



Biology Seminar (BIOL 4800)

Fri 3:00PM - 4:20PM

Life Science Complex A117

Instructor Information

Dr. Zacchaeus G. Compson

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Office: EESAT 310J

Office Hours: by appointment

Fastest way to reach me: UNT email (above)

Course Description

This seminar course is designed to make students aware of cutting-edge research underway in diverse areas of Biology. Weekly presentations will be made by invited speakers actively engaged in research in Biological Sciences and related areas.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Have an increased awareness of the importance of scientific research.
- Understand scientific methodology, how research is conducted in a scientific manner, including the formation and testing of hypothesis, data collection and interpretation.

Course Requirements

Students enrolled in this course are expected to:

- Arrive to class prior to the start of the seminar and stay for the **entire** presentation, including the discussion that follows the presentation. The seminar is scheduled for **3:00 - 4:20 PM**.
- Pay attention and stay engaged throughout.
- Submit written notes of the seminar to validate attendance and engagement.
- In your submitted notes, include at least one question you have for the seminar speaker each week.

Students are strongly encouraged to ask questions during the discussion that follows the speaker's presentation. In addition, students are encouraged to look over the speaker's website in advance of the seminar, so that they are more familiar with the research subject and thus get more from the presentation.

Attendance

You are allowed only one absence without penalty.

- To validate attendance and engagement, written notes must be submitted to me at the end of seminar – if you fail to submit the notes to me, you will not be counted 'present.'
- Notes will be reviewed for completeness – incomplete notes will not earn credit for attending that seminar. What is required to be deemed 'complete'? To start, you are expected to include the name of the speaker, their professional affiliation, their seminar

title, and something from the introduction given by their host. You must include general information about the objective of the seminar, as well as sufficient details of key points throughout (i.e. hypotheses/objectives, experimental or other research approaches, main results) such that a reader can follow the seminar's progression in your notes. You should include some information from the closing remarks of the speaker, as well as some details from the Q&A at the end of the seminar. Finally, you must include at least one question that you had (this can be included anywhere in the notes, e.g. write it down at the point during seminar that you think of it) as well as what you found to be the most interesting aspect of the seminar.

- For every seminar you miss more than **one** (inclusive of the first day of class), one letter grade will be deducted.
- You may miss two seminars and still earn an A, if you submit a review of a peer-reviewed article published by the speaker whose seminar you missed. The article review can count for one missed attendance. You must contact me by e-mail about the make-up assignment at least by the Tuesday following the absence. Do NOT submit an article review without first contacting me.

Article Review

A written article review can be used as a make-up for **ONE** missed seminar. You may only submit one article review for the semester.

- You must contact me by e-mail no later than Tuesday following the missed seminar – do NOT send an article review without first getting approval from me.
- Select a recent peer-reviewed article published by the speaker whose seminar was missed and send the PDF to me to approve. If approved, proceed with writing the review. If the article is deemed unsuitable, I will help identify alternative articles that would be appropriate.
- Write a review of the article and submit it by e-mail before the stated deadline, which will be determined by me based on the specific circumstances of the absence.
- The *minimum requirements* for credit are 1 page, single-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with standard 1 in. margins. Excessive space at the top of the review and spaces in between paragraphs will not count towards the minimum required length. This assignment is for a scientific audience so you should write appropriately. This means your text should be clear, direct, and concise. Make sure you present the information in your own words - do not copy text directly from the article (i.e. plagiarize) and avoid quoting the article directly. I expect high quality work that demonstrates effort was dedicated to reading and interpreting the article. The review should provide a summary of the main objectives and/or hypotheses, methods, results, and primary interpretations. Complete the review by providing your own thoughts and questions - for example, how did it relate to material presented in your courses to date? What aspects were particularly interesting? What could have been improved? etc.
- You are allowed only **ONE** summary submission during the semester.

Grading

Your final grade is based on **attendance** and an optional **article review**.

Examples of grade scenarios:

- Attend all seminars (or miss only one seminar): Final Grade earned = A
- If you miss 2 seminars AND turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = A
- If you miss 2 seminars AND fail to turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = B
- If you miss 3 seminars AND turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = B
- If you miss 3 seminars AND fail to turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = C
- If you miss 4 seminars AND turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = C
- If you miss 4 seminars AND fail to turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = D
- If you miss 5 seminars AND turn in the review on time: Final Grade earned = D
- 5 misses or more and no review: Final Grade earned = F

Website

Course Information, seminar titles and abstracts will be posted on Canvas. Announcements will also be posted weekly.

ADA Policy

The University of North Texas complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a qualifying disability as defined in the ADA and would like to request accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at (940) 565-4323. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>.