

The University of Findlay

College of Sciences

Summer 2026

The mission of The University of Findlay is to equip our students for meaningful lives and productive careers.

Course Number : ASLA 442-02 Exploring Marine Life Through SCUBA Diving: Open Water

Section: Open Water

Credit Hours: 1 credit hour

Class Time/Place: Loop Abroad Thailand Wild Tropics Session 1: June 13th-June 28th, 2026;
Session 2: June 27th-July 12th, 2026

Prerequisites, Co-requisites and Course Description:

This course provides direct access to observe and study the diversity of marine life up close for identification and study while SCUBA diving. As part of this course, students will become familiar with the basic theory and skills to safely dive in a small group under the direct supervision of a certified divemaster. The course is repeatable with a maximum of 9 total credits provided the topics are unique.

Instructor: Erica Ward, DVM

Instructor Contact Information: erica@loopabroad.com

Office Hours: upon request

Course Objectives:

The following Learning Objectives will be addressed or assessed as part of the course:

- **Remember** the identification and use SCUBA equipment, including snorkel, exposure, delivery, information, buoyancy, and accessory systems
- **Apply** competency in SCUBA safety protocols through a demonstration of these learned skills
- **Analyze** how SCUBA diving affects the human body, including processes such as heat loss, oxygen toxicity, nitrogen narcosis, and sinus equalization among others
- **Create** a dive plan including safety stops
- **Apply** your skills to achieve neutral buoyancy at various depths with proper use of the buoyancy control device (BCD)

- **Evaluate** and explain the causes, signs and symptoms of, and prevention of diving-related injuries
- **Apply** your skills to perform basic underwater communication via globally accepted hand signals

Required Textbooks and Other Materials: All textbooks and readings will be provided during the course.

- Scuba Schools International. *Open Water Advanced Adventurer* (e-book provided by mobile app). Fort Collins, Colorado: 2017.
- Materials for notes (notebook and/or laptop, writing utensils, etc.), wristwatch, refillable water bottle, dry bag, sunscreen (must be reef-safe) and insect repellent, bathing suit, rash guard if needed, and snacks.

Instructional Strategies:

Case Analysis		Library and Internet Research	
Debate		Practice/drill	x
Discovery/Independent Research	x	Problem-solving	
Discussion/Questioning/Interviewing	x	Reading assignments	x
Experiential Learning	x	Role-playing/simulation games	
Field Experience	x	Service Learning	
Group Presentation		Video/Audio Review and Critique	
Laboratory Experiences		Other	
Lecture	x		

Methods of Assessment: Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Abstracts		Participation	x
Attendance		Peer Evaluation	
Capstone Project		Portfolio	
Case Study		Portfolio Lab Performance	

Exams	x	Presentations	
Group Projects		Professional Evaluation	
Homework Assignments		Quizzes	
Internet Research		Research project	
Journaling		Other	
Lab Performance	x		
Oral/written review of literature			

Grading: Your course grade will be determined as follows:

Competence in SCUBA skills: 50%

Class Participation and Lab Performance: 20%

Exam: 30%

Grading Scale/Distribution:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
A	4.00	93-100
A-	3.67	90-92
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	83-86
B-	2.67	80-82
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	73-76
C-	1.67	70-72
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	63-66
D-	0.67	62-60
F	0.00	below 60
U	0.00	

University Honor Code:

Each and every student of the University will adhere to the following Honor Code:

“I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie, or commit any act of plagiarism during any academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University’s Honor Code, I may, at my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.”

Student Acknowledgement of University Honor Code:

“I acknowledge that I have fully complied or will comply with all aspects of the University’s Honor Code in submitting this work.”

Student Rights and Responsibilities Statement, Article VIII-Academic Integrity:

<http://catalog.findlay.edu/en/current/Undergraduate-Catalog/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities-Statement/VIII-Academic-Integrity>

University Diversity Statement:

As part of our commitment to achieve excellence, the University of Findlay values and actively promotes a welcoming and supportive environment that honors the many aspects of diversity. We aspire to foster acceptance of, respect for, and appreciation of all persons in our campus community. We celebrate our commonalities and unique differences, and we acknowledge that diversity broadens learning, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and prepares our students for meaningful lives and productive careers.

Course Policies and Practices:**Attendance and Participation Policy**

Students are expected to attend all class meetings for which they are registered. This is regarded as a matter of individual student responsibility. The only excused reasons for absences will be illness that impairs the ability to attend and function within the classroom setting or an unavoidable personal emergency.

Students are expected to attend all class sessions on all days of class. It will be the responsibility of the student to contact the course instructor or site director, preferably before the absence, to provide the appropriate documentation and verification for the reason for the absence, and to make arrangements with the course instructor for missed work. Students are responsible for all missed class material. Students may be subject to limited participation in hands-on practice at the instructor’s discretion if they have missed the underlying material needed to safely perform the task at hand.

Final Exam Date: TBD, Please see Loop Abroad Schedule

Special Services: If you are a student with a disability, it is your responsibility to inform your instructor and register with the Office of Disability Services (ods@findlay.edu) at least one week prior to a needed service so reasonable accommodations can be made.

Course and Instructor Evaluation: Each student is expected to complete the course and instructor evaluation which is sent electronically to the student by the Office of the Registrar. The electronic notification comes in the form of an e-mail from the UF Registrar's Office with the following subject line: Online survey for the designated course (e.g., BIOL 102).

Last Date of Attendance Policy: Instructors are required to indicate the last known date of attendance when a final grade of "F" or "U" is assigned to a student.

Tentative Course Outline:

This course section corresponds with earning Open Water SCUBA certification to facilitate observations of marine life in an ecological context. Currently, certifications are provided through Scuba Schools International. Prior SCUBA experience is not required.

Open Water Certification Lecture Topics and Labs

- Equipment, safety, and buoyancy
- Diving physiology and advanced hand signals
- Dive plans and tables
- Pre-Dive Check
- Controlled Descent
- Mask Removal
- Regulator Clearing
- Regulator Retrieval
- Stationary Gas Sharing
- Mask Sharing
- Delayed Surface Marker Buoy Deployment
- Safety Stop