

University of Alaska Anchorage  
College of Education  
3211 Providence Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508-8269

ED 581 Professional Learning in Science Education:  
Birds of Denali

1 Credit, Graded P/NP

Summer 2019

**Course Sponsor:** Alaska Geographic, Murie Science and Learning Center, Denali National Park

**Instructor:** Maria Berger

**Education Instructor:** Paula Davis

**Facilitating Instructor:** David Tomeo

**Contact Information Address:** Alaska Geographic, Murie Science and Learning Center  
P.O. Box 136, Denali Park, AK 99755

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**Email address:** courses@alaskageographic.org

**Course Meeting Information**

**Location:** Murie Science and Learning Center, Denali National Park & Preserve entrance

**Start and End Date:** June 10, 2019 to June 12, 2019

**Class Day(s) & Time(s):** June 10th, 6:30pm through June 12th, 4pm, continuous residential course

**Final Project Due:** final day of course

**Course Description:** Denali comes alive in June with birds arriving from all over the world to their summer home in the far north. These migrants join the hardy year round residents to offer the Denali birder amazing opportunities to view and study a diverse avifauna in a spectacular landscape. With long-time naturalist Maria Berger, participants will venture out into the tundra and taiga to learn how to identify birds by sight and sound. Course will also cover avian behavior, habitat selection, food habits, and migration ecology. Participants will consider ways to integrate their experience into their teaching or educational environment.

**Intended Audience:** Teachers and other interested educators

**Enrollment Restrictions:** None

**Course Prerequisite/Co-requisites:** None

**Course Design:**

- a. Requires 15 contact hours and approximately 30 hours of engaged learning.
- b. Does not apply to any UAA certificate or degree program.
- c. No UAA lab and/or materials fees beyond standard charges.
- d. This Murie Science and Learning Center course will be entirely field-based. Learning will be achieved through lectures, group discussions, field observations, and field activities. This course is based upon the collegial sharing, collaboration, and support of the participants and facilitator as a community of learners. Course activities will include common readings and group discussions, collective learning processes, peer coaching/mentoring, and reflective practices.

**Instructional Goals and Defined Outcomes:**

## RESEARCH BASED THEORY/PRINCIPLES/PRACTICES/TRENDS (CONTENT)

1.0 Instructional Goal:

The instructor will introduce techniques and skills for identifying birds in the field.

Defined Outcome:

Participants will demonstrate an understanding of various techniques used to identify birds in the field including by sight, bird calls, and habitat.

2.0 Instructional Goal:

The instructor will introduce the natural history (life cycles & migration behavior) of interior Alaska birds to the participants including adaptations for living and breeding in the subarctic.

Defined Outcomes:

2.1 Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the natural history of common subarctic birds.

2.2 Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the adaptive abilities of subarctic birds.

## THEORY INTO PRACTICE (APPLICATION)

2.0 Instructional Goals:

The instructor will facilitate the field identification of a large variety of subarctic birds present in the Denali ecosystem in early June.

Defined Outcomes:

2.1 Participant will develop skills for identifying birds in Denali National Park.

2.2 Participants will discuss how to integrate this knowledge into their teaching or educational environments.

## REFLECTION ON THEORY INTO PRACTICE (REFLECTION)

3.0 Instructional Goal:

Engage participants in discussions, reflective journaling and informal sharing about science instruction and how to incorporate gained knowledge and experience into their classrooms.

Defined Outcome:

Participants will review and reflect upon the scientific information covered. Participants will complete a journal, reflecting on how the information can be shared with their students.

## RELATIONSHIP TO STANDARDS

### 4.0 Instructional Goal:

Familiarize participants with science content standards addressed by the strategies and concepts presented.

### Defined Outcome:

Participants will identify the Science-Content standards applicable to their classroom.

### **Writing Style Requirements:**

Participants' writing will reflect the clarity, conciseness, and creativity expected of post-baccalaureate certificated educators.

### **Attendance and Make-up Policy:**

Participants are expected to actively and collegially participate in all classes as a contributing member of a learning community. Attendance at every session is mandatory.

### **Course Assignments, Assessment of Learning, and Grading System:**

Course grading will be Pass/No Pass based upon the following:

- a. Participation 50%  
Participants will be expected to actively and collegially participate in discussions, activities, and other process experiences during the seminar.
- b. Final Project - Journal completion 50%  
Participants will complete journal assignments to be turned in to MSLC field guide on the last day of class. Assignments will include, but are not limited to, thoughtful reflection based upon seminar experience and an application plan of how participants will integrate issues and content discussed into their own classroom setting.

### **Quality of Work**

#### **Grade of "Pass"**

Passing work includes all components of the assignment and meets proficient criteria. It is focused, developed, supported, logical, and acceptable work with minimal errors. Work of this quality indicates understanding of key concepts and knowledge base.

#### **Grade of "No Pass"**

Work graded "No Pass" may lack key criteria/components of the task and show little or no evidence of conceptual understanding or knowledge utilization. Work may also show minimal or no organization/development and/or clear focus (may be difficult to follow) and may contain numerous errors. This grade indicates minimal or no knowledge or concept development. It may also mean that work was not attempted.

### **Course Calendar/Schedule:**

- Monday 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Greeting and check in at MSLC  
6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Introduction, orientation & overview
- o introduction to select species, both resident and migrants whose life histories teach us about adaptations to life in the north.
  - o diversity of bird habitats of Denali and how that determines where species are likely to be
  - o migration stories and conservation status of select species
- 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Drive to MSLC Field Camp and settle in

- Tuesday 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Exploration of Denali
- identification of alpine and subalpine habitats and what species will likely be there
  - climate change and its effects on Denali birds
  - when and why birds migrate to the far north
- 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Dinner and evening discussions
- species list, what we saw and where
  - questions and more in-depth discussion of where each species comes from, how they live, and their conservation status.
  - teacher study group to discuss the day's activities and how the information can be shared with students
  - identify applicable science content standards addressed by course content
- Wednesday 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Continued exploration of Denali
- continued study of Tuesday's topics
- 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Return drive to MSLC

**Final Project Due:** final day of course

**Course Texts, Readings, Handouts, and Library Reserve:**

Suggested Text/Material:

Cornell Lab of Ornithology (n.d.) Retrieved from: <http://www.birds.cornell.edu>

Cornell Lab of Ornithology (n.d.) *Online guide to birds and bird watching*. Retrieved from: [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org)

McIntyre, C., A. Seegert, and N. Eagleson. (2002). *The birds of Denali: An introduction to selected species*. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Geographic.

Sibley, D. (2002). *Sibley's birding basics*. New York, NY: Alfred Knopf.

Weidensaul, S. (1999) *Living on the wind: across the hemisphere with migratory birds*. New York, NY: North Point Press, a division of Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Supplemental information can be found in the following sources:

Content References:

Chu, M. (2006). *Songbird journeys: four seasons in the lives of migratory birds*. New York, NY: Walker and Company.

Dunne, P. (2003). *The wind masters: the lives of North American birds of prey*. New York, NY: Mariner Books.

Ehrlich, P, Dobkin, D and Wheye, D. (1988). *The birder's handbook*. New York, NY: Fireside Books.

Gabrielson, I., Lincoln, F. (1959). *The birds of Alaska*. Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Co.

Matthiessen, P. (1994) *The wind birds: shorebirds of North America*. New York, NY: Mariner Books.

Sibley, D. (2001). *The Sibley guide to bird life and behavior*. New York, NY: Alfred Knopf.

Sibley, D. (2000). *The Sibley guide to birds*. New York, NY: Alfred Knopf.

#### Standards References:

Alaska Comprehensive Center. (2012). *Guide to Implementing the Alaska Cultural Standards for Educators*. Juneau, AK: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Retrieved from: [https://education.alaska.gov/akstandards/cultural/cultural\\_standards.pdf](https://education.alaska.gov/akstandards/cultural/cultural_standards.pdf)

Alaska Native Knowledge Network. (1998). *Alaska standards for culturally responsive schools*. Fairbanks, AK: University of Alaska Press. Retrieved from: <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/publications/culturalstandards.pdf>

National Research Council, the National Science Teachers Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Achieve. (2013). *The next generation science standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.nextgenscience.org/next-generation-science-standards>.

National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academies and Board on Science Education. (2012). *A framework for K-12 science education: Practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Free download retrieved from: <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/13165/a-framework-for-k-12-science-education-practices-crosscutting-concepts>

State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. (1997). *Standards for Alaska teachers*. Juneau, AK: Author. Retrieved from: <https://education.alaska.gov/TeacherCertification/standards/pdf/teacher.pdf>

State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. (2016). *Content and performance standards for Alaska students*. Juneau, AK: Author. Retrieved from: <https://education.alaska.gov/akstandards/standards/ContentStandards.pdf>

#### **Alignment with College of Education Vision, Mission, and Conceptual Framework:**

We believe that the preparation and support of professional educators is the shared responsibility of the University of Alaska Anchorage and our partners, and that our programs must evolve dynamically in response to unique community needs, research, and continuous program assessment. This PACE course is designed to meet a professional development need in response to our partner school districts and professional organizations. The course fits within the mission of the UAA College of Education as we encourage lifelong learning to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

#### **Link to Standards for Alaska Teachers:**

This professional development effort is firmly rooted in the fundamentals of the standards for Alaska Teachers. It is offered to encourage and support practicing educators in attaining, maintaining, or surpassing the standards that, as stated in Standards for Alaska's Teachers, "define the skills and abilities our teachers and administrators need to possess to effectively prepare today's students for successful lives and productive careers." (Roger Sampson, <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/standards/pdf/teacher.pdf>)

**Course Policies:****Incomplete Grades**

**Due to the nature of this course, grades of incomplete will not be permitted.**

**ADA Policy**

The provision of equal opportunities for students who experience disabilities is a campus-wide responsibility and commitment. Disabilities Support Services (DSS) is the designated UAA department responsible for coordinating academic support services for students who experience disabilities. To access support services, students must contact DSS (786-4530 or 786-4536 TTY) and provide current disability documentation that supports the requested services. Disability support services are mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Additional information may be accessed at the DSS Office in Business Education Building (BEB105) or on-line at [www.uaa.alaska.edu/dss](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/dss).

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Academic integrity is a basic principle that requires all students to take credit only for the ideas and efforts that are their own. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are defined as the submission of materials in assignments, exams, or other academic work that is based on sources prohibited by the faculty member. Academic dishonesty is defined further in the "student Code of Conduct." In addition to any adverse academic action that may result from the academically dishonest behavior, the University specifically reserves the right to address and sanction the conduct involved through student judicial review procedures and the Academic Dispute Resolution Procedure specified in the University catalog.

**Professional and Ethical Behavior**

University of Alaska Anchorage College of Education students are expected to abide by the State of Alaska Code of Ethics of the Education Profession and professional teaching standards as they concern students, the public, and the profession. The standards, adopted by the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, govern all members of the teaching profession. A violation of the code of ethics and professional teaching standards are grounds for revocation or suspension of teaching certification.

**Technology Integration**

University of Alaska Anchorage College of Education students are expected to (a) demonstrate sound understanding of technology operations and concepts; (b) plan and design effective learning environments and experiences supported by technology; (c) implement curriculum plans that include technology applications in methods and strategies to maximize student learning; (d) facilitate a variety of effective assessment and evaluation strategies; (e) use technology to enhance productivity and professional practice; and (f) understand the social, ethical, and human issues surrounding use of technology in PreK-12 schools and apply those principles in practice.

**Course Safety and Risk**

This course is sponsored by Alaska Geographic and the Murie Science and Learning Center. The University of Alaska Anchorage provides the credit option for interested participants. This course takes place entirely outdoors and within a remote area of Alaska. Field courses, such as this, do have inherent risks. These risks will be outlined in the Alaska Geographic Acknowledgement of Risk form and by the course instructors. Acknowledgement of Risk form will be provided at the time of registration and a signed copy is required in order to attend.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

The University of Alaska is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educational institution. The University of Alaska does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, physical or mental disability, status as a protected veteran, marital status, changes in marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, or other legally protected status. The University's commitment to nondiscrimination, including against sex discrimination, applies to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Contact information, applicable laws, and complaint procedures are included on UA's statement of nondiscrimination available at [www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination](http://www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination).