Summer 2017

Instr: R. Burnham
DTB B113a

Geography 491
Advanced Topics in Geography: Whale Geography

Course Objective

This course will explore the concept of organism-centric biogeography, using whales as a case study. In turn, concepts of marine ecology and niche space will also be explored. We will draw on both long-term data sets and more recent research of the Whale Research Lab, in particular exploring the application of acoustics to ecology. This builds on a more traditional approach to biogeographical study, adding layers of understanding of the habitat use of marine mammals.

Course material will cover the many aspects of spatial use by whales as well as a more general appreciation of marine ecology, with particular reference to the west coast. Scientific investigation involves detailed data collection and observations, and so students will be able to follow the process through hypothesis building, data collection and analysis, to result presentation and discussion. The objective of this course is to create a foundation of information and skills so the student may integrate material from various sources including scientific literature and field data, to build a critically enhanced body of knowledge on a marine-based research topic.

Teaching/Learning Method

This course will integrate teaching and learning through both formal learning situations (i.e. lectures and seminars) and field surveys. Concepts and theories of marine

Each student grade will be a sum of the following proportions:

Research Paper	70%
Research presentation	15%
Participation	15%

Undergraduate Grading

Passing Grades	Description

A+ 90% - 100%
A 85% - 89%
A- 80% - 84%