Seminar Syllabus - Fall 2014

Geological Sciences
Univ. of Texas at El Paso

Instructor: Aaron A. Velasco
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GEOL 5101

Th., 3:30 - 4:30 pm, rm. 123
Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Goals and Objectives:
The main goals of the seminar is to 1) expose students to leading edge geoscience through presentations from experts, 2) prepare students for professional meetings, 3) and learn professional conduct in a formal setting.

Professional Conduct:
To align with the goals of this course, you will be expected to: 1) show up on time, 2) be engaged in the guest lectures, 3) not leave until the end of the lecture and questions, and 4) not miss any seminars.

Grades and Grading:
Grades will be calculated attendance (70%) and writing assignments (30%). I must clear any absence prior to missing any seminar. The only excuses for missing a lecture will be attendance/presentation at a professional conference, and/or a required attendance from a course you are currently taking (e.g., a field trip). You will be allowed two (2) excused absences for the semester.

One-Page Summaries:
You will be expected to write a summary of three (3) talks for the semester (of your choice), due one week after the speaker presentation. The one-page summaries must be in your own words, and must follow the following format:

1. Header Information: Title of talk, speaker name, your name
2. First Paragraph: Talk Emphasis
   • What: State the topic.
   • Why: State why the topic is an important problem to study.
   • Key Assumptions: Specify the key assumptions in the talk.
• How: Outline the speakers’ approach to the problem.

3. Second Paragraph - Reviewer Comments
• Analysis and Results: Describe whether the analysis was thorough. If so, why? If not, why not?
• Discussion: Are the new results placed in proper context to other results from other research? What are the implications of the new results?
• Conclusions: Do their results support their conclusion(s)? If not, why not? If so, please state what made the evidence compelling.

This exercise is intended for students to develop strong writing skills and to critically analyze talks.