

# Senior Seminar BSC4931 - U02 Syllabus Fall 2016

**Instructor:** Dr. (Claudia) Ligia Collado-Vides

Office: MMC- OE 211

Date: August 22<sup>nd</sup> – December 10<sup>th</sup> 2016

Location: MMC – AHC-4- 302

Schedule: Tuesday 9:30-10:45

Office Hours at MMC OE 211

**ONLY by appointment email me at [colladol@fiu.edu](mailto:colladol@fiu.edu)**

M 11:00 AM- 1:00 PM

T 3:00 – 5:00 PM

**Class will close the doors 15 minutes after the hour. I mean it, no students will be allowed in class if arrived 15 minutes late.**

## Introduction

This is a seminar designed for B.S in Biology and Marine Biology seniors that are getting ready to start their professional career or apply to graduate or professional schools. The course is a capstone and only senior students should take this seminar.

Prerequisite: Senior standing Prerequisites or Co/requisites: PCB3043, PCB3063, PCB4023, and PCB4674

## Description of the course dynamics and structure

Education, the process of transmitting knowledge values and information, is going through a transformation from a teaching oriented process towards an active learning process where students will have an active, challenging participation in class. It has been discussed and results indicate that knowledge is better retained and used by students when acquired through an active participatory learning rather than a passive receptive process (Fink 2003).

Following those findings, this course is centered in an active learning rather than a passive-teaching process. The structure of the course is designed to motivate and engage students in active learning processes promoting critical thinking through the solution of concrete problems. The seminar will be composed of: in-class group activities including the reading and provide constructive feedback to fellow students, and home assignments. The main home assignment consists of a Research Paper submitted at the end of the semester and presented as a Scientific Presentation in class.

## Objectives

To provide senior biology majors, professional presentation tools to integrate the skills learned during their undergraduate studies and prepare them for advancement either to graduate school or in job seeking.

## Learning outcomes

1. To evaluate academic products based on defined objectives.
2. To write a clear and articulate research paper, including the proper use of references. To produce a 250 word abstract of their research paper.
3. To present scientific research paper in the form of an oral presentation (PowerPoint presentation) worthy of a scientific meeting or job talk.
4. To be able to write a Curriculum Vitae (~ *resume*) and a cover letter.

## Assignment guidelines

### Paper Guidelines:

- The paper should be 10-12 pages of double-spaced text + figures, maps and tables as needed
- Must include a minimum reference list of 10 citations, all 10 must be scientific papers. You may use websites but they do not count for the MINIMUM of 10 peer review papers. References should be presented following the format of the American Society of Botany (see below).
- Please number pages and use 12-point font, Times New Roman
- Your paper must be submitted to turnitin.com for an authenticity check before it will be graded. You will find a link in your Blackboard website that is lined to Turnitin. If any of the paper is **plagiarized**, you will get a 0 for the assignment and you will fail the class. REMEMBER: You must cite and paraphrase all work appropriately, otherwise its plagiarism (= *the wrongful appropriation and publication as one's own, of the ideas or the expression of the ideas of another*).

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*The topic:*

You have two different choices:

- 1- Select a scientist that her/his discoveries have strong legacy in human society: The life and legacy of a scientist.
- 2- Select a scientific topic of global relevance: How a scientific discovery can change the world.

*The sections of your essay*

Abstract  
Introduction  
Chapters-Sections  
Discussion  
Conclusions  
References  
Tables and Figures

### Taking notes from peer review literature:

A bullet type set of notes will be submitted for each one of the 10 references that will be used for your research paper. The notes have to be uploaded as a word document on Blackboard using the Turnitin application. Students will provide a document for each one of the 10 papers that will be used as reference for their research paper following the schedule for the corresponding

paper, and strictly following the rubric. NO EMAIL VERSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. The notes will have to include your name, PI and a proper title of the paper and the reading number. See example below

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Your PI \_\_\_\_\_

Format references following those used by “**The American Journal of Botany**”:

SALMENA L., J. H. POLISENO, Y. TAY, AND P. P. PANDOLFI. 2011. A *ceRNA* hypothesis: The rosetta stone of a hidden RNA language? *Cell* 146: 353-358.

(NB: References are single spaced within the reference, double spaced between references.)

Within the text, cite as: (Salmena et al., 2010), or Salmena et al., (2010)

If it is two authors only, both last names are used: (Balcazar and Douge 2011) or Balcazr and Douge (2011).

### **Assessment tools and grading scales**

Your grade will be a combination of self-evaluation, peer evaluation and instructor evaluation. Be ready to define objectives for each class and evaluate your achievement. Be open-minded and learn how to evaluate your peers. You will use a rubric every single class to evaluate the work of your peers.

**Research paper:** 45%

**Literature Notes:** 15%

**Résumé and Cover Letter:** 15%

**Peer Evaluations:** 25%

Grade scale:

90-100 A, 89-80 B, 79-70 C, 60-69 D-, <60 F.

### **Course expectations:**

Regular class attendance is **mandatory** as is **appearance on time**. No cell phones or beepers are tolerated during class. Students are expected to have finished their reading assignment prior to each class and also are expected to utilize the online learning facilities provided by the instructor. Students are expected to work in groups and use internet tools in class.

### **Highly recommended book**

Pechenik, J. 2010. A Short Guide to Writing About Biology, 7th ed., Pearson-Longman.

**Instructor Communication:** All instructor communication and announcements will be done by email and through the blackboard section of the course web site. Only students' FIU email address will be used. If students do not use their FIU email account, use the easy to set up automatic mail forwarding option to the email account you are using regularly.

**Students are required to maintain a functional FIU email account and to observe the “News” web page.** Emails that are returned due to “over quota” email accounts will not be re-

sent. All email from students must contain "**Senior Seminar**" in the subject line; student emails without proper subject line and without the student's **name** will **not** be answered!

Sexual harassment policy: FIU is committed to eliminating sexual harassment. In accordance with the FIU Faculty Senate guidelines, this syllabus includes a warning that any misconduct will be reported.

Academic misconduct: FIU is committed to not tolerating any academic misconduct by students. In accordance with the FIU Faculty Senate guidelines, this syllabus includes a warning that any academic misconduct, particularly cheating in exams, will be reported and penalized.

**ALWAYS STAY INFORMED!**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND UPDATES CHECK OUT THE COURSE WEBCT SITE.**