Semester: S2024

Course Name: BIOL5190.001. Thesis writing
Prerequisite: Permission of the professor and approval of the department chair
Meeting time and place: TBA, according to individual student’s schedule, @S238
Office Hours: T 1230-1600, W 1000-1130, or by appointment @ S236
Instructor: Dr. Alexandra Martynova-Van Kley, Professor, Biology department
📞 936 468 2569, ⏤ avankley@sfasu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Individual conference, data analysis and writing interpretation conducted under the supervision of a biology graduate faculty member.

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to follow the schedule prepared at the beginning of course with instructor.

COURSE CREDIT HOUR JUSTIFICATION: This is a 1-3 credit hours course, and for passing grade it is expected from students to dedicate 3 contact hours per credit hour per week.

MATERIALS: Not required.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Students will be required to fulfill the agreed upon objectives plan to pass the course:

F Did not make progress on objectives plan,
D Did not make satisfactory progress on objectives plan,
C Satisfactory progress was achieved for only some portion of objectives plan,
B Achieved satisfactory progress on all parts of objectives plan,
A Demonstrated excellence in completing all components of objectives plan

Note: For BIOL 5190, Thesis writing, policy is to give the students a WH grade until the semester they graduate successfully.

COURSE GOAL AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: This course will provide a project-based opportunity to create a well-researched and structured document according to the THESIS WRITING CRITERIA (see below). Students who successfully complete this course should be able to: 1) Develop the ability to conduct thorough literature reviews, critically evaluate existing research, and identify gaps in knowledge; 2) Conduct independent research and contribute to the scholarly discourse in the field; 3) Learn the importance of revision and editing and develop the ability to refine and polish written work; 4) Understand the basics of preparing research for publication, including formatting, submission, and the peer review process; 5) Student learning outcomes collectively aim to prepare students for the rigorous and multifaceted process of planning, executing, and presenting high-quality research in the form of a thesis or dissertation.

THESIS WRITING CRITERIA:

Topic Selection/Correction (if needed): Choose a short topic that is relevant and significant, also aligns with your finding.

Abstract: Write a concise abstract that provides a brief overview of your thesis, including the research question, methodology, and key findings.

Introduction: Introduce your thesis with a clear statement of the research problem, the rationale for your study, and an overview of your research objectives.

Literature Review: Conduct a thorough review of existing literature related to your topic to understand the current state of knowledge, identify gaps, and situate your research within the broader context.

Research Question or Hypothesis: Clearly articulate the research question or hypothesis your thesis aims to address. This should be a concise statement that guides your investigation.

Research Design, Methodology with Data collection and Analysis: Define and describe the research design and methodology you will use to collect and analyze data. This includes detailing your sampling strategy, data collection methods, and analytical
approaches using appropriate statistical or qualitative methods, depending on the nature of your research. Data collection must outline research design. This may involve experiments, surveys, interviews, archival research, or other methods, depending on your field of study.

**Results Presentation:** Present your research findings in a clear and organized manner, often through tables, charts, graphs, or written descriptions.

**Discussion and Interpretation:** Interpret your results, discussing their implications, limitations, and contributions to the existing body of knowledge. Relate your findings back to your research question or hypothesis.

**Conclusion:** Summarize the key findings and their significance, emphasizing the contributions your research makes to the field.

**Citation and Referencing:** Check for proper citation and referencing of all sources used in your thesis according to the citation style specified by your academic institution.

**Chapter Organization:** Structure your thesis into logical chapters, each addressing specific aspects such as literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion.

**Editing and Proofreading:** Carefully edit and proofread your thesis to eliminate errors, improve clarity, and ensure a polished final product.

**Submission:** Submit your completed thesis according to the requirements and deadlines.

**COMUNICATION:** over an e-mail avankley@sfasu.edu (please don't email through D2L). When emailing use your OFFICIAL SFA E-MAIL ADDRESS

**ATTENDANCE:** You are expected to attend all the meetings with the adviser. Missing such a meeting without university approved absences will result in points subtraction from your final grade. Stay focused: turn off your cellphone and pack it away, be respectful to your classmates and the professor. Using a phone during the class without permission will be equal to an absence. If the meeting was missed without prior arrangement as an after the fact make-up will be allowed only by Faculty Notification Requests. The information is located on the Dean of Student's website: [https://www.sfasu.edu/thehub/sos/notification-request](https://www.sfasu.edu/thehub/sos/notification-request)

### E-mail rules:

1. Check your e-mail REGULARLY and, if you have your SFA account forwarded to some secondary account, be certain this is not full and can receive messages.
2. Always indicate BOTH class & section # and your CID in a subject line.
3. When ATTACHING a file, filename should be “First_LastName.ext”, it must also include your name in the document itself.
4. Emails lacking any of the information listed above WILL BE IGNORED.
5. Be courteous: Begin your email with a greeting that addresses your instructor respectfully and professionally, such as "Dear Dr. Smith" or "Hi Dr. Jones."
6. E-mail should be considered a professional form of communication – you should use proper grammar and spelling.
7. CLOSE with your full name: after your message, end with a closing and signature, such as "Sincerely, Jane Doe" or “Thanks, John Doe.”
8. A RESPONSE may take time: I will try to get back quickly, but don't expect a response within a few minutes. It can take up to 24 hours for an instructor to respond. If you need a response ON THE SAME DAY, your best option is to attend the office hours.
9. NO emails will be answered after 5 p.m. and/or during weekends or holidays.
10. **NO GRADE DISCUSSION** over an e-mail, only during one-on-one meetings. Grades cannot be discussed via e-mail at any time due to federal law. I will speak to you in person instead during my office hours. DO NOT involve a third-party who is not affiliated in an official capacity with SFASU (e.g., friend, roommate) in any matters pertaining to your enrollment in this course. Your instructor is legally prohibited from discussing most course/grade-related issues with third parties according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99).

**MENTAL HEALTH:** SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**FACULTY NOTIFICATION REQUESTS:** Please read at [https://www.sfasu.edu/thehub/sos/notification-request](https://www.sfasu.edu/thehub/sos/notification-request).

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Please read the complete policy at [https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/10.4.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/10.4.pdf).

**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, and 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 accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

WITHHELD GRADES SEMESTER GRADES POLICY (5.5): 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.

On-campus Resources:
SFA Counseling Services https://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/clinics-labs/counseling-clinic

Rusk Building, 3rd Floor 936.468.2401
SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services, Room 202 936.468.1041
Crisis Resources: Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255) Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741