Course Description: Since our origins in the distant past, we humans have relied on plants for food, fuel, and fiber; we often use them in many other ways as well. Likewise, plants have adapted to us, and in some sense have changed our human nature through the interaction. Ethnobotany is the study of how people use plants, so it is the intersection of two distinct disciplines: Plant Biology (Botany) and Anthropology. This field is a subset of the study of humans using other organisms (not just plants) for material, cultural, and spiritual uses, a subject known as Ethnobiology.

In our activities, students consider how the interaction of plants and people help us understand social norms, how faith and history help us interpret what we study, and how the Scientific Method and technology are employed.

Pre-requisites: None

Assignments: regular short summaries of readings, discussions, observations and responses to review and discussion questions will be expected. Plant identification and preparation exercises will be conducted. Additionally, a Term Paper using formal writing convention with revision will be assigned.

Oral Presentation: each student will give a brief presentation demonstrating a hands-on project using plants. The presentation will be graded, with points assigned for both content and effectiveness of communication.

Course Objectives:

1. To identify, collect, and properly use several local plants.
2. How people traditionally understand plants, how knowledge is acquired & transferred, how botany is incorporated in culture/worldview
3. What techniques are used to identify active substances, useful fibers, and edible plants
4. How science characterizes, tests, and transfers knowledge about plant uses
5. The threats to traditional ethnobotanical knowledge, either through loss of human culture or biodiversity, and strategies to conserve each
6. Several examples of plants which present significant hazards
7. How we each have personal history and a culture-based worldview informing our knowledge

Required Course Materials:
Textbook to Purchase: Students should bring a copy of *Fifty Plants That Changed The Course Of History* by Bill Laws (Firefly Books 2010), and also a field guide to local plants. Students may choose any one of the many excellent popular identification and use guides, such as from the Peterson Guide series; *Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide* or *Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide* (both by Kelly Kindscher); etc. We will also use research reports, essays, and Instructor’s class notes (an electronic textbook).

Equipment: A sturdy, bound notebook for recording observations in the field, and a 10x hand lens (loupe).

Course Requirements:
Courses at Iowa Lakeside Laboratory are inquiry-based in structure, typically consisting of a mix of lectures, exercises, field trips, and projects designed to teach students essential aspects of a particular topic and the process of forming and answering scientific questions about that topic. Teaching is often by the Socratic Method with an emphasis on interaction between student and teacher. Students should be prepared to work in the field (including under challenging conditions), to meet and interact positively with others, and to practice effective reading, writing, and speech.

IMPORTANT NOTE -- PLEASE READ THIS WARNING: three dangers exist in Ethnobotany. First, we must all be especially aware of the hazards of exposure to (especially ingesting) unfamiliar plants; although the Instructor will do everything to assure a safe experience, risk does exist. If you have a medical condition or particular sensitivity, consider carefully which plants you choose to ingest; and remember “safety first.” Listen to your body and use appropriate caution. Second, our actions affect the environment. Before collecting or purchasing plant materials, consider whether such activity might cause an important loss to an imperiled species, or otherwise present a conservation loss. Third, when interacting with others, we must understand that our actions have consequences (good and bad). Interviewing informants involves responsibility to be polite, good listeners; to refrain from coercion; to be culturally-sensitive; to assure that they and their social group are treated fairly; and to accurately record & publish the information presented.

Course Grade:
- Independent Research project & presentation 25%
- Lab assignments, readings 50%
- Final Exam 25%

All course letter grades will be based on the usual percentage breakdown: 93-100% = A, 90-92% = A-, 87-89% = B+, 83-86% = B, etc.

Course Schedule: This class meets for the full day each day of the session, May 30-June 10, except Saturday, Sunday, and Monday (May 30, Memorial Day).
As a registered student in a Distance Education course through The University of Iowa, you are responsible for the policies and instructions posted below.

**Special Modifications:** If you are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation in order to participate in University of Iowa Continuing Education courses or programs, please contact Student Disability Services: 3015 Burge Hall, (319) 335.1462, or sds-information@uiowa.edu, or fax: (319) 335.3973. Reasonable accommodations for students with physical, mental, or learning disabilities will be made. The Division of Continuing Education is committed to both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Section 508 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

**Academic Misconduct:** All forms of plagiarism and any other activities that result in a student presenting work that is not his or her own are academic fraud. All academic fraud is reported to the departmental DEO and the Associate Dean of Continuing Education. All incidents of academic misconduct (plagiarism and cheating) will be subject to the rules and regulations of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as defined and stated in the Academic Policies Handbook (http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

In this class, students are not allowed to collaborate with others on assignments. Do not share your work with others or ask others to see their completed assignments since both are considered academic misconduct. If you need help, please contact the instructor by email. Students are responsible for understanding this policy; if you have questions, ask for clarification.

**Understanding Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated by the University. It subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Visit this site (http://www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu/) for definitions, assistance, and the full University policy.

**Complaint Procedures:** If at any time you have concerns about this class or your performance in it, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you do not feel that your concern has been resolved satisfactorily, you may contact the Department Chair (contact information provided at the top of page one of this syllabus). If you still do not feel that your concern has been resolved satisfactorily, you may contact University College, 310 Calvin Hall, (319) 335-1497, uc-academics@uiowa.edu. All complaints must be made within six months of the incident.

**Administrative Home of the Course:** The administrative home of this course is the University College (UC), which governs academic matters relating to the course such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, issues concerning academic fraud or academic probation, and how credits are applied for various graduation requirements. Different colleges might have different policies. If you have questions about these or other UC policies, contact your academic advisor or the Division of Continuing Education, 250 Continuing Education Facility, (319) 335-2575, dce-registration@uiowa.edu. As a registered student in a Distance Education course through The University of Iowa, you are responsible for the policies and instructions as posted online: http://uc.uiowa.edu/students/admitted-university-college-programs/academic-standards.