

ZOO 4910L
Research Experience in Animal Behavior in a Zoo Environment
Spring 2024 Syllabus

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Framework of Course: In this course you will be observing, documenting, and analyzing animal behavior at the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens using techniques in animal behavior research. You will present your data in written format through two term papers.

Requirements: The course in many ways is a directed independent study. It will be your responsibility to maintain a self-directed observation schedule at the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens.

Assignments: You will coordinate with the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens to determine what species you will be studying and what the nature of your project will be. You will be required to successfully complete the following tasks:

- 1) On the first week there will be an orientation meeting where we will discuss what your study will be about, how to record your observations in accordance with proper research methods and how to submit your observations.
- 2) You will make weekly observations of the animal (-s) and behavior (-s) in coordination with the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens. These observations will be due by 4:50pm on the Friday of that week and must be emailed to the instructor as an MS Word document.
- 3) Your observations will be submitted weekly excepting Spring Break. They can be submitted electronically.
- 4) Your first paper is due on Friday, March 24. The paper will describe your observations. You will need to do a literature search and include it in your paper if the observed behaviors are documented as occurring in the wild. The paper will also include your conclusions. The paper should be of an appropriate length to adequately cover the assignment and should adhere to standard format. The paper must be emailed to the instructor as an MS Word document.
- 5) Later that week the student and instructor will meet, as requested by the student, at a time to be determined to discuss your paper.
- 6) Your second paper is due on Friday, April 21. This paper will be an advancement of your first paper including your new observations. You will discuss the evolutionary and survival significance of your observed behaviors. Because each study will be different, the paper requirements will study specific. The paper must be emailed to the instructor as an MS Word document.
- 7) Later that week the student and instructor will meet as requested by the student, at a time to be determined to discuss your paper.

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Grades: The student's grade will be determined by the eleven submitted observations (10 points each), one life history paper (10 points), and two term papers. The first term paper is worth 70 points and is on due 15 March. The second paper is worth 130 points and is due on 19 April.

Total points available is 320.

Grading Scale:

A = 320 -> 288

B = 287 -> 256

C = 255 -> 224

D = 223 -> 192

F = 191 -> 0

Note: +/- grades are not used in this class.

Academic Honesty: Refer to the UCF Golden Rule which will be rigidly adhered to.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Activities	Assignments Due
Dec 31	Orientation (12:00 January 4 th , CFZ)	
Jan 7	Begin Observations	Life History Paper (1/12/23)
Jan 14	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (1/19/23)
Jan 21	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (1/26/23)
Jan 28	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (2/02/23)
Feb 4	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (2/09/23)
Feb 11	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (2/16/23)
Feb 18	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (2/23/23)
Feb 25	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (3/01/23)
Mar 3	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (3/08/23)
Mar 10	First Paper Due , Paper Review, No Observations	First Paper Due (3/15/22)
Mar 19	Spring Break	
Mar 24	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (3/29/23)
Mar 31	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (4/05/23)
Apr 7	Continue Observations and Data Evaluations	Weekly Observations (4/12/23)
Apr 12	Second Paper Due and Second Paper Review	Second Paper Due (4/19/23)

Important Dates: Add Deadline – January 12
Drop Deadline – January 12
Withdrawal Deadline – March 29

Office Hours: M,W, and F 2:00 to 3:00 and by appointment

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Learning Outcomes: The purpose of this course is to give you an understanding of conducting animal research, reviewing and evaluating scientific literature, data collection and analysis, and writing scientific papers.

Assignments: You will coordinate with the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens to determine what species you will be studying and what the nature of your project will be. You will be required to successfully complete the following tasks:

- 1) On the first week there will be an orientation meeting where we will discuss what your study will be about, how to record your observations in accordance with proper research methods and how to submit your observations.
- 2) You will make weekly observations of the animal (-s) and behavior (-s) in coordination with the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens. These observations will be due by 4:50pm on the Friday of that week and must be emailed to the instructor as an MS Word document.
- 3) Your first paper is due by 4:50pm on Friday, March 15th. The paper will describe your observations. You will need to do a literature search and include it in your paper if the observed behaviors are documented as occurring in the wild. The paper will also include your conclusions. The paper should be of an appropriate length to adequately cover the assignment and should adhere to standard format. The paper must be emailed to the instructor as an MS Word document.
- 4) Later that week the student and instructor will meet, as requested by the student, at a time to be determined to discuss your paper.
- 5) Your second paper is due by 4:50pm on Friday April 19th. This paper will be an advancement of your first paper including your new observations. You will discuss the evolutionary and survival significance of your observed behaviors. Because each study will be different, the paper requirements will study specific. The paper must be emailed to the instructor as an MS Word document.
- 6) Later that week the student and instructor will meet as requested by the student, at a time to be determined to discuss your paper.

Academic Honesty: Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's [Rules of Conduct](#). According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- *Unauthorized assistance:* Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
- *Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means:* The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather

was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.

- *Commercial Use of Academic Material:* Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.
- *Falsifying or misrepresenting* the student's own academic work.
- *Plagiarism:* Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
- *Multiple Submissions:* Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
- *Helping another violate* academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult [The Center for Academic Integrity](#)[Links to an external site.](#).

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "[Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices](#)[Links to an external site.](#)".

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, [The Golden Rule](#). UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade>.

Course Accessibility Statement: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with [Student Accessibility Services](#) (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Military Activity Statement: Students who are deployed active-duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Title IX Statement: Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu> and <http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/>.