

ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT  
TRACK 2: WRITING-IN-THE-MAJORS SECTION

General Information

TA: Tze-Hei Yong, Section of Ecology and Systematics  
Office: E443 Corson Hall, Phone: 254-4285, E-mail: ty2l@comell.edu  
Lecture: NIWF 1 1: 15am - 12:05pm, Plant Science 233  
Section: TR 3:35 - 4:25pm, Corson Hall A409 (Whittaker Room)  
Office Hours: MWF 10:00 - 11:00am and by appointment.

Class Requirements

Lecture: You are expected to regularly attend course lectures and to be able to incorporate lecture information **in** discussions and in your papers where appropriate. You will also be expected to comment on lecture material in your Class Journals (see below). In addition, there will be a take-home final exam that will require you to have a thorough understanding of lecture material.

Readings: The readings for the WIM section include the readings assigned for lecture, as well as additional readings that will be assigned in section. You are, of course, expected to read the readings and come prepared to discuss them, incorporate them into papers, etc.. You will also be expected to comment on the readings in your Class Journals.

Class Journals: You are required to keep a class journal (I suggest a 9 x 6 looseleaf binder.) in which you record your thoughts, feelings, observations, questions, etc., with regard to the lecture and reading material. There should be one entry for each lecture (more or less), and at least one entry for each group of section readings. I may occasionally give you a set of questions about the next week's discussion topics or readings to help you structure your thinking about a subject. You may wish to answer these questions in your journal entries.

Though admittedly, part of the reason for the Class Journal is to make sure people are going to lecture and doing the readings, you should also see the journal as providing an excellent opportunity for you to work out confusing concepts, develop new ideas, and to generally clarify your thinking, through writing. In addition, your journal entries will let me know if there are common areas of confusion (or interest) regarding the lecture and reading material, so that I can address these topics in section.

You should bring your journal to section meetings. I may occasionally ask you to read from your journal to the rest of the class. You may, however, reserve a section of your journal for your own private writing. Before submitting your journal to me, please mark off the private section, and I will not read or comment on entries in this area. **Journals are due at my office by 4:30pm, each**

**Monday**, and will be returned to you, at latest, in lecture on Wednesday morning before the class starts.

Assignments and Papers: "Minor assignments" include the Ecological Questions, Life Table, Predation, and Competition assignments which are also being done by the regular sections. "Major assignments" include

1) three "Short Papers" (usually 3-4 pages) in which you will be asked to write about and analyze a given ecological / environmental issue;

2) two written assignments related to the development of a research proposal for an ecological question in which you are interested; and

3) the formal research proposal. You will be asked to turn in an advanced draft, which will not be graded, but will be peer-reviewed by your classmates. You will then be asked to write a revision, and only this final version will receive a grade.

**Participation:** Participation includes coming to class on time, doing the readings and being prepared to discuss the day's topic, doing in-class exercises and small-group assignments, and being an active listener in class. Being an active listener means listening attentively to your classmates when they are talking, asking questions of each other, and responding to each other, as opposed to talking only to the teacher or dominating the conversation.

**Grading:** There will be two systems of grading in this class: the usual numerical system, and a check-system (@- / 4 1 @+). Under the check-system, a properly completed assignment will receive a 4 and the full points for the assignment. The Class Journal, Participation and attendance, Peer reviews, and at least some of the Minor assignments, will be graded with the check-system, as well as Short paper #1 and the Proposal Ideas assignment.

Class Journal	10%	50 pts
Participation and attendance	15%	75 pts
Minor assignments	10%	50 pts
Major assignments (see below)	45%	225 pts
Peer reviews	6%	30 pts
Take-home final	14%	70 pt
TOTAL	100%	500 pts

Major Assignments:

Short paper #1	3%	15 pts
Short paper #2	5%	25 pts
Short paper #3	5%	25 pts
Proposal Ideas	5%	25 pts
Library research assignment	12%	60 pts
Formal proposal (draft and revision)	15%	75 pts
TOTAL:	45%	225 pts

Absence Policy and Assignment Deadlines: Everyone gets two free absences, no questions asked. After that, absences affect your final grade. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time, regardless of absences.

Late assignments will lose 2% of the total possible points for the assignment for each day late (e.g. a 50 pt assignment loses 1 pt per day). The exception is in cases of family or personal emergency or serious illness. In these cases, if you don't want to lose the points, I will require a written and signed note from a doctor, funeral director, etc., stating the reason for your absence and providing a phone number for that person so that I can verify your excuse. This is necessary to be fair to the other students who have turned their assignments in on time. Deadline extensions will not normally be granted for absences due to religious observances or extracurricular activities -- since you know it's coming, you should be planning ahead.

Seeking Help: Please ask for help at any time -- in section, at my office, by e-mail, or by phone at my office. As a learner, it is your responsibility to recognize when you need help and to ask for it. I look forward to working with you this semester.