

GRAYS HARBOR COLLEGE  
SYLLABUS  
BIOLOGY 109 - PLANTS OF WESTERN WASHINGTON  
5 CREDITS  
Instructor: Diane Carter/Lou Messmer  
2003-2005

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers the identification and classification of higher plants found in western Washington. The course is suitable for both biology majors and non-majors. 3 lecture hours; 4 lab hours. Satisfies science or lab requirement area A distribution or specified elective for the AA degree.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

The major objectives and outcomes of this course are as follows:

- A. The student will learn and correctly apply terminology associated with plant taxonomy. (*disciplinary learning, literacy*)
- B. The student will apply general principles of botanical taxonomy by classifying common plants of western Washington. (*disciplinary learning, critical thinking*)
- C. The student will identify common plants of western Washington by common names and by some scientific names. (*disciplinary learning, critical thinking*)
- D. The student will recognize the importance of plant communities to humans and the rest of nature. (*disciplinary learning, critical thinking, social and personal responsibility*)
- E. The student will use plant identification books, dichotomous keys, and dissecting tools to correctly identify and classify common plants of western Washington. (*disciplinary learning, using resources, critical thinking*)
- F. The student will create a small personal herbarium collection in which the student correctly identifies, mounts and labels specimens the student has collected him/herself. (*Disciplinary learning, use of resources, critical thinking.*)

This course contributes to the Desired Student Abilities of Grays Harbor College as follows:

- Disciplinary learning (4)
- Critical thinking (3)
- Using resources (3)
- Scientific literacy (3)
- Social and personal responsibility (1)

III. TEXTBOOK/MATERIALS

**Text:** Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast by Pojar and MacKinnon  
*Flowering Plant Families* by Joe Arnette (will be distributed in class)

**Field Equipment:** 10x hand lens, rain gear, lunch, bog boots, casual walking shoes.

IV. COURSE CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Using appropriate resources, the student will learn and practice plant identification and classification throughout the course both in lab and during field trips.

The class meets in the lab one evening each week and there will be five Saturday field trips from 8 AM to about 4 PM.

V. METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Methods of instruction will include lecture, slide shows, videos, class discussions, laboratory examination of living and herbarium specimens and field studies and notes.

VI. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT METHODS

There will be impromptu quizzes given in the classroom and in the field. The final exam will test student ability to demonstrate 1) recognition of previously identified plants and 2) ability to use plant identification resources by correctly classifying and naming plants new to the student. The student will also be graded on the quality of his or her personal herbarium collection. Point distribution will be approximately:

Field and lab quizzes	= ~ 30% of the total grade
Personal herbarium collection	= ~ 30%
Final exam	= ~ 40%

The grading scale is as follows:

A (94%-100%),	A- (90%-93%)	
B+ (87%-89%),	B (84%-86%),	B- (80%-83%)
C+ (77%-79%),	C (74%-76%),	C- (70%-73%)
D+ (64%-69%),	D (60%-64%)	F (0-59%)

Any absences may seriously affect student performance and comprehension of the subject material. Students are expected to consult with the instructor before and after unavoidable absences.