

Lecture: 9 9:50 AM, M-W-F, BSC 2022

Lab:

Section A: Mondays 12:00 - 2:50 PM, BSC 1085

Section B: Tuesdays 9:30 AM - 12:20 PM, BC 1085

Instructor: Jim Loughry

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Office Hours: 10:00 - 11:00 AM, W and F or any other time by appointment

TEXT: *Animal Behavior* by S. E. Nordell and T. J. Valone, Oxford University Press, 2014.

COURSE GOALS: This course deals with animals and what they do (or don't do), how one goes about studying behavior, and the kinds of conceptual problems that arise from such study. Educational outcomes associated with this course include numbers 1, 2 and 5 as specified by the VSU Biology Department and numbers 3, 4, 5 and 7 of the general outcomes specified by the University.

EXAMS: There will be 3 exams in this course. The exams will each cover 1/3 of the lecture and reading material. Exams will be essay, and each will be worth 100 points. In addition, there will be an optional 100 point final exam. Assuming you opt to turn in a term paper or project (see below), then if you take the final I will drop the lowest of your four exam scores in calculating your final grade. Thus, you wind up with 400 potential points from the exams, but only 300 points will count. However, if you opt not to do a term paper or project, then you will have to take the final exam.

MAKE-UPS: Because the final is optional and can make up for a previous exam, there will be **NO** make-ups for any of the first three exams. If you miss one, for whatever reason, that will represent your dropped exam and you will have to take the final. Not only that, but you will also have to do a term paper or project. This policy has a couple of important implications: (1) you better not miss more than one exam, and (2) there is some incentive in taking the first three exams and thus possibly avoiding the final.

LABS: A tentative lab schedule is outlined below. Attendance in lab each week is mandatory. Initial labs in this course will prepare you to obtain and analyze behavioral data. Later labs will try to test hypotheses about certain aspects of behavior. You will choose two of these labs to write up in the format of a scientific paper (these labs are indicated by an * on the lab schedule). The first lab write-up will be worth 30 points and the second one will be worth 50 points. You will have to indicate on the day of the lab whether or not you will be writing it up. You then have 2 weeks from that day to turn in your report. If something else comes up, you have 1 week (i.e., the next lab period) to change your mind. After that, you are required to turn in the lab report you signed up for and failure to do so will be penalized accordingly (see below). In addition to the lab reports, there will be a handful of additional short lab assignments. In total, these assignments will be worth 50 points, so the total of all points from the laboratory part of the course is 130.

ESSAYS: You will be given 5 essay questions during the semester. Each deals with a general,

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If everyone in the class scores above 90%, then everyone will get an A. If no one scores above 90%, then I may adjust the cut-offs downward.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE:

EXAM DATES:

Readings in Text

EXAM 1	February 17	Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5
EXAM 2	March 31	Chapters 2, 7, 8, 9, 10
EXAM 3	May 5	Chapters 6, 11, 12, 13, 14

FINAL EXAM: 8:00-10:00 AM, Thursday, May 8 (optional)

TENTATIVE LAB SCHEDULE:

Week of	Topic
January	13 NO LAB
	20 MLK Holiday: NO LAB
	27 Observational Methods 1/Ethogram
February	3 Observational Methods 2/Reliability
	10 Data analysis
	17 Behavioral Syndromes*
	24 Space Use*
March	3 Game Theory*
	10 Communication*
	17 Spring Break: NO LAB
	24 Antipredator Behavior*
	31 Social Organization*
April	7 Optimal Foraging*
	14 Mate Choice*

21 Vigilance*

28 Behavior of Captive Animals

* Can be used as lab report write-up. Please be aware that due to vagaries of weather and animal activity, the schedule above is extremely tentative and subject to substantial re-arrangement. You will be given as much advance notice as possible about any changes.