

Course objectives: The primary focus of this course is to develop further the skills necessary to search, understand, synthesize, discuss, and present (written and oral) the published literature on current topics in biology. Key objectives this semester are to help students speak more spontaneously, instinctively and directly with their audience, and to learn how to adapt the level of complexity of a presentation for different audiences. We will also take our skills to our community; this will be a core component of the course and will be facilitated by *Community Engaged Learning at Western*. An alternative to this work, students will be allowed to work on campus and interview a professor of the biology department. Also, in keeping with the above goals, active and engaged participation in class by all students is an essential part of this course. Class attendance is mandatory.

Instructor Dr. Graeme Taylor E-mail: gtaylor8@uwo.ca Office: Rm. BGS 2066

Time: Tuesday 2:30pm – 5:30 pm

Location: WIRB 1120

Prerequisites: Restricted to year 4 Honors Specialization in biology and scholars electives.

Office hours: Send an e-mail to Dr. Taylor from your UWO account and we can arrange a mutually convenient time.

Course website: An OWL website will be established for this course. Items posted to this website include required readings, announcements, grades, useful URLs, and assignment instructions.

Course Assessment: Students will be evaluated on three ‘modules’, each of which is worth 30% of the final course grade: (i) Flame Challenge (FC) (ii) Pamphlet, and (iii) Community Engaged Learning (CEL). A further 10% of the course grade will be for weekly reports on your CEL development, Leadership and Participation.

Course schedule:

Date	Scheduled Topics	Written Assignment Due	Assignment value
Jan 8	Introductions, CEL, Essay Assignment		
Jan 15	Essay Lecture & Student Talks		
Jan 22	Lecture on Public Speaking	FC essay draft	No grade (-1%)
Jan 29	Student Talks & updates on CEL	FC script for talk	No grade (-1%)
Feb 5	Flame talks	FC essay	15% & 15%
Feb 12	Flame talks (continued)		
Feb 19	Reading Break		
Feb 26	Objectives for PAM (Review work past work)		
Mar 5	Updates on CEL	PAM essay draft	No grade (-1%)
Mar 12	PAM talks	Pamphlet & talk	15%
Mar 19	PAM talks		
Mar 26		CEL draft & script	No grade (-1%)
Apr 2	CEL talks	CEL <i>journal & talk</i>	15% & 15%
Apr 9	CEL talks		

Please note the following instructions and regulations

Prerequisites

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.” (Western Academic Calendar).

Accessibility

Please contact Dr. Taylor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. For specific question regarding academic accommodations please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD): http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/index.html?academic_acc

Deadlines

Assignments are due at the beginning of class (2:30 a.m. on the due date). Submissions after 2:30 a.m. are considered late. Each assignment must be submitted to turnitin.com and handed in as a hardcopy. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day until the percentage of the assignment is used up.

What to do if you miss a class or a due date

When possible, notify Dr. Taylor in advance of the class or due date. Students must follow-up with Dr. Taylor and their Academic Counselling Office in a timely manner.

“Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling Office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, you must provide valid medical or other supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office as soon as possible and contact your instructor immediately. It is the student's responsibility to make alternative arrangements with their instructor once the accommodation has been approved and the instructor has been informed.” (Faculty of Science Dean’s Office).

Please familiarize yourself with Western’s policy on academic accommodation, which can be found here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

A student requiring academic accommodation due to illness should use the Student Medical Certificate [<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf>] when visiting an off-campus medical facility or request a Record's Release Form (located in the Dean's Office) for visits to Student Health Services.

Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea (including an image) or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge using proper referencing such as citations. Please ask Dr. Taylor if you are unsure how to do this! Please note: submitting two assignments on the same topic to two different courses falls within the realm of plagiarism.

Statement on Academic Offences

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.” (Western Academic Calendar).

Using Turnitin.com

“All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).” (Western Academic Calendar).

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

USC Support Services <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Success Centre <http://www.success.uwo.ca/careers/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.” (Western Academic Calendar)

Senate definition for meaning of letter grades.

A+ 90-100 One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level

A 80-89 Superior work which is clearly above average

B 70-79 Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory

C 60-69 Competent work, meeting requirements

D 50-59 Fair work, minimally acceptable

F below 50 Fail