

BIOL 4181

Seminar



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Office Hours: Monday 10:00-12:30 & 2:00-4:30; Tuesday 11:00-1:30; Friday 10:00-12:30, or by 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.

Prerequisite and Co-requisite Courses

None

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

This is a face-to-face course with online components that students are expected to access in [Blackboard](#).¹

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 website² to retrieve grades and to receive assignments.

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

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). 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.

Assessment	Percent of Total Grade
Grade on literature review	40
Oral presentation grade	40
Participation grade	20
Total	100%

Topic selection – Literature review and oral presentation

Topics for your semester research project will be submitted for approval at the FOURTH class meeting (February 10). 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 March 10.

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 April 28.

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](#)³
- [Angelo State University Catalog](#)⁴

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](#)⁵ (Page 97).

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](#).⁶ The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

Dr. 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](#)⁷ for more information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU's [Academic Integrity Statement](#)⁸ 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](#).⁹

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](#)¹⁰ for more information.

Title IX at Angelo State University

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Miller, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:

Online: [Incident Reporting Form](#)¹¹

Face to Face: Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

Phone: 325-942-2022

Email: michelle.miller@angelo.edu

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171).

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State's policy please visit the [Title IX website](#).¹²

Information About COVID-19

Please refer to ASU's [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) Updates](#)¹³ web page for current information about campus guidelines and safety standards as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Modifications to the Syllabus

This syllabus, including grade evaluation and course schedule, is subject to modification on potentially short notice based on developing circumstances.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignments/ Homework
Jan. 20	I. Introduction to Course, Criteria for Selecting a Topic	Read "Writing a Review Paper" Write entry in 2 discussion forums
Jan. 27	II. The Biological Literature – Finding References	Conduct assignment on database searches
Feb. 3	III. Citing Sources	Complete assignments (2) on methods of citing sources
Feb 10	IV. Note taking/ Writing Summaries	Topic approval and date request form due Write summary on ONE of your primary sources
Feb. 17	V. Writing for Clarity, Flow, and Content	Complete assignment on revising sentences
Feb. 24	VI. Individual Research Article Summaries	Locate a review article on any topic and evaluate their use of primary articles
Mar. 3	VII. Planning and Preparing Oral Presentations	Before class write entry in discussion forum on what makes a good oral presentation
Mar. 10	VIII. Critiquing Scientific Writing	Submit first draft of research report
Mar. 17	Spring Break	Spring Break
Mar. 24	IX. Professional Communication	Conduct peer reviews of two student papers Letter to potential employer or graduate advisor

Mar. 31	X. Student Presentations and Evaluations	Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback
Apr. 7	X. Student Presentations and Evaluations	Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback
Apr. 14	X. Student Presentations and Evaluations	Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback
Apr. 21	X. Student Presentations and Evaluations	Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback
Apr. 28	X. Student Presentations and Evaluations	Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback
May 5	X. Student Presentations and Evaluations	Evaluate presentations, ask questions, and provide feedback

¹ <https://blackboard.angelo.edu/>

² <http://blackboard.angelo.edu>

³ <https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/student-handbook/>

⁴ <https://www.angelo.edu/academics/catalog/>

⁵ <https://www.angelo.edu/live/files/27603-student-handbook-2020-21#page=97>

⁶ <https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/disability-services/>

⁷ <https://angelo.policystat.com/policy/10659448/latest/>

⁸ <https://www.angelo.edu/live/files/27603-student-handbook-2020-21#page=97>

⁹ https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/writing-center/academic_honesty.php

¹⁰ <https://angelo.policystat.com/policy/10659368/latest/>

¹¹ <https://www.angelo.edu/incident-form>

¹² <https://www.angelo.edu/title-ix>

¹³ <https://www.angelo.edu/covid-19/>