**Artistic Field Notebook Assignment for Travel Courses**

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Adapted from work by Dr. Lyn Baldwin, <https://lbaldwin.sites.tru.ca/why-field-journals/>

and John Muir Laws, *The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling*

**Note to instructors:** I am sharing the worksheet I gave to my students who were taking a 12-day travel course to study ecology in Alaska. This travel was paired with a required semester-long course called Plant Responses to Global Change, which used Alaskan ecosystems as case studies. Before the travel component, the students took a three hour Zoom workshop during one of our lab periods on field notebook design and sketching. Dr. Baldwin’s website (above) has materials that can be reviewed to learn more about her wonderful approach.

**Assignments for BIOL 355 TL/Travel Learning Course to Alaska, 2023, Ohio Wesleyan**

**To gain 0.25 course credits for BIOL 355 TL, each student must complete the following:**

* **A field notebook** containing notes, drawings, and personal reflections for each major activity (such as guided hikes and tours). The notebook will be reviewed by Dr. Anderson in the Anchorage Airport before boarding our flight home.
* **Participation in evening discussions** of our activities throughout the trip.
* **A one page personal reflection** (12 point font, double-spaced, one inch margins) about what was learned on the trip. Email this to Dr. Anderson by June 1, 2023.

**Recommended structure for field notebook entries**

* We will follow the field notebook design we learned in the workshop with Lyn Baldwin.
  + For each major activity (for example, our guided hike at Eagle River Nature Center), divide the page into four spaces with room for a title and date at the top. The spaces should contain (1) notes from experts, (2) a drawing (can be colored or not, simple or complex) of a natural object from a close-up vantage point (like a leaf, a sprig of moss, etc.), (3) a drawing (can be colored or not, simple or complex) of the landscape we encountered, and (4) personal observations and reflections. That is, organize at least one page per activity like this:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Title and date – Example: Eagle River Nature Center Hike, 5/17/2023 | |
| Expert notes | Close-up drawing |
| Landscape drawing | Personal observations and reflections |

* + After that page, if you have more to say about the activity, you can write additional notes on additional pages in paragraph or list form, or make another grid, however you wish to communicate.
  + If you don’t have time to complete your notebook entries during the activities, you are expected to finish them during your free time. For some students, this may involve adding color or detail to drawings (this is optional, but everyone must attempt at least simple sketches). Feel free to take pictures of items you wish to capture in drawings to work on later.
  + In your personal notes, you may wish to use these prompts as ways to deepen your observations. This is optional:
    - I notice…
    - I wonder…
    - I hypothesize…