BIOL 4181
Seminar

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Office: Cavness 118A

Office Hours: Monday 8-9:30, 12:30-2:00; Tuesday 1-2:30; Wednesday 8-9:30, 3-4:30; Thursday 10-11:30; Friday 8-9:30. If the posted hours do not align with your schedule, please email me to schedule an appointment.

Course Information

Course Description
In the professional world of biology compiling, organizing, and presenting information to our peers is a vital necessity. This course is designed to help you develop skills that will allow you to effectively search for information, organize it, analyze it, and present it to others.

Student Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students 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

Statement for Synchronous Remote Sessions
To maintain academic quality while accommodating social distancing needs this semester, this course will use a split delivery model that combines face-to-face teaching with remote instruction.

The goal is to provide face-to-face instruction to students who want to return to campus, while also allowing students who may need to learn remotely to participate via virtual class sessions.

How Does It Work?
Your class will be divided and you will be placed into a smaller group of students to maintain physical distancing requirements in our assigned classroom space.

Your assigned group will receive a schedule of in-person class meetings. This schedule is not flexible. For instance, if you are supposed to attend class on a Monday, you cannot elect to go on Wednesday with another class group instead.

When you are not in the physical class, you will attend live remote sessions at the same time as our scheduled course. You will also be expected to complete coursework via Blackboard.1

Please refer to this Health and Safety web page2 for updated information about campus guidelines as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Attendance
You are expected to attend and participate in 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 Texts and Materials
There is no textbook required for this course. Internet access to use the course Blackboard (Bb) site, Google docs, etc. is required. Flash (USB) drive or ASU P drive to save documents is required.

Technology Requirements
Every student must check their ASU e-mail address regularly and use the Blackboard website3 to retrieve grades and to receive assignments.
If you choose to attend remotely, you MUST have access to a computer with a WebCam in order to participate in this course.

**Communication**

I will respond to email and/or telephone messages within 24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend messages may not be returned until Monday.

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 me, include the course name in your subject line.

Virtual communication: Office hours may be done with the assistance of the telephone, Collaborate, Skype, etc. Please contact me directly if this is your preference.

**Assessment**

Points earned from the components listed below and the following formula will determine your grade in this course:

\[
\text{Your Grade} = \text{Grade on Literature Review} \times 0.40 + \text{Oral Presentation Grade} \times 0.40 + \text{Participation Grade} \times 0.20
\]

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). I will assign the other half of your presentation grade.

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.

**Grading**

**Evaluation and Grades**

Course grades will be determined as indicated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Percent of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade on literature review</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation grade</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation grade</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>
**Topic selection – Literature review and oral presentation**

Topics for your semester research project will be submitted for approval at the FOURTH class meeting (Sept. 8). The topic you select is your choice. You must submit the proposed title of your literature review and presentation, proper citation of two suitable primary references, and a signed affirmation of honesty. Presentation dates will be assigned after this date. The Literature Review is due Oct. 6.

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 this course with a “W” is Nov. 10.

**General Policies Related to This Course**
All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:

- Angelo State University Student Handbook
- Angelo State University Catalog

**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.

**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. The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services
Office of Student Affairs
325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
Houston Harte University Center, Room 112

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.

Required Use of Masks/Facial Coverings by Students

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.

**Modifications to the Syllabus**
This syllabus, including grade evaluation and course schedule, is subject to modification. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic may require significant changes in course delivery and content on potentially short notice.

**Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments/ Homework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Aug. 18 | I. Introduction to Course, Criteria for Selecting a Topic | - Read “Writing a Review Paper”  
- Write entry in 2 discussion forums |
| Aug. 25 | II. The Biological Literature – Finding References         | Conduct assignment on database searches                                                |
| Sept.1  | III. Citing Sources                                        | Complete assignments (2) on methods of citing sources                                  |
| Sept. 8 | IV. Note taking/ Writing Summaries                         | - Topic approval and date request form due  
- Write summary on ONE of your primary sources |
| Sept. 15| V. Writing for Clarity, Flow, and Content                  | Complete assignment on revising sentences                                             |
| Sept. 22| VI. Individual Research Article Summaries                  | Locate a review article on any topic and evaluate their use of primary articles       |
| Sept. 29| VII. Planning and Preparing Oral Presentations             | Before class write entry in discussion forum on what makes a good oral presentation  |
| Oct. 6  | VIII. Critiquing Scientific Writing                        | Submit first draft of research report                                                 |
| Oct. 13 | IX. Professional Communication                             | - Conduct peer reviews of two student papers  
- Letter to potential employer or graduate advisor |
<p>| Oct. 20 | X. Student Presentations and Evaluations                   | Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 27</td>
<td>X. Student Presentations and Evaluations</td>
<td>Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>X. Student Presentations and Evaluations</td>
<td>Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>X. Student Presentations and Evaluations</td>
<td>Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 17</td>
<td>X. Student Presentations and Evaluations</td>
<td>Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. [https://blackboard.angelo.edu/](https://blackboard.angelo.edu/)
3. [http://blackboard.angelo.edu](http://blackboard.angelo.edu)
4. [https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/](https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/)
5. [https://www.angelo.edu/catalogs/](https://www.angelo.edu/catalogs/)
7. [https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/](https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/)
8. [https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures](https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures)
10. [https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php](https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php)
11. [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)
12. [https://www.angelo.edu/services/title-ix/](https://www.angelo.edu/services/title-ix/)