

Course: Gator Crossing

Instructor name: Jenna Molen

Room Number: Turlington 2336

Course Description:

Welcome to your new Village! Gainesville is a lovely place, really. We think you will find that there is a lot of activities and great places to explore! In this course, students learn about Gainesville with the help of trusty resident villagers. Students can expect an Animal Crossing experience full of bug catching, gardening, fossil hunting, and fishing.

Gator Crossing is a camp for UF Honors students designed to emulate the open-ended gameplay of Nintendo Animal Crossing. Students are introduced to Gainesville by village experts in entomology, environmental horticulture, archeology, and marine biosciences. Students will be challenged to fill their pockets (hypothetically!) with all the information they learn about Gainesville's bugs, fish, plants, and fossils. Along the way, students learn how to formulate their own research question, so you can propose a research project based on what you learn from village experts. At the end of the multi-day immersive village tour, students can empty their pockets in exchange for bells by presenting their very own research project to the village.

This experience is a social, informational, environmental, and academic introduction to your new village. Move in and start building relationships with your fellow villagers as you explore the most exciting places on the map of Gainesville. Best of all, meet village experts that show you how they use research to explore, protect, and preserve the natural places we visit.

Learning Objectives:

- Discover natural areas of the greater Gainesville area
- Discuss principles of environmental science
- Participate in group activities
- Identify research areas in each topic
- Compile a journal of reflections from each day
- Develop a research question and present your proposed study
- Articulate the importance of protecting and conserving natural resources

Expectations: Students are expected to come to class daily and participate in group activities.

Evaluation:

- Pre/post-survey – 10 points – students complete a pre-survey sense of belonging and self-efficacy scales
- Participation – 15 points – student attend all lectures and fieldtrips
- Reflective journals – 25 points – students log entries from each fieldtrip
- Content presentation – 50 points – teams present a proposed research study inspired by our travels across the village.

Grading Policy: Students are required to participate in each fieldtrip, complete reflection journals, and present what they learned from a given expert in a small group.

Required Materials: N/A

Calendar:

Thursday Aug 15: Welcome Villagers!

6:00pm – 8:00pm Camper Introductions and Group Gameplay
Location: Turlington 2336

Friday Aug 16: Bugs

9:00am – 9:30am Camp Overview
Location: Turlington 2336

10:00am – 12:00pm Honey Bee Lab Tour and Hive Demonstration
Location: 1881 Natural Area Drive

12:40pm-2:00pm Lunch
Location: TBA

2:45pm – 4:00pm Florida Museum of Natural History Butterfly Rainforest Naturalist Observations
Location: 3215 Hull Road

6:30pm – 7:30pm Lake Alice Guided Bug Walk
Location: Museum Road

Saturday Aug 17: Plants

8:30am Meet up for Group Travel
Location: Turlington 2336

9:00am – 11:30am Bioenergy and Sustainability Lab Tour and Composting Workshop
Location: SW 23rd Terrace

12:00pm – 1:00pm Lunch
Location: SW 23rd Terrace

1:30pm – 2:30pm Introduction to Arboriculture and Lab Tour
Location: 2550 Hull Road

3:30pm - 4:30pm Generate a Research Question Workshop
Location: Turlington 2336

6:30pm – 7:30pm Wilmot Botanical Gardens Group Meditation

Location: 2023 Mowry Road

Sunday Aug 18: Fossils

- 8:00am Meet up for Group Travel
Location: Turlington 2336
- 9:00am – 10:00am Paynes Prairie Ranger-Guided Tour
Location: 100 Savannah Blvd, Micanopy, FL
- 11:00am – 12:00pm Lunch at Lake Wauburg
Location: 133 Regatta Drive, Micanopy, FL
- 1:00pm -2:00pm Introduction to Archeology
Location: Turlington 2336
- 3:00pm – 4:30pm Research Proposal Group Work
Location: Turlington 2336
- 6:30pm – 7:30pm Create your Own Fossil Activity
Location: Turlington 2336

Monday Aug 19: Water

- 7:00am Meet up for Group Travel
Location: Turlington 2336
- 9:00am – 10:00am Whitney Marine Bioscience Lab Tour
Location: 9505 N Ocean Shore Blvd, St. Augustine, FL
- 10:30am - 1:30pm Anastasia State Park Beach Day
Location: 300 Anastasia Park Road, St. Augustine, FL
- 12:00pm – 1:00pm Lunch
Location: 300 Anastasia Park Road, St. Augustine, FL
- 2:00pm – 3:00pm Research Proposal Presentations
Location: 9505 N Ocean Shore Blvd, St. Augustine, FL