Office Hours
Monday Per 7, Wednesday Per 2 and 6; other times BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
Office: 3119 Turlington Hall  email: matyas@ufl.edu but please ONLY use SAKAI  phone: 294-7508
Notes: do not expect an immediate response to your message. I CANNOT return long distance calls – use Sakai. When composing your message in Sakai, check the box (Send CC) that will send a copy to my regular email so that I am notified that a new message is waiting for me on Sakai.

Course Information
This course is designed to be a capstone course that utilizes concepts learned in previous weather-related courses. We will cover both meteorological and climatological concepts related to tropical cyclones (TCs). There will be computer-related work with current forecasts, models, and data, and we will use GIS software for some of the analysis. We will use current TC activity to develop an understanding of these weather systems, so please keep in mind that our activities will change from one day to the next. If a tropical system is out there, we want to study it! It is assumed that you have a basic understanding of meteorological concepts such as the difference between high and low pressure systems and how clouds and thunderstorms develop. We will work in groups as well as individually. Enrollment in this course acknowledges your acceptance of the information contained within this syllabus.

Required Textbooks and Tools
Tools: Bring a flash drive or similar portable storage device to EVERY class to save your work

Grades and Grading Scale
Research Project 45%,  Maps Discussion 10%,  Forecasting 10%, Prolific TC Quiz/Presentation 15%, Quizzes 10% , Participation/Quiz Prep 10%

A:  92.5 % or above     A-: 89.5 - 92.49 %     B+: 86.5 - 89.49%     B: 82.5 - 86.49%     B-: 79.5 – 82.49%
C+: 76.5 - 79.49%        C: 72.5 - 76.49%       C- : 69.5 – 72.49%        D+: 66.5 - 69.49%      D: 62.5 - 66.49%
D- : 59.5 – 62.49%  E: < 59.5%

It is your responsibility to know your current grade. Grades will be posted to Sakai. Information pertaining to UF grading policies can be found here: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Forecasting
The class will be divided into teams that will work together to forecast formation, or track and intensity. You will submit your forecasts on E-learning using the Excel sheets that I provide. They are due by the end of class on the day when forecasting occurs. Due to the uncertain nature of tropical cyclones, it is not possible to determine how many forecasts we will submit during the semester – I aim for 5. Never save your forecast to the hard drive of your computer – only save it to your flash drive, then email copies to your group. Only 1 person per group will upload the forecast spreadsheet (.csv) and written summary (.docx) to Sakai. We will also learn to use GIS to plot the storm positions – everyone must learn how to do this!

Maps Discussion
The National Hurricane Center holds a daily maps discussion at 1:00 PM. The head forecaster presents a briefing on current TCs and regions of possible development. We will echo this format. Each student will give a briefing that includes satellite imagery, track locations, model predictions, and the NHC discussion. Specific information to include in your discussion will be presented on a separate handout – you must follow the
instructions on this handout. Dr. Matyas will also upload to Sakai a sample maps discussion and will present it as an example. You must submit your slides to Sakai by 10:30 am on the day of your discussion. Be mindful of terminology and spelling.

**Quizzes**

You will take several quizzes. Four will specifically cover Chapters 1-4 in the required textbook and these are available in Sakai. There may also be in-class quizzes. Other quizzes may be unannounced and will cover information we are using, such as what information can be found on the various websites we use, or how to plot the track data in a GIS. Graduate students will not take a midterm examination.

**Prolific Tropical Cyclones**

Each student will be assigned a tropical cyclone and will prepare a Power Point presentation about it. Specific details and format of information will be provided at a later date. You will upload your slides to Sakai and present them to the class. There will also be a closed-book quiz on these TCs – date is listed at the bottom of the syllabus. I will assemble all slides presented into one presentation that you can use to study for the quiz. Unless official documentation is presented (Doctor’s note, police report), NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES will be permitted! You will not be permitted to take the quiz if you arrive more than 10 minutes late.

**Research Project**

Instead of taking the midterm exam with the undergraduates, graduate students will pursue their own research topic. Your project can be a literature review or involve data analysis, as long as it is related to tropical cyclones in some way – either the storms or their impacts on humans and/or the natural environment. An outline of your intended research is due to me by the date listed at the end of the syllabus and I REQUIRE that you meet with me prior to this date so that we can discuss your ideas. Both of these activities count as part of the grade on the project. You will be giving a presentation on your research topic in class at the end of the semester, and you will also submit a research paper. Dates for these activities are listed at the bottom of the syllabus.

**Participation/Discussions**

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to participate in such activities as quizzing your classmates to writing quiz questions, class-wide and group discussions, and interpreting textbook images in front of the class. Contributing to these activities will be an easy way to earn full credit for 10% of your grade. Those who choose not to participate, who do not regularly attend class, or who do not complete assignments will be penalized. Attendance alone does not qualify as participation. Repeated tardiness will also result in a lower grade.

**Academic Honesty**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor for this class.

You are encouraged to help each other with projects, but you must turn in your own work. The exception is with forecasting assignments, where the group will collaborate and only one student will turn in the assignment for the group. All suspected cases of honor code violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office and actions such as lowering of the course grade, and/or other penalties may be assigned.
Sakai
This syllabus, announcements, copies of handouts, grades, and other course information will be posted on Sakai. Access this page at http://lss.at.ufl.edu If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to learn the material covered during your absence. Come see me if you have questions. You are advised to check Sakai frequently to verify that week’s activities and any announcements about upcoming quizzes, projects, etc. I may also post announcements to Sakai, and many of your assignments will be submitted through this website.

Disability Statement
Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. This office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor. Please provide this documentation to me as soon as possible and a minimum of 1 week before a quiz or exam.

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center and UPD
http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575
University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Attendance and Proper Conduct
Your performance in this course, and participation grade, will suffer if you do not attend class regularly. Arrive to class on time and do not interrupt someone’s presentation if you are late. Wait to the side, then take a seat when the student is finished. We will be utilizing the computers in TUR 3006 – please keep all foods and beverages away from areas where computers are being used. DO NOT save anything to the hard drive of the computer! It may be erased as soon as you log off. Remember to turn off cell phones, and please refrain from casual conversation once class begins. Arriving late to class more than twice will result in a lowered grade. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

Online Course Evaluations
Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results.

Lecture Topics
Definition of a tropical cyclone (TC) and acronyms we will use in the semester
Weather in the tropics and TC formation criteria
Supplemental information to Chapters 2 and 3 in your book
Climatology and steering
Chapter 4 of the book
Climatology of major hurricanes and Chapter 7 of the book
Forecast models
Important Dates

We will have lectures and related activities each day unless another activity is specified here. We may do forecasting on any given Monday during 5th period until November 17.

September 1 – No Class Labor Day
September 5 – All quiz questions, answers, and explanations uploaded to Sakai by 12:00 pm
September 8-10 – Chapter 1 reading quiz available
September 15-17 – Chapter 2 reading quiz available
September 22-24 – Chapter 3 reading quiz available
September 29-Oct 1 – Chapter 4 reading quiz available
October 1 – project outline due on Sakai
October 8 – special guest lecture by Dr. Sytske Kimball, University of South Alabama
October 15 and 20 – Chapter 7 student presentations
November 5 – Graduate students should work on their research project outside of class as the undergraduate students are taking their midterm exam today
November 10 and 12 – Prolific TC student presentations
November 17 – Prolific TC quiz Period 4, work on project Period 5
November 19 – December 3: Graduate students do not need to attend class – use this time to work on your project and meet with Dr. Matyas for feedback if necessary
November 27 - No Class Thanksgiving
December 8: Graduate student presentations – upload slides to Sakai by 10:30 am
December 10: Last day of class – upload research paper to Sakai