

## Marine Biology at ORU

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I've been teaching the Marine Ecology (BIO 458) course at ORU since its inception in 1985. The lect. is a normal 3 cr. course during every other spring semester and the lab (1 cr.) is centered around a 1 wk. field trip to a marine location, which over the yrs has been Key Largo or another Florida Key (5x), Jamaica (3x), Belize (1x), Cozumel, Mexico (9-10x), and most recently to Puerto Rico (1x). We're planning to travel to Bonaire (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonaire>) over Spring Break 2014. For the lab (BIO 458-61), we encourage but don't require students to either be SCUBA-certified before going on the trip or to take the HPER SCUBA course beforehand at ORU or during the same semester and do their check-out dives on location w/ the class. We can do this because the husband-wife team who teach the SCUBA courses at ORU go on the trips w/ my class. It's been a wonderful arrangement, and they are outstanding, certified SCUBA Instructors. We actually spend more than the usual 45 hrs of lab time doing field work like shore walks, off-shore (boat) SCUBA diving, near-shore diving or snorkeling, nightly and/or morning class lectures and discussions, student PPT presentations, and group studying. In preparation for the BIO 458 course, all Biology majors and minors take Intro. to Biology II (BIO 112) which is a general survey of plants and animals.

ORU encourages or requires students focusing on marine biology and environmental science to take 2 summer courses at the Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies ([http://ausable.org/students/course\\_information/](http://ausable.org/students/course_information/)). This is a Christian organization that's affiliated w/ the CCCU (Council of Christian Colleges and Universities) and offers excellent courses in N. Michigan (I've taught Limnology there for the past 18 summers), Washington (near Seattle - Mar. inverts., Mar. Mammals, etc.), Costa Rica, and India.

In addition to the academic courses at ORU, we've had a close working relationship w/ the aquarium staff at the Tulsa Zoo since 1980 and more recently w/ the OK Aquarium in Jenks since before it opened. Some of our students have done internships and/or research at both places. Three ORU students have also done 6-month internships at the Disney Epcot Center Living Seas (<http://profinterns.disneycareers.com/en/default/>) and found that to be an excellent experience. Several past students conducted their Senior Research during their internship. In addition, a few students did extra summer coursework at other universities that offer specialized training not available at ORU. Several ORU grads currently work in the marine biology field. One finished her PhD in fish immunology and is currently teaching at a university, one worked as a veterinarian at the Boston Aquarium and is now in private practice in the Boston area, one teaches marine biology at a university in Washington State, and one works for a Florida Keys

biological supply collecting company. In summary, I believe that ORU offers an excellent, broad-based curriculum in Biology that can be tailored to fit many specialties like marine biology.

For more information, please contact me at:

**Dr. John Korstad**  
**Professor of Biology and Honors Program Director**  
**Oral Roberts University**  
**7777 S. Lewis Ave.**  
**Tulsa, OK 74171 USA**  
**Tel.: 918-495-6942**  
**FAX: 918-495-6297**  
[jkorstad@oru.edu](mailto:jkorstad@oru.edu)

**Personal website:**

[http://webapps.oru.edu/new\\_php/academics/faculty\\_profile.php?id=9&k=](http://webapps.oru.edu/new_php/academics/faculty_profile.php?id=9&k=)

**Honors Program Website:** <http://honors.oru.edu>