



Portland
State
UNIVERSITY

The Environmental Professional Program
Wetland Delineation Program

EPP 720 – Introduction to Grasses, Sedges and Rushes

Course Summary: This course is designed to give participants the knowledge and skills necessary to identify grasses, sedges, and rushes that commonly occur on either side of the wetland boundary in the Pacific Northwest. These species make up the three graminoid families: Poaceae, the grasses; Cyperaceae, the sedges; and Juncaceae, the rushes. Students will learn basic terminology and structure as they apply to each of the three groups as well as general characteristics of common grasses, sedges, and rushes, providing a basis for identification of individual species.

Emphasis will be on practical skills with hands-on experience in examination of basic plant morphology, observation of characteristics of common grass, sedge, and rush families, and the use of dichotomous keys to identify individual specimens. Students will be introduced to the use of regional floristic keys, field guides, and internet resources for species identification. Because diagnostic characters are often small participants will be able to become confident in the use of hand lenses and dissecting microscopes to aid in species identification. The field study portion of the class will provide opportunities to use skills learned in class to identify species in the field. The field session will focus on the use of field characteristics for rapid identification of some of the most commonly occurring grass, sedge, and rush species. While some familiarity with northwest flora is helpful, students are NOT expected to be proficient in plant taxonomy or wetland ecology.

Duration: Partially online, three day in-person course with field day.

Topics:

- Distinguish and identify major vegetative and floral structures of grasses, sedges, and rushes.
- Identify a range of common grass, sedge, and rush species using both vegetative and floristic characteristics.
- Use simple dichotomous keys to identify specimens to genera and/or species
- Locate and use printed, internet, and institutional resources available for the study of grasses, sedges, and rushes.
- Use habitat as a clue to the identify of grasses, sedges, and rushes.

Available Professional Credit: 4.0 CEU, 40 PDH.