Robert Froese (froese@mtu.edu). Sorry, I’m all you’ve got.

Office Hours: I have no designated office hours because I’m usually in my office. I have an open-door policy, which means that if my door is open, come in; please be encouraged to make appointments if you prefer. I check my email usually no less than once per hour and I’m almost always available by instant message, often in the evenings too.

Catalog Description: FW4140 – Vegetation Modelling. Use of models in research and management of terrestrial ecosystems. Teaches application with emphasis on philosophy; models as tools, design goals and approaches, and interpreting the meaning and significance of model outputs. 2 cr.

Pre-requisites: FW3010 or FW3012

Course Goals and Objectives: Forest vegetation simulation models are a critical tool for sustainable forest management and for scientific investigation of forest and ecological issues. In this course we will introduce you to modelling as a discipline and to different modelling applications and their implementation. Modelling approaches including simple, empirical simulations and complex modern computer systems will be studied. At the end of this course, you should understand modelling both from a traditional, forest products planning perspective as well as modern approaches for modelling vegetation where trees are but one component and management of all forest values is the objective. You will take with you the skills needed to apply these models to real-world applications both in the short term (i.e., in capstone) and past graduation into employment.

About the class: Note first and foremost the course website; everything we do will be documented and coordinated there: http://biometrics.mtu.edu/fw4140. We meet Friday only at 10:05-10:55 in room O143. The main SFRES computer lab is reserved for your use Mondays at 14:05-16:55. I'll be there to support you, not to lead you. You complete the assignments when and where you prefer.

There are no “formal” exams in this class. Your grade will be made up of about 10 assignments, equally weighted, comprising 60% of your course grade, and three quizzes, equally weighted, comprising 40% of your course grade. My grading system is as follows: >95%=A, 89-94.9%=AB, 83-88.9%=B, 77-82.9%=BC, 71-76.9%=C, 65-70.9%=CD, 60-64.9%=D and < 60%=F.

Course Schedule: For a complete schedule of quizzes, labs, and reading assignments please see the class website, http://biometrics.mtu.edu/fw4140.
**Textbooks:** There is one required text in this class. I also suggest you keep a few books handy and I will hand out some readings along the way. Vanclay (1994) is a great resource, despite the title.

**Required**


**Optional (and sometimes free)**


**Basic rules for the class:** I have a simple rule set. **Everything is optional**, including attendance, assignments and exams. You're adults, you're paying good money to be here, so I expect you're motivated to make good use of the time and resources that you've purchased. You have many demands on your time, and you're the best person to judge how to spend it. At the same time, everything is fair game, in assignments, exams and even in meetings with me. Something from every lecture and every assignment will be graded or quizzed during the course and contribute to your final grade. So while everything is optional I strongly advise you to come to every lab and class.

Assignments will be submitted in **professional memo format**; this means neat, organized, legible, using good grammar and appropriate formatting. **Late assignments will not be accepted**, other than cases of documented medical excuses or family emergencies. Because failure is a matter of when, not if, developing computer use habits that minimize the impact of failure is a necessary and basic expectation of everyone. I expect that you know to save your work frequently, after every major change, and to back up your work regularly. You can expect the same from me. As a consequence and **in any case** computer failure will not be accepted as an excuse for turning in assignments late.

**Permissible Collaboration:** You are graded in this class in two ways: through quizzes and through homework.

Quizzes are “closed book”, completed individually, and the only aids you are permitted are a calculator and any commercially available “reference guides” (e.g., www.barcharts.com). No sharing of information is permitted during a quiz, deliberate or incidental.
Homework assignments are to be completed individually, but you are allowed to discuss the work with your classmates and with your TA. Your submission must be created individually and must represent your personal, individual response to the assigned tasks. In other words, you may collaborate with your classmates to discover how to do an assignment, but when you actually do an assignment and write your submission you must do that by yourself.

**University Policies:** I am required per university policy to include the following statements.

Student work products (exams, essays, projects, etc.) may be used for purposes of university, program, or course assessment. All work used for assessment purposes will not include any individual student identification.

Michigan Tech has standard policies on academic misconduct and complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For more information about reasonable accommodation for or equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, at 906.487.2212 or go to http://www.mtu.edu/provost/faculty-resources/syllabus-policies/.