COURSE SYLLABUS

Course overview

In this course, we will examine the diversity of animal behavior among species and consider what function behavior serves and how it evolved. We will develop your curiosity about the living world using lectures, readings, and discussions. Through these activities, we will examine scientific methods of posing and testing questions and hypotheses.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to do the following:

- Describe the scientific process, including how experiments are done.
- Develop critical thinking skills and skills necessary for life-long learning.
- Apply evolutionary principles to an understanding of animal behavior.
- Demonstrate ability to organize and communicate ideas about scientific knowledge.

Course philosophy

This course aims to get you excited about animal behavior, but in the context of the scientific method. The course is less about details, but more about the theories and perspectives that bind those details together. In this course, you will not be required to know all there is to know about any one species' behavior. Rather we will ask you to apply examples of behavior in a variety of animals, especially birds and insects, to concepts relating to mechanism, function and evolution. You will learn a new way of thinking about nature, which revolves around asking questions and finding answers to those questions. You will learn many facts, but more importantly, you will learn how these facts became known. We want this class to be interesting and challenging for each of you. We hope that it stimulates your curiosity about the living world around you and fosters confidence in your abilities to find, evaluate, synthesize, and apply scientific information throughout your life.

Required Textbook


Grading

Grades will be based on three exams (2 midterms and one final), a 5 page written paper, two oral presentations, a lab notebook, and participation in lab and lecture activities. Because this is a writing intensive course, exams will be composed mostly of short answer and essay questions. Writing intensive courses also require one conference per semester with the instructor; these will be scheduled on an individual basis. Because this is an oral intensive course, you will be required to give a 10 minute presentation, including a question and answer session with your peers, at the end of the semester. You will also give a short oral presentation on a paper drawn from the
scientific literature at some point during the course. Grades will be calculated as a percentage of the 700 points possible in the course.

**Attendance Policy**

We expect you to attend all lecture and labs. Due to the nature of labs, missed labs cannot be made up. Missed exams cannot be made up unless the instructor is informed of the absence ahead of time. Failure to attend 3 or more labs will result in a failing grade for the course. We understand that occasionally emergencies and illnesses arise. Please keep us informed in such cases.

We expect you to participate actively in all discussions and lab activities and part of your grade will be based on your class participation. Science education research has demonstrated that students who take an active role in their learning learn more and retain that knowledge longer; therefore, we encourage you to prepare for and actively participate in class.

**Late-Assignment Policy**

I will deduct **25% of points** per class period for late assignments. Oral presentations **must be given** on the day that they are scheduled.

**Point breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment/Exam</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation of scientific paper</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final oral presentation (including questions)</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 page research paper</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab (notebook and attendance)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in discussion</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>700</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

90-100% = A  
80-89% = B  
70-79% = C  
60-69% = D  
Below 60 = F

**Plagiarism/Academic Honesty**

Disciplinary action may be initiated in cases of plagiarism, cheating, and/or academic dishonesty. Please refer to the student code of conduct:  
http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/current/academics/regs3.html#Student_Rights

**Student Support**

Students with special needs or concerns can contact Student Support Services (474-6844). Please let me know at the beginning of the semester if you will require accommodations due to a documented disability, and I will work with you in conjunction with the Office of Disability Services (203 WHIT, 474-7043).