

Zoology Seminar

Zoology 4990

FALL SEMESTER 2016

Instructor: Jonathan Clark (<http://www.weber.edu/jonclark/>)

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Office hours: Monday and Thursday, 1:30 – 3:00 PM, and by appointment

All class communication will be done through your mail.weber.edu e-mail account so please check it regularly.

COURSE FORMAT

Students will read and discuss papers in an informal setting, Fridays, 12:00 PM; TY 240. During each period, a student will provide a summary and lead the discussion on a research paper chosen from a collection provided by the instructor. Each presentation is limited to 20 minutes, with an additional 10 minutes provided for questions and discussion.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The topic under investigation this semester is phylogenetic biology. Everyone is expected to read the week's paper before class and to participate in the discussions by asking questions and offering insights based on previous coursework or experience. We are interested in using the class as a cooperative learning experience where we can all benefit from our collective knowledge. Students will:

- *learn about phylogenetic biology and the methods used to study evolutionary relationships among organisms.*
- *appreciate the importance of phylogeny to understanding biological diversification.*
- *develop their skills in organization and public speaking.*
- *enhance their critical thinking abilities.*

GRADING

The presentation is worth 40 points and will be evaluated by student peers and the instructor for effectiveness. Presenters are required to hand in to the instructor a 2-3 page (typed, double-spaced) summary of their paper; the summary is worth 40 points and is due one week after the presentation. An additional 40 points are available to each student throughout the semester for class participation. To receive maximum credit, students should read each paper carefully and be prepared to demonstrate their understanding of the topic by asking and answering questions.

The final grade, based on 120 points, will use the following scale:

A	93 - 100%	B-	80 - 82%	D+	67 - 69%
A-	90 - 92%	C+	77 - 79%	D	63 - 66%
B+	87 - 89%	C	73 - 76%	D-	60 - 62%
B	83 - 86%	C-	70 - 72%	E	< 60%

EXPECTATIONS

Students are encouraged to view the statement of Student-Faculty Expectations on the Department of Zoology's web site (<http://weber.edu/zoology/stuexpect.htm>).

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
Sept. 2	Introduction – J.C.
Sept. 9	Introduction – J.C
Sept. 16	Student presentations
Sept. 23	Student presentations
Sept. 30	Student presentations
<i>Oct. 7</i>	<i>No Class</i>
Oct. 15	Student presentations
<i>Oct 21</i>	<i>No Class</i>
Oct. 28	Student presentations
Nov. 4	Student presentations
<i>Nov. 11</i>	<i>No Class</i>
Nov. 18	Student presentations
<i>Nov. 25</i>	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class</i>
Dec. 2	Student presentations

Choosing a paper

During the period Sept. 5 – Sept. 9, students should choose the paper (and two alternates) they wish to present. Students should send an e-mail message (jclark1@weber.edu) with their choice and alternate selections. Choices received earliest will be given priority, but there is no relationship between when a request is received and when the presentation will be given). *The deadline for choosing a paper Sept. 9.*

Presentation

Students will be given a detailed handout on how to prepare their presentations.

A note on grading

All classes, regardless of the number of credit hours received, are graded based on the following interpretation of letter grades:

- A: outstanding; excellent
- B: very good; good
- C: average, or slightly above or below average
- D: well below average
- E: not passing

Students expecting to receive an A or A– must come prepared to each class period, not just the class session when they are presenting.