Division of Marine Science & Technology
Department of Marine Sciences
Course Syllabus

**COURSE TITLE**
Dolphin Studies and Field Experience: Marine Mammal Care & Basic Training

**COURSE NUMBER**
OCB 1311 CRN 30200

**PREREQUISITES**
Passing OCB 1301C with a C or higher

**CREDIT HOURS**
3.0

**CONTACT HOURS**
45

**CLASS MEETING TIMES**
Saturday 2-5, Sunday 9-5, Monday 9-5, Tuesday 9-5, Wednesday 9-5, Thursday 9-5, Friday 9-11 (7 day class)

**CLASS METHOD**
Off-site at Dolphin Research Center, Grassy Key FL

**INSTRUCTOR**
Kirsten Donald, MSc.
Email: Kirsten@dolphins.org
Phone: (305) 289-1121 ext. 247

**OFFICE HOURS**
Monday-Friday 9-5

**COURSE DESCRIPTION (FROM CURRENT CATALOG)**
This introductory program surveys a wide range of knowledge, theories and ongoing research concerning marine mammals, animal husbandry, operant conditioning training practices and related issues, including instruction specific to the facility and its resident dolphins. This course offers students a unique opportunity to gain career oriented hands-on experience in dolphin husbandry and training, including diet preparation; how to feed, reinforce, and maintain established behaviors all under the guidance of accomplished animal trainers. Students will reside at the Dolphin Research Center on Grassy Key. Course requirements center on active participation in the course and passing comprehensive end of course exam.
**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

(From FLDOE SCNS Listing)

This course is intended to give students a strong understanding of theories and ongoing research concerning marine mammals, animal husbandry, operant conditioning training practices and related issues. Additionally, the class is designed to provide students with the opportunity to gain career oriented hands-on experience in the field of basic marine mammal care and training. The non-traditional instructional mode follows FKCC's commitment to provide effective alternatives and variety of presentation, recognizing the value of experiential education.

After completion of course seminars, practical application workshops and comprehensive end of course exam, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1) Classify, external and internal aspects of dolphin anatomy and physiology, adaptations for a marine environment.
2) Review the philosophy and techniques of behavioral modification and training, with a focus on positive reinforcement in training behavior and its application to working with dolphins.
3) Outline basic dolphin ethology as related to behavior and social structure and how it applies to animal care and training.
4) Construct a plan for basic marine mammal care, dietary and medical needs, and animal handling.
5) Use hand signals operant conditioning techniques in communicating requests for various trained behaviors from the dolphins.
6) Review medical issues unique to marine mammals, methods of treatment of bacterial, viral, fungal and parasitic disease, established preventive care practices.
7) Outline the organization of the Marine Mammal Stranding Network; procedures used in assisting and rehabilitating stranded marine mammals; international and domestic issues concerning threats to dolphins and the marine environment.
8) Summarize specific concerns surrounding appropriate design, construction and maintenance of aquatic mammal habitats in human care.
9) Outline pinniped classification, basic anatomy, physiology, life history, behavior, reproduction, maternity care, and conservation.
10) Outline manatee classification, basic anatomy, physiology, life history, behavior, reproduction maternity care, and conservation.
11) Identify each of the resident marine mammals through discrimination of specific physical and behavioral characteristics.
12) Apply skills in animal care, handling and reinforcement during a live animal presentation for the general public.
13) Critique prior conceptions, new information, and experiences with of dolphins and the marine environment.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

None but students will be provided with a list of suggested readings
**PROPOSED COURSE SCHEDULE**

Please note: The course schedule is subject to change to meet the needs of the course and its students. If you miss a class, it is YOUR responsibility to stay current.

The Course takes place over the period of one week:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Textbook Chapters--Topics</th>
<th>Assignments-- Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/25/14</td>
<td>Topic 1. Introduction to the Facility and Resident Marine Mammals</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/25/14</td>
<td>Topic 2. Importance of Relationships in Animal Care and Training</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/26/14</td>
<td>Topic 3. Dolphin Life History and Physiology</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/26/14</td>
<td>Topic 5. Intro to Dolphin Handling</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/27/14</td>
<td>Topic 6. Marine Mammal Husbandry Care</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/27/14</td>
<td>Topic 7. Medical Care and Pathology of Marine Mammals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/28/14</td>
<td>Topic 8. Pinniped Life History and Physiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/28/14</td>
<td>Topic 9. Manatee Life History/Physiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/28/14</td>
<td>Topic 10. Marine Mammal Habitat Design &amp; Maintenance</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/29/14</td>
<td>Topic 12. Public Presentation of Dolphin Handling Techniques</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/29/14</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>50</td>
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STUDENT EVALUATION AND COURSE POLICIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT GRADE DETERMINATION</th>
<th>FKCC GRADING SCALE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50% Class participation in seminars and activities</td>
<td>90-100% A</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% Final Exam</td>
<td>80-89% B</td>
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<td>70-79% C</td>
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<td>60-69% D</td>
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<td>Below 60% F</td>
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Exam Policy
• The final exam will be closed book/notes. The use of electronic devices is strictly prohibited during exam.

Participation
• Students earn points for each seminar/activity they attend and participate in. Arriving late, leaving early, cell phone and non-class computer usage, as well as any other disruption of class will result in loss of points.
• Unexcused absences will result in a loss of participation points; excused absences (i.e., those with acceptable documentation of an emergency) will not result in point loss.
• Please note that the instructor may withdraw a student from a course for excessive absences (see FKCC Policies below). For our purposes, “excessive absences” is defined as 3 or more unexcused absences.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with FKCC Policies, which can be found in the current Student Handbook.