Animal Behavior

Biology 3307

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Office hours: Monday - Thursday (Del Rio) 10:30am – 12:00noon
or by appointment

General Information

This course will be an all on-line (Web Based) course. Each student must have access to a computer either at home or at one of the Rio Grande College computer labs.

In order to complete this course, each student must activate your Sul Ross State University e-mail account. Even if you have another personal e-mail account (i.e. MSN, AOL, Hot Mail, G-mail, etc.) you must activate your Sul Ross State University account. If you need assistance in activating your account and password contact our Office of Information Technology personnel at any of the three campus sites.

All internet courses are taught using the **Blackboard** administration software. To begin your WEB/internet course, log on to the internet using you internet browser. Go to Sul Ross State University - Rio Grande College website at http://rgc.sulross.edu and click on the **Blackboard** link. Click on the Student Logon button and enter your username and password. Your username and passwords are the same used for your Rio Grande College e-mail account. Then click on the course for which you are registered, in this case *Animal Behavior.*

Course Materials

Alcock, John. 2013. Animal Behavior: An Evolutionary Approach, 10th edition. Sinauer Associates, Inc., Sunderland, MA. 522 pp.

Overview

This class focuses on the main conceptual underpinnings of Animal Behavior. In the first part of the class we will review classical ethology, which focuses on "how" animals behave the way they do. In the second part of the class we will focus on more recent developments in behavioral ecology, which focuses on "why" animals behave the way they do.

Student Learning Outcomes

The graduating biology student graduating with a BS in Biology should be able to:

SLO1 The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of basic biological concepts, including but not limited to evolution via natural selection, cell theory, and the role and function of DNA.

SLO2 The student will be able to demonstrate utilization of various field techniques toward addressing scientific questions in the specific discipline. These field techniques can include, but are not limited to, plant collection and processing, various animal collection techniques, ecological surveying and sampling, and biodiversity indexing.

SLO3 The student will be able to use biological instrumentation to solve biological problems using standard observational strategies.

SLO4 The student will develop writing skills by summarizing and critiquing recent relevant biological literature.

Marketable Skills

A student getting a degree in the Biological sciences would be expected to acquire the following marketable skills by graduation.

1) Students will be able to organize, analyze, and interpret data.
2) Students will be proficient at using presentation software.
3) Students will acquire experience in managing time and meeting deadlines.
4) Students will gain the ability to speak effectively and write concisely about scientific topics.
5) Students will acquire experience and guidance in the development of professional email correspondence.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completion of a course in Animal Behavior, students are expected to have a thorough understanding of:

- The student will understand the important organizing principles in the field of animal behavior. This will be accomplished mainly through assigned readings, class material, assignments and discussions.
- The student will be able to use the scientific method to evaluate hypotheses. This will be accomplished by your reading of the critical papers from the primary literature.

- The student will develop communication skills. This will be accomplished through writing assignments and online discussions.

Test Information

All exams will be administered using Blackboard. All assignments, exams, etc. will be taken on-line using the Sul Ross State University Blackboard system. Students **must** note that all assignments and exams **must** be completed in the announced period of time. Excuses for missed exams or other assignments will **not** be accepted. If a student misses an exam for "any reason," that student will be required to take a make-up exam in the Del Rio-Rio Grande College computer lab at a scheduled time. It is highly recommended that you complete all graded assignments using the Rio Grande College computer labs located at each campus site. These computer labs are faster and more reliable than most home connections. Each student is responsible for completing the material on time. **Excuses will not be accepted! If your home computer and/or your internet service disconnects or fails, I will not accept that as an excuse. All graded assignments will be on a time period.**

Quizzes and Exams will consist of a variety of multiple choice, true false, matching, and/or short answer questions. All exams/quizzes will have a time limit. Students who exceed this time limit will have points deducted from their exams results. Deductions are as follows: 0-59 seconds = 2 points; 1-2 minutes = 4 points; 2-3 minutes = 6 points; 3-4 minutes = 8 points; 4-5 minutes = 10 points; etc.

Grading Policies

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Quiz 1 - 4: 50 points each = 200 points
Exam 1-4: 100 points each = 400 points
Discussion participation: 20 discussion topics @ a maximum of 10 points each = 200 points

Therefore, there are a total of 800 possible points and your letter grade will be assigned accordingly.

A = 720-800
B = 640-719
C = 560-639
D = 480454
F = 0-479

Study Tips:
Everyone has their own unique way of learning. How you study rather than how long you study will have a huge impact on your grade in this course. If you use all the resources available to you and take an active role in the learning process you will likely do much better.

Some specific tips are:

- Spend 20 – 30 minutes to skim through each reading assignment before class.
- Review the lecture notes and read the assigned reading
- Try to draw diagrams from lecture and the book from memory
- Make flash cards or important concepts and terms
- Call up a friend and try to explain what you have learned in class
- ASK QUESTIONS! You are not in this class alone, if you don't understand something, more than likely your classmates also don't understand.

Disabled Students:
Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities. Please meet with me the first week of class to discuss any special needs you may have.

Academic Honesty:
Cheating will not be tolerated. The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper, a laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs.
- Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
- Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
- Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test.
- Substituting for another student; permitting any other person; or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.
- Bribing another person to obtain an unadministered test or information about an unadministered test.
- Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of the rough and/or final versions of an assignment by a professional typist.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea into one's own work offered for credit. This includes verbatim written answers by colleagues with whom you might discuss laboratories exercises. Plagiarism also includes copying information from internet resources. To avoid plagiarism, make sure you always use your own words to construct your written answers.

Tentative Lecture Schedule
(*note: exact date are subject to change, be sure to keep abreast of changes*).

Week	Days	Topic	Reading assignment
1	Jan. 13-17	An introduction to Animal Behavior	Chapter 1
2	Jan. 20-24	Behavioral Ecology & the Evolution of Altruism Jan. 24th – Quiz 1 (chapters 1 & 2)	Chapter 2
3	Jan. 27-31	The Evolution of Social Behavior	Chapter 3
4	Feb. 3-7	The Evolution of Communication Feb. 7th - Exam 1 (chapter 1-4)	Chapter 4
5	Feb. 10-14	Avoiding Predators & Finding Food	Chapter 5
6	Feb. 17-21	The Evolution of Habitat Selection, Territoriality, & Migration Feb. 21st – Quiz 2 (chapter 5 & 6)	Chapter 6
7	Feb. 24-28	The Evolution of Reproductive Behavior Feb. 28th - Exam 2 (chapters 5-7)	Chapter 7
8	March 2-6	The Evolution of Mating Systems	Chapter 8
9	March 9-13	*Spring Break---No Classes*	
10	March 16-20	The Evolution of Parental Care March 20th – Quiz 3 (chapters 8 & 9)	Chapter 9
11	March 23-27	Proximate & Ultimate Causes of Behavior March 27th - Exam 3 (chapters 8-10)	Chapter 10
12	March 30-April 3	The Development of Behavior	Chapter 11
13	April 6-10	Evolution, Nervous Systems, & Behavior April 10th – Quiz 4 (chapters 11 & 12)	Chapter 12
14	April 13-17	How Neurons & Hormones Organize Behavior	Chapters 13
15	April 20-24	The Evolution of Human Behavior	Chapter 14
16	April 27-May 1	The Evolution of Human Behavior May 1st - Final Exam (chapters 11-14)	Chapter 14