BIOL 4181-010
Seminar in Biology

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Office: Cavness 101A

Office Hours: Mon 9:00-11:00, 3:00 – 5:00; Tue 11:00-12:00, 2:00 – 4:00; Wed 9:00-11:00, 2:00 – 4:00; Thu 11:00-12:00, 2:00 – 3:00; Fri By Appointment

Course Information

Course Description
A course designed to acquaint the student with the basic literature of the discipline and to encourage an exchange among biology majors and faculty members on selected topics.

Prerequisite and Co-requisite Courses: None.

Prerequisite Skills
Accessing Internet websites, using ASU Library resources, and proficiency with Microsoft Word and/or PowerPoint are expectations of BIOL 4181.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students successfully completing this class will be able to:

1. Identify, locate, and use refereed journals and other literary resources in biology.

2. Prepare and give an oral presentation based on primary research literature on a biological topic that meets stated criteria on evaluation sheet.

3. Prepare a typewritten review paper using proper citation.
4. Critically evaluate a scientific paper and presentation for clarity and content.

**Course Delivery**

This is a face-to-face course with learning resources and supplemental materials posted in Blackboard.

**Required Texts and Materials**

None.

**Communication**

**Written communication via email:** All private communication will be done exclusively through your ASU email address. Check frequently for announcements and policy changes. In your emails to faculty, include the course name and section number in your subject line.

**Grading**

Your grade in this course will be determined by points earned from the components listed below and the following formula:

Report Grade x 0.40 + Oral Presentation Grade x 0.40 + Participation Grade x 0.20 = Your Grade.

Letter grades will be assigned based on the following scale (modified as necessary by the attendance requirements previously listed): 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; below 60 = F.

**Oral Presentation = 40 %**

Oral presentation scores will be calculated using an evaluation form that covers several criteria in the following areas. The form will be available for you to review before you give your oral presentation. Your grade will be determined by an average of the instructor’s score and the class’ average score (after throwing out the extreme high and low score).

**Structural Components**

Demonstrate your ability to synthesize and organize information from the primary literature in a logical, lucid fashion (i.e. present a clear introduction as to what will be presented and why, use an overall logical organizational sequence, clearly identify the main ideas, make clear, smooth transitions between major points, use good examples and appropriate data, provide a thorough summary, give credit for ideas and data by citing references on each slide as they are used).
Content Factors

Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of your topic (i.e. provide clear examples and arguments, use appropriate vocabulary level, draw logical conclusions based on data, provide thought provoking discussion of implications, answer audience questions correctly and clearly).

Presentation Factors

Demonstrate your ability to convey information to others (i.e. use legible visuals that effectively illustrate concept or data, show enthusiasm for your topic, be aware of your physical space and that of the audience, maintain eye contact with your audience, speak loud enough so that all of your audience can hear you, speak at a speed such that the audience can understand the information, avoid nervous gestures, verbal crutches, and unprofessional posture, stay within the time limits).

Written Report = 40%

Written reports (final drafts AND edited first drafts) are due at the beginning of class ONE week after your presentation. Late papers will have points deducted (10% each day). Remember that the minimum requirement is for you to cite at least 5 references. The report will be graded for:

Format, grammar, spelling, organization = 25%
Content (in-depth treatment of topic) = 40%
Response to reviewers’ comments indicated on reviewed copies = 10%
References (follows format guidelines and used correctly) = 25%

Participation = 20%

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class and to complete various exercises in writing, editing, and critiquing. Grades earned on these exercises will contribute to a participation grade. Due dates are strict and no late work will be accepted.

Peer Evaluation/Audience Participation
The evaluation of student presentations will constitute part of the speaker’s grade and part of the participant’s grade. Members of the audience will be graded on participation by completing an evaluation form for each speaker (to earn points for an evaluation form, comments must be included). The names of the evaluators will be removed from the forms and the forms given to the presenter. In addition, all members of the class are expected to be involved in the question/answer session following each presentation. Obviously, points for participation must be earned during class and cannot be made up, even for an excused absence.

General Policies Related to This Course

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:

- Angelo State University Student Handbook¹
- Angelo State University Catalog²

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU. The College of Science and Engineering adheres to the university’s Statement of Academic Integrity.³

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website.⁴ The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:
Incomplete Grade Policy
It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s Academic Integrity policy in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list.

Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center.

Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Days
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information.

Title IX at Angelo State University
The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning
that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator at:
Michelle Boone, J.D.
Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
325-942-2022
michelle.boone@angelo.edu

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form.

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345.

For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.
## Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic or Module</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 13</td>
<td>Introduction, Criteria for Selecting a Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>No Class MLK Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Biological Literature – Finding References</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Citing Sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Note Taking/ Writing Summaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td><strong>Topic approval and date request form due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Writing for Clarity, Flow, and Content</td>
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<td>Feb 24</td>
<td>Individual Research Article Summaries</td>
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<td>Mar 2</td>
<td>Planning and Preparing Oral Presentations</td>
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<td>Mar 9</td>
<td>No Class – Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 16</td>
<td>Critiquing scientific writing</td>
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<td>**</td>
<td><strong>First draft of research report due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 23</td>
<td>Work Day Revisions</td>
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<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Apr 6</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Apr 13</td>
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<td>Apr 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 27</td>
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1. [https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/](https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/)
2. [https://www.angelo.edu/catalogs/](https://www.angelo.edu/catalogs/)
4. [https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/](https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/)
5. [https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures](https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures)
7. [https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php](https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php)
8. [https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of](https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of)