

BSC 1920 – FYI: First Year Introduction to Biology at UF

Sections 016F, 0952, 096H

Syllabus for Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00am-1:00pm or by appointment (email to set up)

Course Objectives & Policies

Objectives:

As you begin your career as an undergraduate student at UF, this course provides an introduction to the field of biology and UF resources specific to that discipline. It is expected that this course will be taken the first semester after declaring a biology, zoology, botany (or related) major. In order to encourage interactions between you and the faculty instructor, the class size has been kept small.

We will have discussions about and inquiries into the following topics:

1. The nature of science (hypothesis testing, peer review, grant funding)
2. Accessing the scientific literature
3. Independent undergraduate research
4. Facilities at the university
5. Advising and career resources
6. Library resources and databases
7. Scientific ethics: proper citation of the literature, the ethical use of animals, etc.
8. Opportunities for faculty/student interactions.

We'll use Evolutionary Biology as a thematic area around which to center our discussions.

Textbooks:

There is no required text in this course, but readings will be assigned from books and journal articles; these will be made available electronically through the class Canvas site.

Course Assignments and Grading: Points will be given for good-effort completion of assignments (detailed information on assignments 1-8 can be found on the class Canvas site under the Assignments tab).

Full credit for each assignment requires following instructions on the Canvas site and submitting assignments by the due date and time. Assignments that are more than 1 week late may not be graded. If an assignment is late due to an emergency or illness, contact the instructor **in advance** to make arrangements. Documentation of the illness or situation will be required.

1. Develop an **Academic Plan (or take Advising Quiz)**: Meet with a Biology Advisor and plan 2 years of coursework in your major; an alternative assignment for CLAS majors is to take an advising quiz. (5 pts) *Note: Development of a Career Plan is an alternative to this assignment for students that are close to graduation.*
2. **Annotate 1 Reference**. Keeping track of what you've read and where is a key component of proper citation. Try the annotated bibliography approach to summarizing what you read in a primarily literature source. (5 pts)
3. Create a **Bibliography**: Using the database search engines available at UF and reference software (e.g., EndnoteWeb) as explained in the Library Tutorial, conduct a literature search on a research topic and submit a formatted bibliography. (5 pts)
4. Write a 5-page **Paper** on a topic in Animal Behavior that is listed in the Bibliography Assignment. This is a **REQUIRED ASSIGNMENT** (5 pts).
5. **Review** a classmate's paper (see #4 above). Provide an anonymous, constructive review of a peer's first paper submission. This is a **REQUIRED ASSIGNMENT** (5 pts).
6. Revise your paper based on comments provided during the anonymous review (see #5 above). This is a **REQUIRED ASSIGNMENT** (5 pts).
7. Complete **Animal Care and Use Training**. Online training is required for every person who will have contact with animals in a research (or classroom) setting. Complete the basic online training module *Working with the UF IACUC* (non-VA version). (5 pts)
8. Complete **CHOMP questionnaire**. UF has purchased access to several programs to aid in the discovery of your "best-fit" major and career. These are free resources that help you to set your eyes on a path that will ultimately suit you. (5 pts)
9. **Class Participation**. Participation in class discussions is key to your success of this course, attendance will be documented and participation in class discussions noted. (10 pts total, each missed class is a deduction of 1 participation point). **Arriving more than 20 minutes late will be considered as not attending that class.**

Class discussions

A goal of this course is discussion, and learning to discuss is a critical skill to aid in your college success. Be prepared to participate in the class discussions by completing reading assignments and exercises when assigned. During discussions, recognize that in many respects there is no single answer to a question and much is yet unknown in biology. In class discussions, please be courteous to others and respectful of alternative views. All of you are encouraged to ask either factual or interpretative questions and discuss the assigned reading material. Please refrain from side-bar discussions and distracting behavior.

Grading scale

This is an S/U course, so your performance will be either S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory). To earn an "S" in the course, you must complete all required assignments (i.e., paper, review and paper revision) and earn a total of 37 points via the completion of assignments and participation in the course.

Course policies

Readings should be done in advance of class; you are expected to come ready to discuss the topics. In cases of major medical and/or family emergencies, as officially documented by a letter, students can negotiate an incomplete for the term. Consistent with University policy, Incompletes will revert to E if not completed within 1 term.

University support services

Resources are available on campus to help students meet academic goals and solve personal problems, which may interfere with their academic performance. Such resources include:

1. [UF Counseling and Wellness Center](#), 301 Peabody Hall and Radio Rd Facility, 392-1575, personal and career counseling.
2. [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.
3. [CLAS Academic Advising Center](#), Farrior Hall, 100 Fletcher Drive, 392-1521, provides advise on course selection and course planning to meet graduation requirements

Disability Notice

Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me before the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the [Student Accessibility Services](#) office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.