Journal Colloquium in Environmental Science
SWS6920 – 1 credit

Term: Fall/Spring

Instructors: Dr. P.W. Inglett
            Dr. K.S. Inglett
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            Phone: 294-3164
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            Hours: T/TH 3:00-5:00pm
            Hours: W/F 9:00-10:00am

Class Meeting: Biweekly for 2 hours, time and place TBD each semester

Course Description/Objectives: A discussion-based course to help graduate students in environmental science fields develop skills for critical analysis of literature while exploring current literature topics. After completing this course, students should be able to identify the purpose of scientific literature and the basic structure of journal articles, and critically evaluate a scientific paper on the basis of the rationale, approach, methodology, conclusions and overall significance of the work. All students are required to lead a discussion of one paper, contribute to the discussion of every paper, and complete a review of a sample journal manuscript.

Course Format: Discussion

Pre-Requisites: Environmental science/earth system science course or consent of the instructor

Course Texts: There is no required text for the course. Each semester, current journal articles will be selected for presentation and discussion. The following are suggested readings that will be covered throughout the course.


Sample papers:


**Attendance and participation:** Attendance at the 6 bi-weekly discussion sessions is required. Students must also be prepared by having read the paper for the week and voluntarily contribute to the discussion.

**Paper presentation:** Each student will choose a suitable paper (not a review article) from a major environmental science journal published during the last 3 months (approved by instructors). Appropriate journals would include, e.g., Nature, Science, Biogeochemistry, Global Change Biology, Limnology and Oceanography, Soil Biology and Biochemistry, Ecosystems and Environmental Science and Technology. Several potential articles should be selected by each student and submitted for approval and selection of the final class article no later than 10 days before the student’s assigned discussion period.

On the assigned date, students will lead the discussion of their approved paper. Students will be assessed on their ability to explain and dissect the paper and stimulate discussion of the paper’s scientific importance, author intent, study flaws and merits as follows:

I. 25% - Introduction/background summary
   a. rationale explanation
   b. objectives description
   c. hypotheses evaluation

II. 25% - Experimental approach
   a. design overview related to hypotheses
   b. methods evaluation
   c. statistics results related to hypotheses tests

III. 25% - Results/findings
    a. evaluation of results for each objective
    b. conclusions corresponding to hypotheses
    c. evaluate (accept/reject) authors findings

IV. 25% - Overall significance/implications
    a. discuss potential applications
    b. description of intellectual merit/scientific "nugget"

**Practice manuscript review:** Students will gain experience in the peer review process by providing comments on a sample paper submitted for journal review. This includes evaluation of approach, methods, significance, results, interpretation, and conclusions, as well as language usage and grammar.

**Make-up Exams/Assignments:** All assignments will be assigned in advance, with ample time for completion. Students are not permitted to miss discussions except for approved and documented absences (hospitalization, death of family member, etc.) in accordance with the University policy on absences: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx.

**Grading System:**
Course Component | # Items | Total Points | % of Grade
--- | --- | --- | ---
Attendance | 7 | 60 | 20
Discussion session participation | 6 | 60 | 20
Paper presentation | 1 | 120 | 40
Manuscript review | 1 | 60 | 20

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter Grade</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>Grade Point</td>
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*Point values determined after rounding to nearest whole number.

**Class Demeanor:** Students are expected to compose themselves in an adult and professional manner and give complete consideration for the professor and fellow students. This includes using appropriate language in course correspondence, being on time, silencing cell phones, and displaying respectful behavior in discussion sessions.

**Academic Honesty:** As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g., assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: [https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scfr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scfr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/)

**Software Use:** All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

**Campus Resources:**
Health and Wellness:
• U Matter, We Care  www.umatter.ufl.edu/: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
• Counseling and Wellness Center:  http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
• Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.
• University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). http://www.police.ufl.edu/

Academic Resources:
• E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learningsupport@ufl.edu. https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml.
• Library Support, http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
• Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/

Services for Students with Disabilities: The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at: https://evaluations.ufl.edu Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at: https://evaluations.ufl.edu

Schedule of topics:

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<tr>
<th>Date*</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Intro, Sample Paper</td>
<td>Drs. Inglett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>1st paper discussion</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<td>Session 3</td>
<td>2nd paper discussion</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<td>Session 4</td>
<td>3rd paper discussion</td>
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<td>Session 5</td>
<td>4th paper discussion</td>
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<td>Session 6</td>
<td>5th paper discussion</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<td>Session 7</td>
<td>Course summary, discussion of manuscript reviews</td>
<td>Drs. Inglett</td>
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*Dates TBD each semester*