Biology 418 Seminar  
Fall 2020  

Dr. Loren K. Ammerman  
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Class time and place: Monday 12-12:50pm, Cavness 023  
Office Hours: M 10-12, 3-4, T 9-12, R 9-10 or by appointment

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.

ATTENDANCE:
You are expected to attend all scheduled classes either in-person or via Blackboard Collaborate. More than 2 absences will result in the loss of a letter grade from your final average. More than 4 absences will result in automatic failure of the course.

REQUIRED USE OF MASKS/Facial Coverings by Students in Class at ASU:
As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.

REQUIREMENTS:
Every student must check their ASU e-mail address regularly and use the Blackboard website to retrieve grades and to receive assignments. You MUST have access to a computer with a WebCam in order to participate in this course remotely.

ASSESSMENT:
Your grade in this course will be determined by points earned from the components listed below and the following formula:  
Grade on Literature Review x 0.40 + Oral Presentation Grade x 0.40 + Participation Grade x 0.20 = Your Grade
Specific guidelines for the Literature Review and the Oral Presentation will be provided in a document posted on Blackboard. Participation grades will be earned on contributions to discussion boards and assignments in writing, editing, and critiquing others’ work. Peer evaluations of your oral presentation will comprise half of your grade (after removing the lowest and highest scores from the class). The other half of your presentation grade will be assigned by me.

Due dates are strict and no late work will be accepted. Letter grades for the course 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.

**TOPIC SELECTION – LITERATURE REVIEW AND ORAL PRESENTATION:**
Topics for your semester research project will be submitted for approval at the FOURTH class meeting (Sept 14). The topic you select is your choice. You must submit the proposed title of your literature review and presentation, proper **citation of THREE suitable primary references**, and a signed affirmation of honesty. Presentation dates will be assigned after this date. The Literature Review is due Oct 5.

Specific guidelines for the Literature Review and the Oral Presentation will be provided in a document posted on Blackboard.

**DROP POLICY:**
The last day to drop the course is determined by the university calendar ii (Tuesday, 10 November, 5:00pm). Please come talk with me if you are considering dropping the course.

FOR POLICIES ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY, STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES, TITLE IX POLICIES, OR OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS, PLEASE VISIT THE “ORIENTATION” MENU BUTTON IN THE BLACKBOARD COURSE.
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments/Homework</th>
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| Aug 17    | I. Introduction to Course, Criteria for Selecting a Topic             | - Read “Writing a Review Paper”  
- Write entry in 2 discussion forums |
| Aug 24    | II. The Biological Literature – Finding References                    | Conduct assignment on database searches                                               |
| Aug 31    | III. Citing Sources                                                   | Complete assignments (2) on methods of citing sources                                 |
| Sept 7    | HOLIDAY – no class                                                    |                                                                                      |
| Sept 14   | IV. Note taking/ Writing Summaries                                    | - Topic approval and date request form due before class  
- Write summary on ONE of your primary sources |
| Sept 21   | V. Writing for Clarity, Flow, and Content                             | Complete assignment on revising sentences                                             |
| Sept 28   | VI. Planning and Preparing Oral Presentations                         | Before class write entry in discussion forum on what makes a good oral presentation  |
| Oct 5     | VII. Critiquing Scientific Writing                                    | - Before class submit research report (literature review)  
- Conduct peer reviews of two student papers |
| Oct 12    | VIII. Professional Communication                                     | Letter to potential employer or graduate advisor                                      |
| Oct 19    | IX. Student Presentations and Evaluations                             | Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback                           |
| Oct 26    | IX. Student Presentations and Evaluations                             | Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback                           |
| Nov 2     | IX. Student Presentations and Evaluations                             | Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback                           |
| Nov 9     | IX. Student Presentations and Evaluations                             | Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback                           |
| Nov 16    | IX. Student Presentations and Evaluations                             | Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback                           |

i [http://blackboard.angelo.edu](http://blackboard.angelo.edu)

ii [http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrars_office/academic_calendar.php](http://www.angelo.edu/services/registrars_office/academic_calendar.php)