

**Biology 7900, Graduate seminar, 1 credit
Dept. of Biology, Valdosta State University
Fall 2011 Syllabus**

Instructor: Dr. Archna Bhasin

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Office: 2093 Bailey Science Center

Office hours: Wednesday 4-4:50pm or by appointment

Class: Wednesday 5-6:50pm Bailey Science Center Rm. 2022

Thursday 4-5pm Science Seminar series, Student Union Theatre

<http://www.valdosta.edu/cas/scisem/Fall2011.shtml> (check schedule regularly)

Course description: This course is a graduate level course that emphasizes presentation, analysis and discussion of current primary literature in the biological sciences. Students will improve their scientific reading, oral and written communication skills. Educational outcomes associated with this course include numbers 1 and 2 as specified by the VSU Biology Department for its Master's program, and general outcomes numbers 3, 4, 5, and 7 as specified by the University.

Course requirements:

1. Each student will make two formal 45 minute Powerpoint presentations on two different biology topics of their choice. The only restriction is that the topic and articles selected cannot be too closely related to the student's thesis project, for example, articles that will be references in the student's proposal or thesis cannot be presented. The presentations should be clear, thorough, with appropriate background and must present significant amounts of data from the primary article(s).
2. Students must select three articles for each presentation, and the instructor must approve all three articles. Two articles must be primary peer-reviewed articles and one must be a secondary review article. The presentation should be based on one or both of the primary articles, depending on the length and content of the articles, with appropriate background information obtained from the review. Additional sources should be used, but need not be presented for approval.
3. Once articles are approved, the presenter should make copies of one or both of the primary articles for their classmates and instructor. Students must read the article(s) to be presented before class.
4. Each student will be responsible for asking questions after two presentations. No questions or comments will be allowed during the presentations. In addition to the assigned questioners, all students are encouraged to ask questions and discuss the topic after each presentation.
5. Each student must submit an extensive written outline of the first topic they will present. The outline must be detailed, thorough and must contain complete sentences. It will be due the day of the presentation and will be graded for organization, thoroughness and quality of writing (A, A/B, B, B/C, C).
6. Each student will submit notes and questions (a form will be provided) at the end of each presentation and at the end of each Science Seminar. These will only be graded for the assigned questioners and grades will be qualitative (A, A/B, B, B/C, C). For everyone else, they will be used to record attendance and to help students focus on the presentations. Attendance is expected for all classes and all seminars. Please let the instructor know in advance if you know that you will miss a class or seminar. If you unexpectedly miss a class or seminar, please notify the instructor as soon as possible via email or in person.

Grading:

Grading will be qualitative and each student will receive feedback and their grade (A, A/B, B, B/C, C) at the end of their presentation. The final grade will be a sum of the presentation grades, the outline grade, the question grades and attendance. The presentation and outline grades will weigh most heavily in the final grade.

Class schedule:

W 8/17	Organizational Meeting, sign up for presentation and question dates
Th 8/18	No Science Seminar
W 8/24	Articles approval/disapproval session
Th 8/25	First Science Seminar
W 8/31	Handout Presentation schedule with article titles Handout copies of articles
Th 9/1	Science Seminar
W 9/7	Presentation 1 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 9/8	Science Seminar
W 9/14	Presentation 2 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 9/15	Science Seminar
W 9/21	Presentation 3 - Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 9/22	Science Seminar
W 9/28	Presentation 4 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 9/29	Science Seminar
W 10/5	Presentation 5 - Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 10/6	Science Seminar
W 10/12	Presentation 6 - Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 10/13	Science Seminar
W 10/19	Presentation 7 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 10/20	Science Seminar
W 10/26	Presentation 8 –

	Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 10/27	Science Seminar
W 11/2	Presentation 9 - Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 11/3	Science Seminar
W 11/9	Presentation 10 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
Th 11/10	Last Science Seminar
W 11/16	Presentation 11 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -
W 11/23	No class – Thanksgiving Break
Th 11/24	No class – Thanksgiving Break
W 11/30	Presentation 12 – Post-presentation questions: 1 – 2 -

Schedule with articles and presenters to follow