



## BIOL 4500 – Biology Seminar

### Course Syllabus – Spring 2016

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Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Edgewater Hall 255, (678) 466-5445, [disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu).

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#### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

**Ann Showalter**

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The best way to contact me is via email. If you do not get a response within one business day, assume I did not get your email. I do not always check email on weekends.

#### COURSE DETAILS

**Course title:** BIOL 4500 – Biology Seminar (CRN 20730)

**Classroom location:** Lakeview Discovery and Science Center, Room 155

**Class meeting day and time:** Friday, 2:00pm – 3:50pm

**Textbook:** All required materials will be provided by the professor.

**Credit hours:** 1.0 semester credit hour

**Catalog description:** Experts from industry, government, and academe address current topics in Biology. Students enrolled in the seminar prepare for the talks by performing electronic literature searches and submitting questions for the speakers. This course gives students the opportunity to meet with and question experts in the field. Examinations and projects are based on seminar topics.

**Pre-requisites:**

- BIOL 1108, with a minimum grade of C, and BIOL 1108L, with a minimum grade of C, or BIOL 172, with a minimum grade of C
- BIOL 1107, with a minimum grade of C, and BIOL 1107L, with a minimum grade of C
- CHEM 2412, with a minimum grade of D, and CHEM 2412L, with a minimum grade of D, or CHEM 252, with a minimum grade of D
- MATH 1231, with a minimum grade of C or MATH 231, with a minimum grade of C

## LEARNING GOALS & OUTCOMES

This course is designed to prepare biology majors for their future careers. The primary goals of the course are: (1) to develop strong critical thinking skills and the ability to understand and integrate scientific knowledge as it relates to real-world issues, and (2) to research the requirements for your future career and develop the required documents (e.g., curriculum vitae or resume).

After this course, I want you to be able to:

- Integrate current research in biology related to the problem of feeding the growing human population
- Gain proficiency at reading and understanding scientific literature
- Confidently articulate your ideas in group discussions
- Get a head-start preparing for your career

This course supports outcomes 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7 of the Biology major.

- (1) Effectively demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of major fields of biology.
- (3) Knowledge of physical science, mathematics, and statistics required to support an understanding of biology.
- (5) Demonstrate the ability to collect, evaluate and interpret scientific data, and employ critical thinking to solve problems in biological science and supporting fields.
- (6) Collaborate effectively on team-oriented projects.
- (7) Demonstrate the ability to identify and describe the impact of biological and physical sciences on the environment and society.

## EVALUATION & GRADING

This course is a pass-fail course – you must earn at least 70% of the points in this class to pass. In other words, a passing grade (“S”) is  $\geq 70\%$ , while a failing grade (“U”) is below 70%.

Your grade will be based on the following:

	Points	%
Class participation @ 5 points per week	75	34%
Submission of article summaries @ 5 points per week	45	20%
Leading class discussion	30	14%
Professional development assignments	70	32%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Mid-term progress report:** No mid-term grades will be reported for this course. Students making unsatisfactory progress will be contacted individually by the instructor before mid-term. Students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term, which occurs on March 4. [Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link.](#)

**The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is Friday, March 4, 2016.**

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Class	Topic
Jan 15	Introduction, Reading scientific papers <a href="#">Becoming a professional</a>
Jan 22	Human population growth, Article summaries <a href="#">Creating a CV</a> <b>**Post an example CV</b>
Jan 29	Transgenic crops, Article summaries <a href="#">Get involved!</a>
Feb 5	The Western diet, Article summaries <a href="#">Thinking about your future</a>
Feb 12	CV workshop <b>**CV Draft 1 due</b>
Feb 19	Aquaculture/overfishing <a href="#">How to lead a discussion</a> <b>**Plan to Build Your CV due</b> <b>**CV Draft 2 due</b>
Feb 26	Microbes and our diet (student-led)
Mar 4	LinkedIn workshop <b>**Report on Career Plan &amp; LinkedIn account due</b>
Mar 11	<b>NO CLASS – Spring Break</b>
Mar 18	Invited research presentation (tentative) <b>**Polished LinkedIn profile due</b>
Mar 25	Pesticides/herbicides (student-led) <b>**CV Draft 3 due</b>
Apr 1	Water use (student-led)
Apr 8	Nutrient pollution (student-led)
Apr 15	Loss of biodiversity (student-led)
Apr 22	Final synthesis discussion <b>**CV Final Draft</b> <b>**Meeting with Mentor due</b>
Apr 29	Academic Research Conference

## COURSE POLICIES

1. **Attendance is a required part of your participation grade.** If you miss class for legitimate reasons (e.g., jury duty, etc.), you must contact me immediately. Once I have

documentation from an authority (doctor, judge, etc.) for your absence, the missed points (for participation and any assignments) will not count against you. Regular doctor's appointments (check-ups, etc.) are not valid excuses for missing class. Unexcused absences will result in a zero for participation points on that day.

2. **Show up on-time for class each week.** You will be marked as late if you are more than 5 minutes late for class. You can be late one time during the semester without penalty (a freebie!), but for every other tardy, you will lose 2 participation points for the day. If you are more than 20 minutes late, you will lose 3 participation points for the day. There are no freebies for showing up <20 minutes late to class.

**Class is scheduled for two hours**, and you are expected to remain in class for the full period. Students who leave class early will lose participation points for the day.

3. **Speak up to get a passing participation grade.** Everyone who shows up on time to class starts with a participation grade of 3 out of 5 points (60%). If you speak up only once during discussion, you will get a 4 out of 5 (80%) for participation that day. If you speak up more than once, you will get a 5 out of 5 (100%) for participation that day.

Late penalties will be deducted on top of the points you earn for speaking up in discussion. For example, if you speak up once (4 out of 5 points) and show up 10 minutes late (-2 points), your participation grade for the day will be 2 out of 5 points.

4. **Late policy on posting article summaries.** Article summaries are due on the Thursday before class at 5pm. This is to allow discussion leaders a chance to review your summaries and questions as they prepare for discussion leading. Summaries posted after 5pm on Thursday will be penalized 2pts. Summaries posted after the start of class will receive a grade of zero.

**Late policy on other assignments.** Unless otherwise indicated, all other assignments are due at the start of class. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 10% of the points for each day (i.e., 24 hour period) that the assignment is late. Students who miss class for valid (and documented) reasons are still held to the deadlines for assignments submitted to Dropbox. For example, if you have to miss class because of jury duty, I still expect you to submit your assignments to Dropbox. Exceptions and waivers of late penalties may be made for extenuating circumstances.

5. **Many assignments will be submitted on Dropbox in D2L.** It is your responsibility to ensure that the appropriate documents have been submitted by the deadline. Submit documents as Word (.doc or .docx) files only – I will not accept Pages (sorry Mac users!), PDFs, or Google docs for any assignments. If you submit inappropriate documents (e.g., wrong file format or wrong assignment altogether), you will be subject to late penalties until you post the appropriate file to Dropbox.
6. **Respectful behavior is expected.** This means active listening when I am talking or when another student is talking during class discussions. Inappropriate side-conversations and the inappropriate use of laptops/cell phones is distracting to other students and disrespectful to everyone. This is especially unprofessional (and embarrassing) when we

have outside speakers in class. Students who violate this policy will lose participation points and may be asked to leave the classroom for being disruptive.

7. **Cell phones are not permitted during discussions.** I highly doubt that anyone can carefully read a scientific paper on a cell phone, and if you can't read it well, I highly doubt you can fully participate in a discussion of the paper. Anyone using a cell phone during discussion will lose 3 participation points for the day.
8. **Plagiarism will NOT be tolerated**, and any instances of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary action (see Academic Dishonesty below). Ignorance is not an excuse. I consider your completion of the plagiarism awareness assignment as evidence that you understand the various forms of plagiarism. Completion of this quiz is not optional, as I will not accept any homework assignments until you have completed the quiz. If you are ever in doubt, please ask me (or the Writers' Studio) for help.
9. **Visitors are not permitted without the instructor's permission.** Children are not allowed in the classroom at any time.

## GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### General Policy

Students must abide by policies in the Clayton State University Student Handbook, and the [Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities](#). The Student Handbook is part of the [Academic Catalog and Student Handbook](#), which begins on page 6.

### University Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students' ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

### Academic Dishonesty

Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating and plagiarism. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the [Office of Community Standards](#). Judicial procedures are described beginning on page 19 in the section of the [Academic Catalog and Student Handbook](#) titled, Procedures for Adjudicating Alleged Academic Conduct Infractions.

### Disruption of the Learning Environment

Behavior which disrupts the teaching-learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

More detailed descriptions of examples of disruptive behavior are provided in the Clayton State University [Academic Catalog and Student Handbook](#) starting on page 14.

## COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to:

<http://www.clayton.edu/hub/itpchoice/notebookcomputerpolicy>.

### Software Requirement

To properly access the course content you will need to download the following free software:

- Adobe Reader (needed to access files in PDF format): <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- Adobe Flash (needed to access video content): <http://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/>

### Computer Skill Prerequisites

- Able to use the Windows™ operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word™ word processing
- Able to send and receive e-mail using the Clayton State University e-mail system using Outlook™.
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to use a Web browser.

### In-class Use of Student Notebook Computers

Laptop computers may be used during class, but only for class-appropriate activities. The inappropriate use of laptops WILL result in a loss of participation points.

### GeorgiaVIEW Desire2Learn (Online Classroom)

On-line activity will take place in Desire2Learn, the virtual classroom for the course.

You can gain access to Desire2Learn, by signing on to the SWAN portal and selecting: "D2L" on the top right side. If you experience any difficulties in Desire2Learn, please email or call The HUB at [TheHub@mail.clayton.edu](mailto:TheHub@mail.clayton.edu) or (678) 466-HELP. You will need to provide the date and time of the problem, your SWAN username, the name of the course that you are attempting to access, and your instructor's name.

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**Changes or additions to this syllabus can be made at the discretion of the instructor at any time.**

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*Last update: January 12, 2016*

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