

SEMINAR (BIOL 5130) – FALL 2021

Instructor: Jeffrey T. Olimpo, Ph.D.

Office Hours: Scheduled by appointment only (held via Zoom)

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COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES

This seminar course is intended to provide students with exposure to current topics in the biosciences and bioeducation fields. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Create and present an oral talk focused on their anticipated or current thesis/dissertation research
- Describe the relevancy of one or more seminar topics to both their understanding of those topics as well as how those topics apply to their own professional practice/development

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As members of a scholarly community dedicated to healthy intellectual development, students and faculty are expected to share the responsibility of maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work. All 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 on an assignment. Please note that all suspected instances of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be referred to the Dean of Students Office, in accordance with UTEP policies and procedures.

The honor code also states that all members of the UTEP 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 UTEP 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.

COMMUNICATIONS

When you e-mail me, please include a proper subject, any message you are responding to, the course name, as well as your name. Please use your UTEP account to ensure the e-mail is not blocked by the university's spam filter. If you e-mail me directly from our Blackboard course, essential information like the course name and section will automatically be included. I will do my best to respond to your e-mail within 48 hours. If you do not receive a response from me within this timeframe, I ask that you please re-send your e-mail. Ensure that you regularly check the e-mail account listed for you in Blackboard, as this is where I will send all communications.

CENTER FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations must be registered with the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) Office in Room 106 of the Union East Bldg. You may contact

them at (915) 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu for more information. Once you are registered with the CASS Office, I ask that you please schedule a time to meet with me so that we may have a private conversation to discuss accommodations, as recommended by CASS.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The IT Support Team can assist with Blackboard, password resets, and student e-mail accounts. Hours and other helpful information can be found at <http://www.helpdesk.utep.edu>.

COURSE GRADING & EXPECTATIONS

COURSE GRADING:

- Seminar Attendance 75% (one “free pass”)
- Thesis/Dissertation Research Presentation 15%
- Summary of Selected Seminar Talk 5%
- Application of Seminar Talk to Your Prof. Dev. 5%

A = 90 - 100%	D = 60 - 69%
B = 80 - 89%	F = <60%
C = 70 - 79%	

Please note that the “+/-” grading system will *not* be used in this course as per departmental and university policies.

SEMINAR ATTENDANCE

Your attendance at all seminars is expected. With the exception of the orientation scheduled for 9/3/2021, it is anticipated that all seminars will be delivered virtually (see the *Tentative Seminar Schedule* at the end of this syllabus). A link to these virtual sessions will be distributed via e-mail early in the semester. Please note that you are allowed one “free pass” (i.e., you may choose not to attend one seminar without penalty). In order to be considered in attendance, you must be present for the entirety of the seminar. Otherwise, you will not receive credit for that session.

BLACKBOARD

Please be advised that we will make use of Blackboard® (<https://adminapps.utep.edu/blackboardlearn>) this semester. Specifically, you will use Blackboard to access and submit assignments as well as check your grades. Please note that your login and password are the same as you would use to access your UTEP e-mail account.

THESIS/DISSERTATION RESEARCH PRESENTATION

In an effort to provide you with an opportunity to learn more about the work of your peers, I ask that you please prepare a short talk focused on your anticipated or current thesis/dissertation project. Please use the template found under the “Assignments” link on our Blackboard site to prepare your presentation. All

presentations will be delivered on **Friday, Sept. 24th**, and you will receive feedback on your work from both your classmates and faculty in the department. Please plan for your talk to be 5 – 7 min. in length with approximately 3 – 5 min. for questions/discussion.

SUMMARY OF SELECTED RESEARCH TALK

For a seminar of your choice, please write a summary of at least 500 words in length that describes the central research questions and motivations for the work performed; the study design and methods used, including why those methods are appropriate given the focus of the work; the major findings; and the implications of those findings to one or more communities of practice. Your summary must be written in narrative form (i.e., no bullet points/lists of information) and should be understandable to those outside of the field in which the research was performed. **Please note that you only need to write one summary, and you should please upload that summary to the “Assignments” section of our Blackboard site no later than 11:59pm (MT) on Friday, Dec. 3rd.**

APPLICATION OF SELECTED RESEARCH TALK TO YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

You will be exposed to a diverse array of topics this semester, including those in the biological sciences and biology education fields. For this assignment, you will choose one seminar and write a short (500 words) reflection describing how the content presented in the seminar could be applied to your own professional practice and development. For instance, you may hear about a new technique that you feel you can apply to your own research. Alternatively, if you are interested in pursuing a career in academia, one of the talks may have inspired you to think more deeply about how you might engage with students in that type of career. **Please note that you only need to write one reflection, and you should please upload that reflection to the “Assignments” section of our Blackboard site no later than 11:59pm (MT) on Friday, Dec. 3rd. Please also note that you may *not* select the same seminar here as you did for the “summary” assignment detailed above.**

TENTATIVE SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Wk.	Date	Seminar Topic (Facilitator)
1	Aug. 27	Graduate Student Orientation (R. Aguilera)
2	Sept. 3	BIOL 5130 Orientation (J. Olimpo)
3	Sept. 10	~~ NO SEMINAR ~~
4	Sept. 17	EEB Tenure and Promotion Talk (P. Lavretsky)
5	Sept. 24	Student Thesis/Dissertation Research Talks (J. Olimpo)
6	Oct. 1	Logic and Critical Thinking in STEM (M. Imad)
7	Oct. 8	RISE Seminar (R. Aguilera)
8	Oct. 15	Science and Civic Engagement (L. Corwin)
9	Oct. 22	Neurobiology (M. Chee)
10	Oct. 29	Microbial Pathogenicity (D. Smyth)
11	Nov. 5	CUREs Across the Curriculum (K. McDonald)

Wk.	Date	Seminar Topic (Facilitator)
12	Nov. 12	Genetics and Developmental Biology (R. Lyczak)
13	Nov. 19	Cell Biology/Biochemistry (L. Diaz-Martinez)
14	Nov. 26	~~ THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY ~~
15	Dec. 3	~~ DEAD DAY ~~