Welcome to BIOLOGY 470! This section of BIO 470 is designed to provide upper-class BIO majors experience communicating an area of expertise in oral and written fashion. Communicating findings in an informative presentation is an essential skill for professionals of all sorts, particularly scientists. The topic of this section is the natural history of invertebrate animals.

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Student participation in general and specific topics in biology. One credit hour.

PREREQUISITES: 20 semester hours of biology; no co-requisite.

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Office: S-210; Office hours: W 9:00-12:30; 1:00-2:30; and available widely by appointment.

Required Materials
Text: Ten research articles from primary literature associated with the topic of student interest.

Suggested Materials


GRADING POLICY: Your grade will be determined by the following elements.

Preliminary topic list: 5%
Annotated bibliography draft 1: 5%
Annotated bibliography draft 2: 5%
Abstract: 5%
Presentation outline: 5%
Peer presentation summaries: 20%
Oral presentation: 45%
Attendance and participation: 5%
Major field exam score: 5%

GRADING SCALE: A = 90–100%; B = 80–89%; C = 70–79%; D = 60–69%; < 60% = F

PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance is required for all class meetings and presentations. Absences will be excused for illness accompanied by a doctor’s note, university-sponsored events, and family emergencies with documentation. Unexcused absences will detract from the attendance, participation, and potentially other portions of the student’s grade depending on what content is missed. Participation in the form of contributions to class discussions and questions to presenters is expected and assessed as part of the student’s grade. Failure to contribute to the end of course evaluation will result in a 2% detraction from the participation grade.

Major Field Biology Test: BIO 470 students are required to take the Major Field Test in Biology. Students must sign up for this test with Testing Services (Rusk Building rm 328; 936-468-3958) http://www.sfasu.edu/ccs/testing/) and keep the appointment. Students failing to take this test will receive a 0 for attendance/participation and a withheld grade (WH) for the course. The result of this exam is applied to the course grade as follows: 90th percentile or above = 2% bonus; 80-89th percentile = 1% bonus; 70-79th percentile = full score; 60-69th percentile = 90% of full score; 50-59th percentile = 80% of full score; 40-49th percentile = 70% of full score; 30-39th percentile = 60% of full score; and 1-29th percentile = 50% of full score.

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR:
Week 1 (Jan. 21): Holiday
Week 2 (Jan 28): Course intro and background on invertebrates.
Week 3 (Feb. 4): Literature searching strategies. Sign up for presentations.
Week 4 (Feb. 11): Preliminary topics due; topic discussion.
Week 5 (Feb. 18): Discussion – oral communication strategies and practice
Week 6 (Feb. 25): Individual consultations; literature review assignment 1 due: annotated bibliography draft 1
Week 7 (Mar. 4): Individual consultations
Week 8 (Mar. 11): Individual consultations
Week 9 (Mar. 25): Individual consultations
Week 10 (Apr. 1): Presentations
Week 11 (Apr. 8): Presentations
Week 12 (Apr. 15): Presentations
Week 13 (Apr. 22): Presentations
Week 14 (Apr. 29): Presentations
Week 15 (May 6): Presentations

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES (SLOs)
SLO 1. Describe intellectually stimulating aspects of invertebrate animals. (PLO1)
SLO 2. Critically evaluate scientific literature. (PLO 1, 5)
SLO3. Effectively communicate scientific information in oral form. (PLO 2, 5)

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES
PLO 1. The student will demonstrate a good knowledge base in biological concepts.
PLO 2. Clearly articulate scientific information in oral form.
PLO 5. Demonstrate teamwork skills needed to coordinate diverse multidisciplinary teams to solve challenges in the biological world.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes: This course is not included in the general education core curriculum.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic integrity is expected of everyone in this course. Any form of academic dishonesty will lead to the student receiving a failing grade for the entire course. Additionally, a Report of Academic Dishonesty form will be submitted to your Dean’s office.

SFA Policy A-9.1 is summarized as follows: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

WITHHELD GRADES (Semester Grades Policy A-54): Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. The circumstances precipitating the request must have occurred after the last day in which a student could withdraw from a course. Students requesting a WH must be passing the course with a minimum projected grade of C.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD), as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodation. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/. Please note that you must visit with me outside of class time concerning your request before I will be able to provide the accommodations described in the notification from ODS.