

# BIO 491 – Seminar in Biological Sciences

## Course Syllabus

### Fall 2016

**Place:** Ross 1010

**Time:** Fridays. Seminars begin promptly at 3:35pm and end when the Speaker has finished taking questions from the audience (typically ~4:30pm).

Go to <http://www.unco.edu/nhs/biology/documents/seminar.pdf> to view the schedule of speakers.

**Faculty:** Dr. Nicholas Pullen

**Office Location:** Ross Hall 2536

**Office Hours:** M 3:40PM-4:40PM, W/R 9:30-10:30

**Office Phone:** 970-351-1843

**email:** [nicholas.pullen@unco.edu](mailto:nicholas.pullen@unco.edu)

#### Course Description from the [2016-2017 Undergraduate Catalog](#)

(1 lecture) Invited speakers will present research topics in content biology and biology education. Graduate students will also present final defenses of their theses or dissertations. Repeatable but maximum 1 credit counts toward upper division BIO electives. S/U graded.

#### Course Objectives

With successful completion of this course, students will have:

- Received exposure to current, basic research in various biological disciplines.
- Demonstrated the ability to: summarize seminar content, brainstorm suggestions for future research direction, and critique the effectiveness of seminar delivery.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Text:** None

#### Technology Use Expectations

All assignments must be submitted through Blackboard (do not email work). You can access your Blackboard courses by going to <http://unco.blackboard.com>.

Messages sent to your UNC email account and/or posted to any other university-sponsored system, such as Blackboard, are considered official communication. Please be attentive to these resources. If you send a message to me, use your UNC account – for good reasons external email domains (*e.g.* hotmail, yahoo, etc.) are often blocked. I will not get a message zapped by the spam filter. Additionally, you are expected to use clickers as part of your participation in class (more on this below).

#### Seminar Conduct

UNC policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed.

Please turn off your cell phone and silence any other portable device during seminar. It's okay to have your computer/tablet out for notetaking.

Essential to the seminar format is question time at the end of the presentation. Please feel free to ask questions! It can help you write your summary.

#### Attendance

You are expected to attend all seminars and attendance will be taken every week. Please discuss any conflicts in advance with me. One unexcused absence does not affect your grade. Accruing two unexcused absences results in a 10-point reduction. **More than TWO** unexcused absences will result in a 'U' grade, regardless of whether sufficient points are earned (see 'Grading Policy' below).

## Assignments:

### Students must complete a written summary after EVERY seminar.

A one-page (double-spaced in 12-point font, 1” margins) abstract of each seminar is required (about 250-words). While you are listening to the seminar, take notes, with attention to the following:

1. Name and affiliation (*i.e.*, school and department) of the speaker.
2. What question(s) were the researcher’s asking (*i.e.*, what was the research about)?
3. A summary of the findings (*i.e.*, what were the results/how did their data answer the research questions?
4. Suggest what the next step should be; what questions should the researchers answer next? (This should be creative and not just a regurgitation of what the speaker says is next – integrate your own thinking and feedback from the audience during question time.)
5. In a couple sentences provide your impression of the seminar (*e.g.*, speaker’s presentation style, clarity, what you liked/didn’t like, etc.).

Each week, the summary of the previous week’s seminar is due to me by **NOON on Wednesday**. These should be submitted through SafeAssign on Blackboard. Do not email your summary to me.

### Personal Connection Paper

This is a more in-depth reflection on one of the seminars; which one is up to you. Feel free to meet with me if you have any concerns or questions as you do this. Write a two-page (double spaced in 12-point font, 1” margins) paper on how that particular topic connects with your scholarly and/or career interests. For example, perhaps an allergist comes to talk about genetic factors predisposing some people to asthma versus others, and clinical biomarkers that can help make such predictions. How, as a pre-med student, might this affect your outlook on a career as a physician, or in research? Maybe you are interested in ecology, and one of the speakers presents an intriguing math model. How does that affect your research outlook (interests, applications, etc.)? I also want to see you include current literature in your reflection with at least three peer-reviewed primary references cited in the style example below:

Author names (Last Name, First and Middle Initials). Year. Article title. *Full Journal Title*. Volume: page range.

For example:

Doe JA, Smith JB, Rex T. 2016. Visual acuity of Tyrannosaurus when viewing unidentifiable prey. *The Journal of Intrepid Dinosaurology*. 1: 1-10.

This paper is due by **NOON Friday, December 9**, uploaded into Blackboard only.

### Evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points Total</i>
Summaries (12x10-points)	120 → <b>(one freebie!)</b>
Personal Connection Paper	40

### Grade Breakdown

Grades are reported on the basis of percentage of points earned:

60-100%	S
< 60%	U

### Academic Integrity

As members of a scholarly community dedicated to healthy intellectual development, students and faculty are expected to share the responsibility for maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work. All submitted material for this course must be your work and no one else’s.

Cheating or plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, copying someone else's work and using banned material while taking exams. The penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a zero for the course.

Explore this resource, produced by UNC Libraries, to learn more about plagiarism:  
<http://libguides.unco.edu/plagiarism>.

*Honor Code:* all members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

### **Disabilities**

Students who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (970) 351-2289 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

### **Library Services**

For assistance with biology library resources feel free to communicate with the biology subject librarian:

Annie Epperson

[annie.epperson@unco.edu](mailto:annie.epperson@unco.edu)

970-351-1535

Ms. Epperson also runs many science research guides, [found here](#).

### **Some Other Important Dates**

Add Deadline on URSA: 08/26/2016

Drop Deadline on URSA: 09/02/2016

Course Withdrawal Deadline: 10/13/2016

National Talk Like a Pirate Day: 09/19/2016

Daylight Saving Time Ends: 11/06/2016

