

ENV-426

Fluvial biogeosciences

Battin Tom Ian, Peter Hannes Markus

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Environmental Sciences and Engineering	MA1, MA3	Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	4
Session	Winter
Semester	Fall
Exam	Written
Workload	120h
Weeks	14
Hours	4 weekly
Courses	2 weekly
Project	2 weekly
Number of positions	

Summary

Stream and river ecosystems are increasingly deteriorated owing to global change and climate change. Students will understand basic physical, chemical and biological processes in streams and rivers, and how they relate to ecosystem health and integrity.

Content

The class will provide fundamental insights into physical and chemical processes of stream and river ecosystems, which will be linked to the ecology and ecosystem processes therein. At the end of the class, acquired knowledge will be converged into a discussion on ecological restoration strategies and the management of water resources in the Anthropocene.

The class (2 ETCS, Prof. Battin) will encapsulate the following units:

1. Introduction and rationale — why fluvial biogeosciences?
2. From geomorphology and hydrology to ecosystems
3. The basics of benthic and hyporheic life
4. Streams and rivers are global players — from water resources to biogeochemistry
5. Carbon and nutrient cycling
6. Ecosystem metabolism
7. Biogeosciences for environmental engineers and scientists

The class will be accompanied by the practical work (2 ETCS) in the laboratory and in the field. It will convey insights into research on fluvial biogeosciences, including proposal writing, and practical work related to metabolism and microbial ecology. Students will learn on a weekly basis how to design, plan and carry out a small research project; this requires the regular presence of the students to conduct fieldwork, lab work and computer exercises. The project will be led by Dr. Amber Ulseth and Dr. Hannes Peter, and assisted by the Doctoral Assistants David Scheidweiler and Asa Horgby

Keywords

biogeosciences, streams and rivers, hydrodynamics, biogeochemistry, ecosystem science, benthic life, nutrient cycling, metabolism, restoration, management

Learning Prerequisites**Recommended courses**

The BSc Class Aquatic Ecosystems (ENV-321) would be an asset.

Important concepts to start the course

A basic understanding of fluvial ecosystems, hydrology, geomorphology and hydraulics would be helpful.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Report on their project on fluvial biogeosciences
- Assess / Evaluate critical environmental issues related to stream ecosystems
- Theorize basic concepts in fluvial biogeosciences
- Assess / Evaluate benthic life
- Assess / Evaluate ecological restoration strategies
- Generalize theory in fluvial biogeosciences
- Carry out simple experiments in fluvial biogeosciences

Teaching methods

power point, black board, hand-on in the lab and in the field, computer exercises

Expected student activities

Interactions and discussions with teachers

feedback and respond to questions

feedback in an appropriate manner on the content and its presentation

conduct a supervised small research project

report on the methods and results from the practical work

Assessment methods

written exam (80%)

reading and discussion of papers with the students (20%)

Supervision

Office hours Yes

Assistants Yes

Others office hours: Tuesday 11:00 to 12:00 (Prof Battin)
assistants: Dr. Luis Gomes Gener and Dr. Hannes Peter

Resources

Bibliography

Calow P and Petts GE 1992 The Rivers Handbook. Blackwell

Dodds W and Whiles M 2010 Freshwater Ecology. Academic Press

Goldman CR, Kumagai M and Roberts RD 2013 Climatic change and global warming of inland waters. Wiley-Blackwell

Palmer, M. A., Hondula, K. L., & Koch, B. J. (2014). Ecological Restoration of Streams and Rivers: Shifting Strategies and Shifting Goals. *Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics*, 45(1), 247–269. doi:10.1146/annurev-ecolsys-120213-091935

Williamson, C. E., Dodds, W., Kratz, T. K., & Palmer, M. A. (2008). Lakes and streams as sentinels of environmental change in terrestrial and atmospheric processes. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, 6(5), 247–254. doi:10.1890/070140

Palmer, M. A., & Febria, C. M. (2012). The Heartbeat of Ecosystems. *Science*, 336(6087), 1393–1394. doi:10.1126/science.1223250

Battin, T. J., Kaplan, L. A., Denis Newbold, J., & Hansen, C. M. E. (2003). Contributions of microbial biofilms to ecosystem processes in stream mesocosms. *Nature*, 426(6965), 439–442. doi:10.1038/nature02152

Battin, T. J., Luyssaert, S., Kaplan, L. A., Aufdenkampe, A. K., Richter, A., & Tranvik, L. J. (2009). The boundless carbon cycle. *Nature Geoscience*, 2(9), 598–600. doi:10.1038/ngeo618

Ressources en bibliothèque

- [The Heartbeat of Ecosystems](#)
- [Ecological Restoration of Streams and Rivers: Shifting Strategies and Shifting Goals](#)

- Lakes and streams as sentinels of environmental change in terrestrial and atmospheric processes
- The boundless carbon cycle
- Contributions of microbial biofilms to ecosystem processes in stream mesocosms