

FIELD WORKSHOP IN NAMIBIA (001-2-3135)

2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR – תשפ"ג
2 CREDITS

This course is a hands-on workshop designed to let students who have completed Biophysical Field Methods Course # 001-2-3035 to use the skills that they learned theoretically on how to measure the micrometeorological variables that affect animals and plants in the environments in which they live, and how to analyze the effects of these variables in the field. It takes place at Gobabeb Namib Desert Research institute in Namibia.

Eligible Students: The course and workshop are aimed at graduate students in the life sciences who have completed Course # 001-2-3035 Biophysical Field Methods. Enrollment is limited to 12.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE COURSE

This second part of the study of Biophysical Field methods is a **16 day-long field workshop** at Gobabeb-Namib Research Institute (<http://gobabeb.org/>) in Namibia. We have tentatively planned for the workshop to be held during the January-February 2023 spring break in Israel. THESE DATES ARE NOT FINAL.

During the course, papers to read and weekly quizzes and assignments will be made available on the UDEMY platform, imbedded in the online course.

Instructors: Prof. (Emeritus) Berry Pinshow (Mitrani Department of Desert Ecology, Swiss Institute for Dryland Environmental and Energy Research) Prof. (Emeritus) J. Scott Turner (SUNY-ESF) and Drs. Eugene Marias and Gillian Maggs-Kölling (Gobabeb-Namib Research Institute).

Your in-class participation and responses the online questions and assignments will count towards your grade in the first part of this course.

We strive to make the field experience rich, interactive, and varied. We will divide the group into smaller working groups. Each instructor works with one of the small groups for three days, after which the group rotates to a different instructor. Each afternoon we hold a class meeting, where students present their preliminary findings and discuss them with the other students and the teachers. In this way, all students engage with as many problems one encounters in doing field work in biophysical ecology as possible and discuss how to approach them. We also have late afternoon or evening presentations by the instructors and opportune guest lecturers. We devote particular days to data analysis and interpretation, and other specific days to effective presentation of results. Meals are catered by the Gobabeb dining hall, and are taken communally, which builds camaraderie and group cohesion. About half the days are devoted to hands-on experimentation, organized around a particular problem in physiological ecology (e.g., just how do desert plants get water?). The culmination of the course is preparation and presentation of a poster to the Gobabeb community of scientists and students. The poster will be printed and added to the display at Gobabeb. Students are also welcome to present their posters at meetings and other venues.

Please Note:

Since the field workshop takes place abroad, there are costs involved, some of which may be subsidized by BGU. The onus will be on students to obtain funding for the other expenses. We make every effort to cover costs incurred in Namibia (including lodging, meals, course material, local travel, and other on-ground expenses). Travel is at the expense of the participants, which will be roundtrip airfare from Israel to Walvis Bay in Namibia. Depending on status, students may apply to their Institute at the BIDR or to their faculty for support to attend the workshop. Students may also apply to external organizations such as Sigma Xi; in consultation with their advisor. You will be expected to be on site for the dates of the workshop. If feasible, students may arrange their arrival and departure dates to give time to travel around Namibia, again in close consultation with their advisor.

If you are interested in taking this course, please email me at pinshow@bgu.ac.il.

Prof. Berry Pinshow