

**BIOL 4900: Senior Seminar**  
**Fall Semester 2020, Section A (CRN# 23641), 1 Credit hour (0-3-1)**  
**Department of Biology, College of Science & Math, Valdosta State University**

**Section A (BC 1202): T 5:00 – 6:50 p.m.**

**Biology Seminar (BC 1023; TBA via Blazevue): T 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.**

**Instructor: Dr. Brian C. Ring**

and images on your topic. **Failure to give a presentation will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory for the course (U).**

**4. Major Fields Test:** You must contact the VSU Testing Office located in Powell Hall (North entrance to Bailey Science Center) to schedule a day and time to take the Biology Major Fields Test (MFT). A score of at least 140 is required to achieve a grade of Satisfactory. You must take the MFT by no later than mid-term (**Thursday, October 8, 2020**). If you score less than 140, you must continue to re-take the test until you reach 140. The Biology Department will pay for your initial test; you are responsible for all fees associated with retaking the test thereafter. No scores on the MFT we leave for Thanksgiving and return online only. **If I have not received a score of 140 or more for you by that time, you will receive an Unsatisfactory for the course (U).**

**ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Students are expected to attend all scheduled meetings (below); any student who cannot attend one or more sessions should discuss this with the instructor prior to the absence. It is expected that all members of the class will participate in a brief discussion after each presentation is given. Therefore, be prepared to ask meaningful questions, critique the quality of the material presented and raise meaningful issues related to the topic discussed.

**COURSE GRADE:**

Annotated Bibliography	+10
Outline	+10
Rough Draft	+15
Final Paper	+35
Presentation	+30
TOTAL	100 points
Each absence from scheduled class	-10
Failure to score 140 or higher on Major Field Test	-40
Failure to attend Biology Science Seminars &/or online talks	-40

OVERALL: Satisfactory (S)  $\geq$  70% of points or Unsatisfactory (U)  $<$ 70%

NOTE: Failure to provide a Bibliography, outline, and/or Rough Draft by the due dates will not allow your professor to help you prepare for the final paper and presentation and will affect your overall grade.

**Format of the Written Paper**

This document may not exceed 15 double-spaced, typed pages (12 point font), excluding figures, tables and bibliography. The following format is suggested and should adhere to the outline and annotated bibliographies you already produced:

1. Main body of the paper
  - A. Introduce the topic
  - B. Present concepts and theories relevant to the topic
  - C. Define key terms
  - D. Present basic information gained by past and present research on the topic
  - E. Discuss experimental procedures involved in gaining information on the topic
  - F. Discuss controversial issues and changes (if any) on your topic

The main body of the paper may be organized in any way that is appropriate so long as you prepare a proper **outline** before you start your **rough draft**. You can use an historical approach, present basic theory with supporting research results or focus on controversy associated with competing ideas/theories. The way in which the paper is written depends largely on the student's perspective of the topic. If there are any questions, please consult the instructor before starting to write.

When researching information, you must use review articles, books, and professional peer reviewed journals which provide research results central to the topic examined. The Literature Cited section (see below) must include AT LEAST 10 references (more is better) appropriately cited in the body of the manuscript; at least 7 of these references must be scientific articles from peer-reviewed journals of original research (e.g. not review papers).

2. Summary

The summary should *briefly* restate the major points in the body of the paper and not present any new information. It should not exceed two paragraphs in length. No references should be cited in the summary. The summary is, in a sense, the equivalent of the abstract of a review/research paper.

### 3. Literature Cited

All sources of information used in the paper should be cited. In the body of the paper citations should follow either of the following common APA formats:

Johnson (1995) found that *Bufo valiceps* eggs were tolerant to 3 ppt NaCl for up to eight days.

*Bufo valiceps* eggs were tolerant to 3 ppt NaCl for up to eight days (Johnson 1995).

*Bufo valiceps* eggs were tolerant to 5 ppt NaCl for up to eight days in two different studies (Harrington et al. 1995, Hampton & Ralph 1996).

References in the literature cited section should be listed in the same format as APA style, see this website for tutorials: <http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/index.htm>

**Special notes to students:** The VSU Biology Department Plagiarism Policy (<http://www.valdosta.edu/biology/>) will be discussed in class with each student's signed receipt of acknowledgement due thereafter. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.

