Course Description: This course is designed to teach you to identify approximately 150 different trees commonly used in Southern California landscapes. We will also focus on the landscape usage, growth habits and cultural requirements of these plants. We will try to point out some invasive plants and poisonous plants that may require special consideration before being used in the landscape.

Student Learning Outcome: The successful Plant ID student should be able to correctly identify (by spelling correctly and pronouncing the scientific names and common names) 80% of any group of 70 plants, in a period of two hours, using cut samples, living specimens or photographs, of the approximately 150 plants covered in the Plant Identification course.

Course Objectives:
Explain the binomial method of plant nomenclature
Utilize the terminology of plant identification
Correctly label and present samples
Identify plants by growth habits, foliage, flowers, fruit and bark
Describe the necessary soil, water and cultural and climatic requirements of different plant materials
Compare and contrast growth habits and space requirements of different landscape trees
Describe and identify common pests and diseases
Discuss the characteristics of the common plant families
Differentiate between various landscape use requirements
Select trees to fit various landscape use requirements

Text Books and Materials:
*Sunset Western Garden Book* (Sunset Publishing Corporation)
Clipboard, three-ring notebook, things for plant sample collecting (bag, 1" masking tape, etc.), flashlight, hand pruners, gloves, comfortable walking shoes

This is a night class and the weather will be changing. On wet or cold evenings, remember to dress accordingly. We will be going on a plant walk every night except in the case of an absolute downpour. If it’s raining lightly, we’ll be out there so bring your rain gear.

Quiz and Examinations:
There will be a quiz at the beginning of every Lecture class period. These quizzes can cover any material that we have covered since the beginning of the semester. I do this because the final is comprehensive.
There will be about 11 quizzes. I will drop your 3 lowest quiz grades. There is NO make up on the quizzes.
There are two mid-term exams about 6 weeks and 12 weeks into the semester.
The final will be held during the last class session.
Grading:
Weekly Quizzes (no make ups) (I usually drop 3 quizzes) = 300 points
Mid Terms (2 x 175 points each) = 350 points
Plant ID Notebook = 350 points
Final Exam = 350 points
1350 points possible

NO INCOMPLETES WILL BE GIVEN IN PLANT IDENTIFICATION CLASS - IF YOU'RE NOT MAKING IT, DROP THE CLASS. It's easier to retake the class starting from scratch than it is to try to pick where you left off.

About studying for a plant ID class: Doing well in plant identification requires a lot of effort on the part of the student. Memorization is probably the biggest part of these classes. It requires constant practice, patience, and a lot of hard work. Here are a few suggestions that might make life a little easier in this class.

1. Practice with other students in the class. Collect samples before class meetings and quiz each other or whenever you can.

2. Make flash cards. Put the scientific name on one side of the card and the non-standard (common) name on the other and use them as often as you can.

3. Practice naming plants as you see them. Drive your friends and family nuts! Notice plants as you're walking around campus or anywhere else, while you're driving around. Everywhere! Just don't run into anything!

4. Practice writing the plant names. I think that it really helps to remember the names and spellings when you practice by putting pen to paper.

5. Use your notebook as a study guide as you build it. The photos will help you remember the growth habits, main attractive features and landscape uses.

6. Collect samples every week even if you use photos in your notebook. Actual plant samples are great study guides. You can touch them and smell them and judge their size. That's difficult to do with photos. Besides, the tests all use samples, not photos.

7. It is absolutely, positively against the rules to get discouraged! Memorizing takes time and practice. It's certainly tougher for some than others. Try different things to help you study, and once you've got it figured out, it starts to get a lot easier.

8. If you need some help, ask!

Drop Policy: The last day to drop the class without a "W" is September 25th. The last day to drop the class with a "W" is November 20th. Students can be dropped due to excessive absences. Excessive absences are defined as missing three classes without notification to the instructors. The College drop dates can be found on inside cover of the Fall 2009 Class Schedule.

Cell Phone/Pager Policy: All cell phones and pagers must be turned off or put on a vibration setting. If you have to take a call, take it away from the rest of the class. If you are on the phone excessively instead of lecture/walkabout you may be dropped from class. Texting during class will not be tolerated.
College Services: There are several services available to the students of El Camino College. These services include: Tutoring, Basic Skills Lab, Math Lab, Health Center, Disabled Students Center, and more.

Special Resource Center: Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Special Resource Center on campus as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. You may also contact me privately to discuss your specific needs.