

ZOO 6939

## Graduate Seminar in Animal Behavior

Fall 2025



### CLASS MEETINGS AND FORMAT

**Tuesdays at 12:50 PM - 2:45 PM**

**Location:** [Carr Hall Room 222 \(CRR 0222\)](#)

This graduate seminar takes the form of a journal club where themes in the primary literature of animal behavior and behavioral ecology are chosen by students. In previous offerings, the course has been divided into four sections each representing one of “*Tinbergen’s Four Questions*”, though other themes are possible. Each week one student will serve as the discussion leader and we will read and discuss a paper of their choice. The student’s chosen paper can be a classic in animal behavior, or contemporary research that is of interest to a broad readership.

### Instructor: Nick Keiser, PhD

Nick Keiser is a behavioral disease ecologist, and the Keiser Lab studies the multifaceted interactions between animal behavior and infectious disease ecology using a diversity of test systems (e.g., spiders, ants, flies, frogs, ticks, snails, etc). Nick’s research experience includes host-parasite interactions, disease avoidance behavior, social behavior, predator-prey interactions, and often focuses on individual differences in behavior.

#### Contact information:

**Email:** [ckeiser@ufl.edu](mailto:ckeiser@ufl.edu)

**Phone:** 352-273-4981

**Office Hours:** Thursdays 3:00PM – 4:00PM

[www.keiserlab.com](http://www.keiserlab.com)

### COURSE RESOURCES

**Textbook:** N/A

#### Course Website (e-Learning):

Class material will be posted on the Canvas e-Learning website (<http://lss.at.ufl.edu>). You are responsible for receiving all Announcements made in lecture and/or posted on the course website for this class. For help with e-Learning, call the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357, or visit the e-Learning support website: <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

## ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING

Students will sign up on Canvas with the intention to lead a discussion as soon as possible. At least **one week prior** to the class meeting, post a DOI link to the paper. Any other information you choose to share is welcome. In preparation for leading the discussion it is advisable to prepare leading questions, points of particular interest in the paper, and a summary of important contributions the paper makes. Also, describe to the class how this topic pertains to your current research or interests. This preparation may require reading additional related literature.

On the canvas discussions page, please post a link to the peer-reviewed paper the group will be reading during your week to lead the discussion. For best results, post a link directly to the journal web page and also attach a PDF. Links to library web pages or directories often encounter errors when others try to access them, so that should be avoided. Before midnight on the day of your presentation, please upload a powerpoint or PDF file of your presentation to the assignments tab on Canvas.

Grading Summary:	Letter Grades
Discussion lead: 50%	A 90% - 100%
Class participation: 50%	B 80% - 89.9%
	C 70% - 79.9%
	D 60% - 69.9%
	E < 60%

## DROP/ADD/WITHDRAWAL

A student can drop/add during the drop add period with no penalty. After drop/add, a student who drops will receive a W until the date listed in the academic calendar. After that date, the student may be assigned an “E” (fail). Note: it is the responsibility of the STUDENT to withdraw from a course, not the instructor. Failure to participate/complete the class is NOT a drop.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to check the course Canvas website regularly for announcements, assignment due dates, and other course related information. Attendance is not required, but unexcused absences will negatively affect your class participation grade.

## COURSE EVALUATION

Anonymous course evaluations will be open via UF’s online evaluations system near the end of the semester (<https://evaluations.ufl.edu>). You will receive e-mail notifications of when the evaluations open. Evaluations are stored and reported in a completely anonymous manner. Authentication for evaluation submission is only to ensure that only one evaluation is submitted per student.

## ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

**Academic policies and resources:** <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** Students who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. Requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565; [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Please contact the DRC or your instructor as early as possible in the semester to ensure that you receive the necessary accommodations.

**Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be notified of specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### **Academic Integrity**

UF students are bound by **The Honor Pledge** which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

**U Matter, We Care:** If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

**Counseling and Wellness Center:** <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

**Sexual Assault Recovery Services:** Student Health Care Center, 392-1161. University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

*E-learning technical support*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>. Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

*Library Support:* <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center:* Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/> Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

**Basic Needs:** Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support – see <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu>. Please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so, and visit The **Field and Fork Pantry** <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu> for additional resources. The **Molm Family Gator Career Closet** ([link](#)) alleviates the financial strain of purchasing professional clothing for career fairs, interviews, and the workplace. This service is available to all University of Florida students with a valid UF ID and UF alumni up to one year after graduation.

**Recording lectures:** Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student