The Desert Studies Institute (DSI) is located at Boise State University. The Institute offers summer sessions that combine classroom workshops with expert instruction, allowing students to earn graduate credit. The Institute focuses on desert environments, incorporating knowledge of geology, geography, and ecology. Students will meet with resident faculty and guest instructors from the region and across the globe.

For more information, visit Boisestate.edu.

**COST**

The credit fee is $297 per credit. For more information, call Boise State Summer Schools (208) 426-7090 or visit BoiseState.edu.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Registration is now open on BoiseState.edu.

**FACULTY**

Institutional faculty include professors from Boise State University and the region form the core of the Desert Studies Institute. The faculty of the Desert Studies Institute is selected annually on the basis of their expertise in area research and teaching.

**REGISTRATION**

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The Desert Studies Institute (DSI) was established in 1997 as a cooperative program between the Department of Anthropology at Boise State University and Celebration Park, which is operated by Canyon County Parks, Recreation and Waterways. Each year the Desert Studies Institute provides a broad range of academic offerings of interest and value to students, teaching professionals, Idaho’s citizens and visitors.

The mission of the Institute is to provide educational programs and scholarly presentations concerning the prehistory, history, ecology and politics of Idaho’s desert environments and deserts worldwide. The programs are presented to enrich the understanding and appreciation of complex desert ecosystems in Idaho and to promote their perpetual preservation as educational resources for the future.

DESSERT STUDIES INSTITUTE WORKSHOPS 2017

The Way West Through Southern Idaho
June 3 & 4, 2017, William Jerremes, Boise State University
This workshop reviews the history of emigration associated with the Oregon Trail in southern Idaho, placing an emphasis upon its role leading to the environmental degradation along the trail corridor. Field Trip. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Environmental Studies, and History. 1 credit

Death of an Ecosystem
June 14 & 15, 2017, Eric Yensen, College of Southern Idaho, Emeritus
This workshop will focus on important ecological interactions in northern Great Basin ecosystems. Learn about the ecological roles of ground squirrels, badgers, raptors, coyotes, grasshoppers, sagebrush, and many others: how they interact to form a functional ecosystem; and how human activities are causing the collapse of this ecosystem. The workshop includes a field trip to the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, Environmental Studies, and Geosciences. 1 credit

Great Basin Birds of Prey
June 5-8, 2017, Marc Bechard, Boise State University
This workshop focuses on the types of birds of prey found in North America, their identification, and breeding biology with emphasis on the Snake River Plain of southern Idaho. Included are field trips to the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area and the World’s Center for Birds of Prey. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, and Environmental Studies. 2 credits

Introduction to Idaho’s Native Pollinators
June 17 & 18, 2017, Raymond Vizgirdas, Consulting Biologist
This workshop is an introduction to the concepts and issues surrounding pollination ecology. Some 80% of the earth’s flowering plans rely on animal pollinators, primarily insects, to ensure reproduction. Beyond the direct economic value, insect pollination is essential for maintaining the structure and function of a wide range of natural communities including sagebrush steppe and montane forests. Alarmingly, managed and wild insect pollinators have suffered declines in recent years prompting calls for proactive strategies to help bolster their populations. Field Trip. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, and Environmental Studies. 1 credit

Ethnobotany: Introduction to Edible, Medicinal, and Useful Plants
June 10 & 11, 2017, Raymond Vizgirdas, Consulting Biologist
This workshop focuses primarily on plants used by Native Americans as food, medicine, clothing, and building materials. Classroom and field activities will emphasize plant identification, ecology and ethnobotany. This workshop will bring together aspects of our region’s natural and cultural history. Field Trip. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, and Environmental Studies. 1 credit

Ice Age Megafauna of Southern Idaho
June 26 & 27, 2017, Eric Yensen, College of Southern Idaho, Emeritus
Learn about sabretooth cats, mammoths, ground sloths, and other extinct (and living) animals that lived in Idaho and surrounding areas during the last ice age a “mere” 13,000 years ago. This workshop will focus on what is known about these species and their ecological relationships. The ice age ecosystem serves as a point of reference for understanding modern ecosystems. The workshop also includes thought-provoking questions about their extinction. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, and Environmental Studies. 1 credit

National Parks in a Comparative Perspective
June 29 & 30, 2017, Emily Wakild, Boise State University
This workshop focuses on the history of national parks around the world but especially the American West and Patagonian South America. The U.S. National Park Service celebrated its centennial in 2016 but did you know that Argentina and New Zealand also had parks by then? We will explore stories about the origins and existence of these parks as well as trace their history through textual, visual, and film sources. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Environmental Studies, and History. 1 credit

Fish & Invertebrates of the Snake & Boise Rivers
Students will learn about the aquatic species in the Snake and Boise Rivers and their habitat needs. Day one will be in the classroom covering ecological principals of the rivers along with an overview of fish and aquatic invertebrates that live in the region. We then head to the field with various sampling gear to collect and identify aquatic invertebrates from local waters. Day two will focus on collecting and identifying native and nonnative fish species. There will also be an opportunity to investigate various aquatic habitat and water quality measures to assess river health. If you like to fish, this class may even help you catch more fish! Students should bring waders if they have them. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, and Environmental Studies. 1 credit

Owls of the Snake River Plain
June 12-15, 2017, Marc Bechard, Boise State University
This workshop focuses on the identification, natural history, and food habits of owls found in the western United States with emphasis on the Snake River Plain of southern Idaho. Instruction will be given in owl pellet dissection and field trips will be taken to the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. Cross-listed with Anthropology, Biology, and Environmental Studies. 2 credits

Technological Innovations for Exploring Idaho Deserts
July 31-August 1, 2017, Nikki Schwend and Tom Bicak, Canyon County Parks, Recreation, and Waterways
Explore the intricate ecological relationships of the Snake River’s biological community by employing Vernier’s LabQuest equipment. Experiment with a variety of abiotic-biotic relationships at Celebration Park and learn to use computer interfaced probes and microscopes. Students will also have the opportunity to explore the...