Objectives:

- To understand how and why humans are critical and necessary components of ecosystems
- To synthesize the dynamic nature of cities with the various ways of studying urban ecosystems
- To possess a nuanced understanding of the scientific theories and practices driving the research of urban ecosystems
- To evaluate urban communities from a trans-disciplinary perspective that uses a wide variety of academic approaches
- To be able to gather pertinent evidence from published material to support arguments regarding theories in urban ecology
- To present technical information in a clear and concise manner, both written and orally, with all sources of information appropriately cited and referenced
- To 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 with both a textbook and 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. In the lab section of the course, projects will include bird biodiversity, urban bioacoustics, social surveys and feral cat ecology and individual studies for part of the semester.

Prerequisites/Recommended Background:

Introductory Biology and Ecology is recommended

Suggested Texts/References:


Cities and the Environment Journal ([www.catejournal.org](http://www.catejournal.org))

Course Work/Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADING:</th>
<th>PTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams 2 (25 points each)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper/small group presentation</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Group presentation and class participation throughout the semester</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PTS =</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Comment:

This is an evolving course that is designed to be truly interdisciplinary. It changes every semester based on the demographics of the students enrolled. You can help design the curriculum during the semester. We are looking for you to bring enthusiasm and commitment to the course. Please see Professor Strauss for more information of a copy of last semester’s syllabus (eric.strauss@lmu.edu).