



Travel Seminar Spring 2015

Biology of Wild Horses

A trip to Nevada and California to observe wild mustangs



Course Goals

- Observe wild horse behavior at liberty and in confinement
- Observe the environment shared by mustangs and other range animals
- Learn viewpoints of stakeholders in management of mustangs on and off range
- Learn about the adoption and training of mustangs

Dr. Elaine Larsen

Teacher of animal physiology

Horse owner/farmer for 40+ years

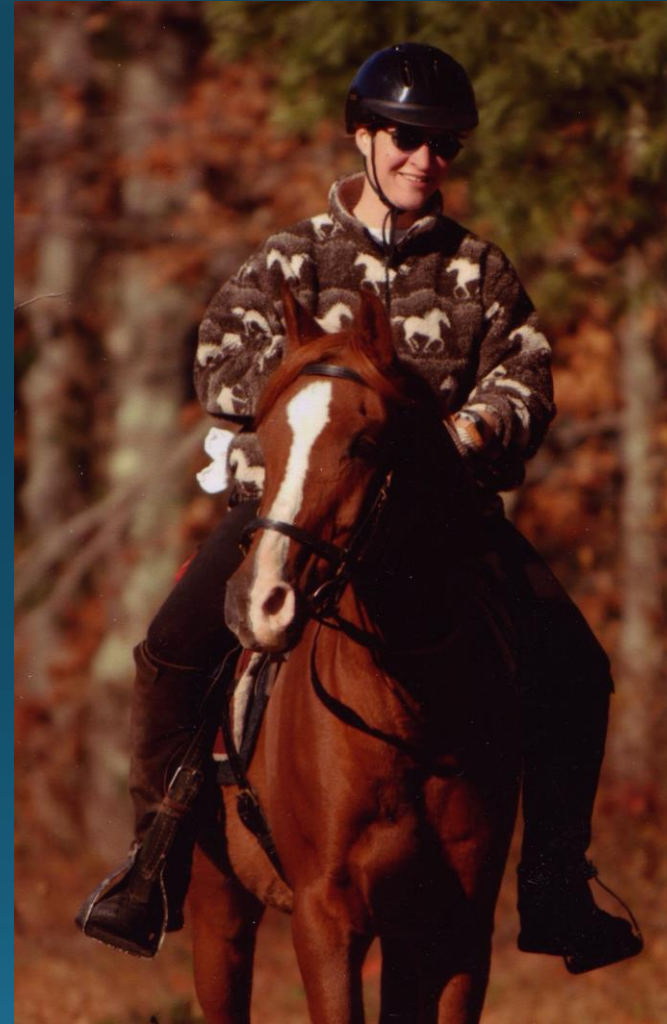
1000+ miles of competitive long distance riding

Competitive trail riding judge

Certified farrier

CPR and first aid trained

Experienced in leading and equipping outdoor education experiences





Dr Lynn Dunn

Animal science professor at SUNY Cobleskill, teaching equine science for 20+ years, has led previous student trips to observe mustangs in Nevada and Utah.

Schedule overview

- In Feb and March, 3 meetings to review reading assignment, observation criteria, group and behavior expectations, and other course requirements.
- Each student picks a topic as a focus of their observation/inquiry
- Spring break: Travel to Carson City Nevada

In Carson City, NV, Sun-Wed

- Meet with BLM wild horse agent John Axtel
- Explore rangelands around Carson City and Tahoe, observe different environmental zones, attempt to locate and observe mustangs



In Carson City, NV, Sun-Wed

- Visit Palomino Valley Holding Facility
- Observe mustangs in confinement
- Speak with staff about care of mustangs and adoption programs



Shingletown, CA, Thurs-Sat

- Travel to the Wild Horse Sanctuary, a privately run refuge for mustangs
- Observe horses in pasture and corrals
- Presentations by staff about mustang management and training



Return to Skidmore

- Saturday evening drive to Reno, NV
- Sunday return flight to Albany and van to Skidmore



After spring break trip

- Group meeting to discuss/debrief
- Individuals work on a poster presentation
- At end of semester, each student will have a formal poster presentation at either a session during exam week or at the Saratoga Equine Symposium in April.

What else should I know about the trip?

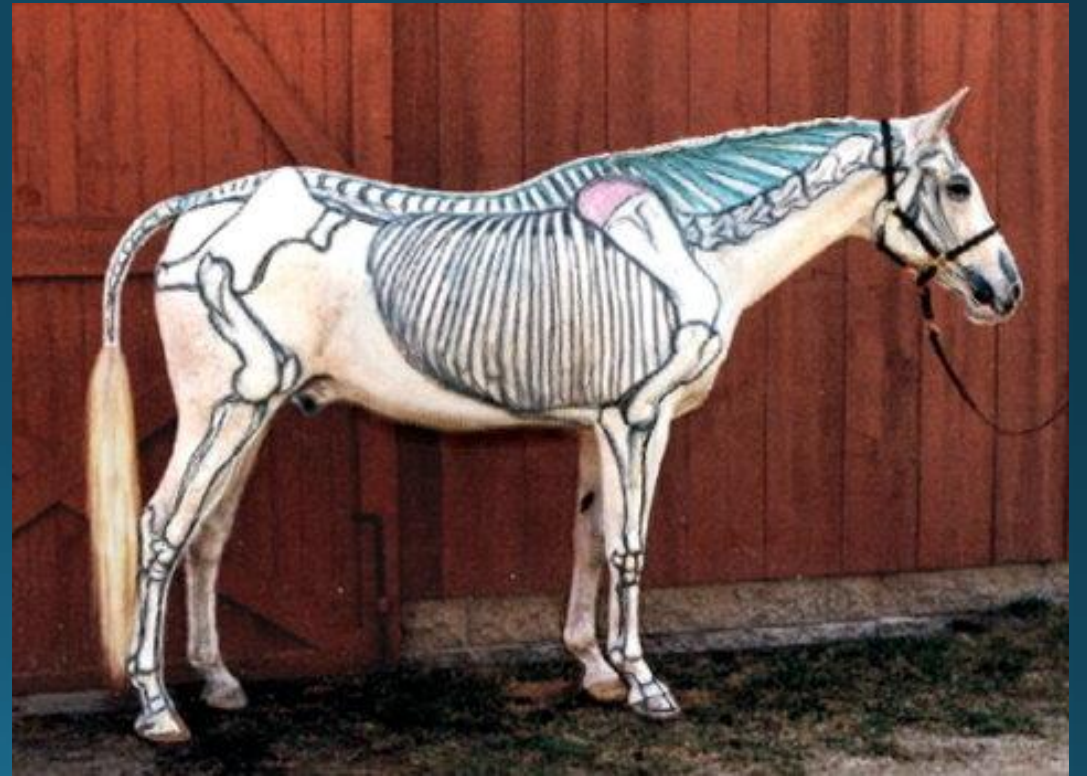
- Overnights will be in hotels or cabins, no camping.
- Dinners will be at restaurants, lunches and breakfasts will mostly be “cold” and/or packed.
- You will not be approaching, interacting with, or handling horses on this trip. Studying the mustangs will be observational only.
- Observations will be made outdoors in March, so may be cold and windy. Making observations may mean long periods outdoors and stationary, or hiking over rough terrain. An equipment list will be provided for your personal clothing and equipment, and students need to be prepared for outdoor work.

Prerequisites for travel seminar:

- Enrollment in BI 152 or BI 152H Inside *Equus*
- OR
- Enrollment in BI 316 Animal Behavior in Spring '15 or a previous semester
- Application and permission of instructor
- Previous experience with animals or horses is NOT required

BI 152 Inside *Equus*

- 4 credit course (lecture and lab) on animal physiology and behavior using the horse as a model
- Does not give biology credit for majors
- Satisfies Natural Science requirement for college
- Satisfies QR2
- Meets MWF 9:05-10 am and Tues 12:30-3:30 pm



BI 152H Inside *Equus*

- 4 credit course (lecture and lab) on animal physiology and behavior using the horse as a model
- Does not give biology credit for majors
- Satisfies Natural Science requirement
- Honors level course, with writing intensive component



How are BI 152 and 152 H different?

- BI 152 and BI 152H will have the same class and lab activities.
- The class times are also the same: MWF 9:05-10:00 am and Tuesday 12:30-3:30 pm
- The honors component will be an additional writing project over the semester, with the possibility of publication
- BI 152 or 152H may be taken without the travel seminar.





Questions?

Elaine Larsen, 518-580-5072, Dana 325, elarsen@skidmore.edu