

# Animal Behavior

ZOO 4513 – 3 credit hours

**Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00 pm to 2:20 pm**  
**HEC 117**

**Instructor:** Dr. Melinda Donnelly, room 401A, Biological Sciences Building

Email: [Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu](mailto:Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu)

**\*please put ZOO 4513 in the subject line**

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Fridays 9:00 am to 10:00 am, Mondays, 2:30-3:30 pm

\*Note: Office hours may change/cancel based on my schedule/field work but advance notice of changes will be provided.

**Prerequisites:** PCB 3044; a basic understanding of biology or a year of introductory Biology is required.

**Course Website:** Webcourses ZOO4513-18Spring 0002

## **Email Policies:**

- Include in your email subject: course title (i.e., Animal Behavior) and class number (ZOO4513).
- Include in your email: (1) your full name, (2) course title, and (3) section number (0001).
- I will try to respond within 48 hours, but some response times may be longer. Please plan accordingly by not waiting to the last minute to contact me with questions or concerns.
- Typically, I do not check email in the evenings (after 5 pm) and on weekends
- Due to confidentiality, grades must be discussed in person with the instructor and not via email.
- I will only be able to send e-mail communications to your Knight's E-mail addresses.

## **Course Description and Goals:**

This course is designed to introduce you to the broad field of animal behavior, and to provide you with an understanding of behavior from an evolutionary perspective. Classes will include a combination of lectures and group discussions that will be based on textbook readings (see required text below), as well as scientific papers and readings from the popular press/scientific media. The goal of this course is to expose you to a variety of approaches used to understand animal behavior and to broaden your perspective on the

animal (and human) world around us. Another goal of this class is to help you develop a critical approach to understanding the science behind animal behavior studies.

**Required texts and resources:**

Additional readings and other materials will be provided by the instructor online (via webcourses) or in class.

**Textbooks (required):**

Alcock, J. (2013) *Animal Behavior: An Evolutionary Approach*, Tenth Edition. Sinauer Associates, Inc. Sunderland, MA. ISBN: 978-0-87893-966-4.

**Webcourses:** Animal Behavior is a web-enhanced class. Announcements, lecture notes, quizzes, grades, additional readings, and relevant web links will be made available at this site. Use your NID and myUCF password to log in. Before emailing your instructor, please check this site for frequently asked questions or announcements!

**Other Resources:**

The UCF Library has an animal behavior resource page available at <http://guides.ucf.edu/zoo>. Use it!

**Optional texts and books:**

Goodenough, J., B. McGuire, and E. Jakob (2010) *Perspectives on Animal Behavior*, Third Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Hoboken, NJ. ISBN: 978-0-470-04517-6

Sherman, P. and Alcock, J. (2013) *Exploring Animal Behavior: readings from American Scientist*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (paperback). Sinauer Associates, Inc. Sunderland, MA. ISBN: 978-1605351957

**Journals (online via the library):**

*Animal Behaviour*  
*Behavioral Ecology*  
*Ethology*  
*Behavior*

**General Class Information, Expectations, and Assignments:**

Monday classes will be primarily reserved for lecture material. Wednesday classes will focus on lecture material with time dedicated for group discussions or presentations. You will be expected to actively participate in the class and you are responsible for learning any material that you may have missed. **Note that class lectures will include information that is not covered by the assigned readings/textbook. All take-home assignments must be typed unless otherwise noted.**

**There will be NO extra credit for this class unless included as questions in an exam.**

**Lectures:**

Lectures are designed to benefit you by highlighting important concepts and providing additional explanation of complex topics. Students are expected to demonstrate the utmost respect for the instructor and their fellow students during class. Proper class etiquette includes: not arriving late or leaving early; turning all cell phones OFF when entering the classroom; not disrupting class by talking, texting, or using your computer for purposes unrelated to the lecture/note taking. Students not adhering to these common courtesies will be asked to leave the class.

**Readings:**

You will be responsible for *both* lecture material and assigned readings in the text. Both sources are fair game for exams, so please do not place undue emphasis upon one or the other. Readings will be assigned in class and/or on the class website. To succeed, students must read and understand materials presented in the textbook. Relevant chapters are included on the class schedule and readings need to complete **prior to class**.

**Class Participation and Group Discussions:**

Your attendance is important both for your understanding of the lecture material, as well as your participation in the class discussions. Everyone will be assigned to a discussion group no later than ~Week Two of class (once the class roster is finalized). You will remain with this group for the semester. I make note of students who participate in class and will periodically take attendance.

**Group Assignments:**

During one class in the semester (a Wednesday, see schedule below), your group will be responsible for sharing articles (of your choosing!) on current topics in the field of animal behavior. This will require some literature searching, preparation, and reading-up on a topic of interest to you that relates to the material covered in class and/or animal behavior in general. This is something that you can prepare for in advance. You must be in attendance the day your group up in order to receive full credit for this assignment.

Members of each group will be required to email me ([Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu](mailto:Melinda.Donnelly@ucf.edu)) your article(s) on the **Friday (by midnight) before your group's Wednesday discussion day (see schedule below)**. This is to allow the class enough time to complete any pertinent readings. The source of your article is up to you. Please email either an attachment with the article or a link to the source along with (<one page, typed, single space, 12 pt font):

- 1) A brief summary regarding the article's topic;
- 2) Why you found the topic or article interesting;
- 3) At least one question you have regarding the article; and
- 4) Whether or not you think the article's findings are valid given the source and/or methods and results/conclusions (and why).

All articles/topics must relate to animal behavior and each group should try to coordinate their article selection around a general/broad topic or theme. The UCF library has an excellent online guide established to assist literature searches for animal behavior; it is available at <http://guides.ucf.edu/zoo>. The purpose of this assignment is to:

- 1) Provide you with an opportunity to search, explore, and read scientific literature;
- 2) Hopefully provide you with an appreciation for how broad the field of animal behavior is; and
- 3) Get you thinking critically about scientific literature, science in the media, and scientific sources.

Note that I encourage all of you to bring up topics of interest, articles, news items, etc. (related to the class) at any time during the semester.

### **Exams:**

There will be three exams—two midterms and one final exam. I am not a fan of multiple-choice and tend to give exams that are writing-intensive. My goal is for you to learn and apply the material covered in class, not regurgitate it like an Adelie penguin (*Pygoscolis adeliae*) feeding its young (see also: Figure 5.22, panel 3 in your textbook). So, you can expect short-answer questions or short essays. Lectures and assigned readings are fair game. The midterm exams will focus on new material covered. **The final exam may be comprehensive; however, it will emphasize the remainder of the semester not covered by the other two midterms.** The final will be made up of two parts: 1) a “data collection” component that you will complete during the semester (details will be provided in class, this will be due the last full week of class); and 2) standard, written exam questions. Your final exam will be scheduled during the exam period (**TBD**).

### **Exam Policies:**

1. **All exam grades count towards your semester grade. No exam grades will be dropped.**
2. All exams will be based on both lecture material and text reading assignments.
3. You must bring:
  - a) A pencil
  - b) Your UCF ID – **note: failure to show your ID may result in a score of zero for the exam.**
4. *IF* needed, scantrons will be supplied. You do not need to bring your own.
5. Exams 1-3 will begin promptly at the beginning of class and each requires the full 1 hour, 20 minutes. The final exam will occur at the scheduled time during finals week (see class schedule).
6. **Do not arrive late.** A late student will be allowed access to the exam only at the discretion of the instructor/proctors. Under no circumstances will extra time be allowed.
7. Prior to the exam, all books, notes and bags must be stowed under your seat.
8. Cell phones must be turned OFF and stowed during the exam period.

9. **You will NOT be allowed to leave the exam.** Make sure you have everything you need (pencil, ID, tissues, etc.) and use the restroom before the exam starts.
10. You must print your **PID number** on the scantron (if used) and question sheet/exam form. Be sure you know it!
11. Grades will be posted on WebCourses and I will inform the class when they are posted.
12. **REVIEW OF EXAMS** - Exams will not be returned to students. Instead, you may review your exam during office hours or by appointment. Each exam must be reviewed prior to the next exam date (i.e. if you would like to review exam 1 this must be done before exam 2 is given).

### ***Missed Exam Policy:***

1. Make-up exams for exams 1 and 2 will be provided **only** for students who must miss the exam due to official University business at which your presence was required (e.g. a university-sponsored team event). **Hard-copy documentation must be provided 48 hours in advance from the appropriate university body.**
2. For all other cases (e.g. illness, unforeseen emergencies, etc.) you must contact the professor promptly (within 24 hours or less) after missing the exam and provide **hard-copy documentation (a signed document from a doctor, police officer, judge etc. - not by e-mail) within one week.** The absence must have been caused by a valid emergency as defined by UCF and/or the professor, including but not limited to: major illness, serious family emergency, jury duty, military obligation, etc.
3. Make up exams will be in essay format.
4. Unexcused absence from an exam (e.g., you slept through your alarm) will result in a failing grade for the missed exam and you will not have an option of a make-up exam.
5. All students are required to take the final exam and there will be **no make-up exams for the Final.**

### ***Quizzes:***

There will be 7 multiple choice quizzes to be accessed and completed **on WebCourses.** Quizzes will be available on Webcourses by 5:00pm the Thursday before they are due. All quizzes are due by **11:59 pm Friday** every week except exam weeks (see class schedule below). You will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz. Quizzes are open book but require prior preparation to successfully complete the quiz in the time allotted. If you are not satisfied with your grade on a quiz it may be taken a second time prior to the due date and the best score of the two will count. As questions are drawn randomly, so the two quizzes are unlikely to contain the same questions. **There will be no make-up quizzes and no deadline extensions;** you are responsible for reading the text and remembering to complete the on-line quizzes on time. **The first quiz will occur at the end of week 1.** I will drop the lowest quiz from your grade, so your best 6 quizzes will count towards your final grade. This will be reflected in Webcourses automatically.

Two common problems with quiz submission you should note are:

1. Questions must be **answered in order** and you may not return to previous questions;
2. Final submission of the quiz must occur prior to the **30-minute** deadline or the computer will not accept it.

**Grading and Evaluation:**

Students will be graded and evaluated based on exam scores (midterms and final), class/discussion participation (including attendance), quizzes, and completion of group assignments. Graded tests in this course will be NOT returned individually and may be viewed only by request and only during scheduled office hours. You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Your grade will be based on the following assignments:

Midterm exam 1	20%
Midterm exam 2	20%
Class participation and discussions	5%
Group assignment	10%
Quizzes	10%
Final exam part I ('data collection project')	15%
Final exam part II (exam 3)	20%

You can access your scores at any time using the **Grade Book function of Webcourses**. The overall final semester grade will not be rounded. Either you have the grade or you don't. In other words, a 79.9999 is still a 'C+'. **There will be no exceptions to this policy and no adjustments will be made to final grades.**

You will be graded based on the following scale (this class is NOT graded on a curve):

A	94-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-93%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	63-66%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	77-79%	F	<60%

**Academic Conduct:**

Students are expected to follow UCF's standards for personal and academic conduct as defined and outlined in the Golden Rule (see: <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu>). Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also

receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University.

**Late assignments will receive a 10% deduction per day that the assignment is late.** After two days, late assignments will not be accepted and you will not receive credit for the assignment. **Make-up assignments/exams will be determined on a case-by-case basis and in advance of any deadline (see exam and quiz policies above).** As noted above for exams/quizzes, if you must miss an assignment, exam, discussion, etc. and you have a valid reason for doing so (see above), you **must inform me by email PRIOR to the missed class/activity or ASAP.** If you must miss for medical/health reasons, please provide a doctor's note. Students are expected to notify me in advance (at the beginning of the semester) if they intend to miss class to observe a holy day of their religious faith.

The current UCF policy concerning **incomplete grades** will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, I will be documenting attendance during at least the first couple weeks of class. Failure to attend class will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid and incur the wrath of the bean counters.

### **Technology and Media:**

#### *Email:*

My preferred method of communication is via email. Please put "ZOO-4513" in the subject line. If I do not respond within 48 hours, please send a follow-up email. I will try to respond to all emails within 48 hours. Please note that emails received after 5 pm at night may not be opened until the following morning.

#### *Phones in Class:*

Please turn off and put away all phones during class. Texts, phone calls, web searching, etc. will not be tolerated.

#### *Laptop and iPad (or tablet) Usage:*

Laptops and tablets may be used in class for the sole purpose of taking notes. All wireless/internet connections must be turned off and/or in airplane mode.

### **Disability Access:**

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability

Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

**Professionalism Policy:**

Per university policy and classroom etiquette; phones, tablets, *etc.* **must be silenced** during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, *etc.*, and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

**Shameless Plug for the UCF Marine Turtle Research Group:**

From Dr. Mansfield: Consider applying for our 2016 Summer Internship Program! We will be accepting applications early in the spring 2016 semester. Graduate students from the lab will make a short presentation about the program with more details (likely in January or early February). Interviews will be conducted in Feb/March and final selections will be made by the end of the semester. We will be choosing up to 12 interns for long days and nights on the beach or on the water, working within the Archie Carr NWR in Melbourne Beach, FL.

**Course Schedule (subject to revision):**

Additional optional and assigned readings will be provided as the semester progresses. The dates and assignments/subjects/readings in this schedule are tentative, and can be changed at the discretion of the professor.

Additional readings for group discussions will be announced in class on Mondays and selected from the readings provided by the week's discussion group (who should have provided reading options to me by the ***previous Friday at midnight***). These readings will be made available online. Please note that this schedule is subject to change.

**Class schedule (tentative and subject to change at the discretion of the instructor):**

Week	Dates	Topic	Relevant Chapters	Quiz Due Date (11:59 pm)	Discussion Group
1	Jan. 8, 10	Introduction + An Evolutionary Approach to Animal Behavior	1, 2	Jan. 12	
2	Jan. 15, 17	<b>No Class on Monday (MLK Holiday)</b> , Behavioral Ecology and the Evolution of Altruism, Group Time	2, 3		
3	Jan. 22, 24	Behavioral Ecology and the Evolution of Altruism, Evolution of Social Behavior	3,4	Jan. 26	Group 1 Assignment and Discussion
4	Jan. 29, 31	The Evolution of Communication	4		Group 2 Assignment and Discussion
5	Feb. 5, 7	<b>No class on Monday</b> , Avoiding Predators and Finding Food	5	Feb. 9	Group 3 Assignment and Discussion
6	Feb. 12, 14	Avoiding Predators and Finding Food, Mid-Term Exam Review <b>Wednesday: Midterm 1 (Chapters 1-5)</b>	5		
7	Feb. 19, 21	Habitat Selection, Territory, and Migration	6	Feb. 23	Group 4 Assignment and Discussion
8	Feb. 26, 28	Evolution of Reproductive Behavior and Mating Systems	7, 8		Group 5 Assignment and Discussion
9	Mar. 5, 7	Evolution of Mating Systems and Parental Care	8, 9	Mar. 9	Group 6 Assignment and Discussion
10	Mar. 12, 14	<b>No Class- SPRING BREAK</b>			
11	Mar. 19, 21	Development of Behavior, Evolution, Nervous System, and Behavior	11, 12		Group 7 Assignment and Discussion
12	Mar. 26, 28	Monday: Nervous Systems and Behavior, Mid-Term Review; <b>Wednesday: Mid-term Exam 2 (Chapters 6-9, 11-12)</b>	12		
13	Apr. 2, 4	How Neurons and Hormones Organize Behavior	13	Apr. 6	Group 8 Assignment and Discussion
14	Apr. 9, 11	Evolution of Human Behavior	14		Group 9 Assignment and Discussion

15	Apr. 16, 18	Evolution of Human Behavior, Monday- Final Exam Part 1 Due	14	Apr. 20	Group 10 Assignment and Discussion
16	Apr. 23	Final Exam Review, Presentation of Individual Projects (Final Exam Part 1)			
Final Exam	TBD	Final Exam Part 2- Written Exam- Cumulative			