



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



**Ramon Llull University, IQS School of Management - Barcelona  
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart - Milan  
Franklin University Switzerland - Lugano  
Forum-Nexus Program  
Undergraduate Division**

**Course Syllabus**

**BIO 494-SIS  
Biodiversity and Biological Ecosystems in Europe**

**Course Description**

Biodiversity is the name given to the variety of ecosystems, species and genes in the world or in a particular habitat. It is essential to human wellbeing, as it delivers services that sustain our economies and societies. Biodiversity is also crucial to ecosystem services — the services that nature supplies — such as pollination, climate regulation, flood protection, soil fertility and the production of food, fuel, fiber and medicines. We are currently witnessing a steady loss of biodiversity, which has profound consequences for the natural world and for human well-being. The main causes of this loss are changes to natural habitats due to intensive agricultural production systems, construction, quarrying, the overexploitation of forests, oceans, rivers, lakes and soils, invasive alien species, pollution and, increasingly, global climate change. The purpose of this course is to explore the severity of these problems in Europe, and to review the policies that the European Union and its member countries are implementing to preserve and improve biodiversity.

**Course Requirements**

This course requires independent research, organization, and academic discipline. Students are expected to complete the readings in pace with their assignments and the course outline. Students will meet with their SIS Supervising Professor(s) regularly throughout the course for consultation and assistance. There will be an oral presentation, a final exam, and four essay assignments.

Students are also required to participate in a minimum of three Forum-Nexus professional visits and three cultural visits. Students may also pursue individual visits to companies and organizations as part of their independent study.

**Essay #1 (minimum length: 1,000 words)**

1. What is biodiversity?
2. Why is it important to preserve it and restore it?

**Essay #2 (minimum length: 1,000 words)**

Explain in detail the main issues addressed in the policy entitled “The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030”

### **Essay #3 (minimum length: 1,000 words)**

Discuss the main current issues in Europe related to forest biodiversity

### **Essay #4 (minimum length: 1,000 words)**

1. Discuss the global impact of Europe with respect to biodiversity
2. What should be done to address these issues?

### **Presentation**

Deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation illustrating the main points learned in the course

### **Required Readings**

#### **Biodiversity – Ecosystems**

European Environment Agency

February 2020

<https://bit.ly/3xHaOu4>

#### **The European environment — state and outlook 2020: knowledge for transition to a sustainable Europe**

European Environment Agency

Updated on March 3, 2022

<https://bit.ly/3O6UHLC>

#### **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**

European Commission

Directorate-General for the Environment

Luxembourg, 2021

<https://bit.ly/3tysDZH>

#### **Forest Biodiversity in Europe**

European Forest Institute

May 20, 2022

<https://bit.ly/3ML1qK3>

### **Components of Final Grade**

Essay #1	10%
Essay #2	10%
Essay #3	10%
Essay #4	10%
Presentation	20%
Final exam	40%

### **Grading Scale**

93-100 %	A
90-92.9 %	A-

87-89.9 %	B+
83-86.9 %	B
80-82.9 %	B-
77-79.9 %	C+
73-76.9 %	C
70-72.9%	C-
67-69.9 %	D+
63-66.9 %	D
60-62.9 %	D-
Below 60 %	F

## **Course Outline**

### **Modules:**

1. What is biodiversity. Why is it important?
2. What are the current threats to biodiversity?
3. The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
4. Forest Biodiversity in Europe
5. Marine biodiversity
6. Biodiversity in agriculture
7. The problem of alien species
8. The impact of climate change on biodiversity
9. Europe's global impact on biodiversity

## **Schedule of Classes and Visits**

The detailed schedule of classes, professional visits, and suggested cultural visits for each session is available online at [www.forum-nexus.com/schedules](http://www.forum-nexus.com/schedules).

## **Academic Integrity**

Ramon Llull University, Franklin University Switzerland, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.

## **Course Outline**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>Topics</b>
6/1 – 6/30		<b>Pre-Program Preparation</b> Become familiar with the syllabus, identify additional readings, begin readings and research
7/2	Rome	<b>Essay #1 Due</b>
7/4-7/5	Rome	<b>Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor</b>
7/4-7/8	Rome	<b>Complete Readings and Research – Modules 1, 2</b>

7/8	Rome	<b>Essay #2 Due</b>
7/11-7/12	Florence	<b>Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor</b>
7/11-7/15	Florence	<b>Complete Readings and Research – Modules 3, 4</b>
7/15	Florence	<b>Essay #3 Due</b>
7/18-7/19	Milan	<b>Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor</b>
7/18-7/22	Riva del Garda	<b>Complete Readings and Research – Modules 5, 6, 7</b>
7/22	Riva del Garda	<b>Essay #4 Due</b>
7/26	Venice	<b>Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor</b>
7/25-7/28	Venice	<b>Complete Readings and Research – Modules 8, 9</b>
7/28	Venice	<b>Final Exam</b>
7/29	Venice	<b>Final Presentation</b>