Course Objectives:

Through critical review and discussion of historical and contemporary literature:

1) gain an understanding of the theoretical basis of foraging ecology
2) evaluate cases studies that attempt to employ/test theoretical predictions.

Course format is a weekly discussion session. A number of papers (~2-4) will be assigned for each meeting. In the discussion, a pre-designated student will lead a discussion of one of the assigned papers. All students will be required to read each paper and contribute to the discussions. The lead student will assume that others have read the papers and will not simply give a book report on the assigned paper. Rather, the leader may, for example, challenge a conclusion or method in the paper, identify hypotheses that may be suggested by the paper and initiate a discussion of how to test those hypotheses, identify some aspect of the paper that they fail to understand and seek clarification, or do something else that is creative. Discussion leaders will be expected to be familiar with important material in the literature cited section of their paper. The instructor will facilitate discussion and provide a summary that synthesizes the literature discussed during each weekly meeting. Students will be evaluated on their performance as discussion leaders and as discussion participants. Sitting there quietly will not be a successful course completion strategy.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions.

Grading Policy: To obtain an A in this course, you must earn it.

1) 30% - Contribution to seminar discussions led by others,
2) 40% - Discussion leadership,
3) 30% - A term paper that reviews an area of foraging ecology, identifies (an) unanswered question(s), proposes (a) testable hypothesis(es) to answer the question(s), and outlines field or simulation studies necessary to test the hypothesis(es). Simple literature reviews will not be appreciated; risk taking will be rewarded. Maximum paper length is 25 double-spaced 12-pitch text pages plus literature cited; longer is not necessarily better. Topics must be approved in advance.

Due Date for Term Paper: Scheduled final exam date and time for course. Material turned in after the due date and time will be reduced 1 letter grade for each 24-hours or portion thereof after the deadline. Incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. death).