

UNIVERSITY NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
Department of Entomology

SAMPLE SYLLABUS: ENTO 414/814: Forensic Entomology

Fully Online
Section:

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Courtesy of
<http://moneitor.deviantart.com/art/forensic-entomology-139355868>

OFFICE HOURS: Online M, T, W 11-12 EST

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE AND FEEDBACK:

During most week days, students can expect a response within 24- 48 hours. Weekend response times will vary, depending on my schedule. Grading turn-around is typically about one week.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Application of entomology to legal issues. Criminal investigations, insects of forensic importance, insect succession on carrion, and case studies. *Prerequisite: Introductory course in entomology*

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- Recognize and identify the most common insects involved in a post-mortem crime scene
- Collect and rear insects associated with cadavers at various stages of decay
- Determine post-mortem intervals and whether a cadaver has been relocated
- Explain the importance of insects in urban, stored products, and medico-legal entomology in the context of forensics

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:

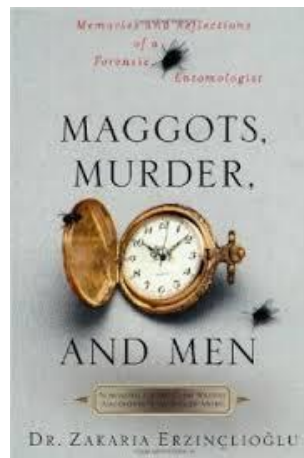
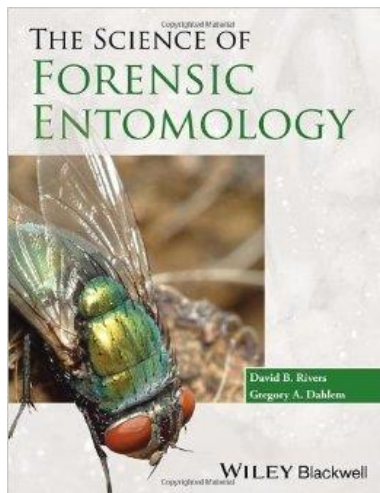
Activities will include lectures, discussions, group and individual work, visual aids, demonstrations, and some problem-based learning. Teaching a broad range of topics in a limited amount of time using formats other than pure lecture is very ambitious. Therefore, the overall success of the course is dependent upon **student preparation and organization. (3 hours outside for every credit earned)**

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Rivers, D. and G. Dahlem. *The Science of Forensic Entomology*. West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell. 1st ed.

AND

Erzinclioglu, Z. *Maggots, Murder, and Men*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books.

**Technical Requirements:**

- 1) Access to a computer--a phone or tablet does not work as well
- 2) Access to a strong internet connection
- 3) A basic understanding of BlackBoard. If you're a newcomer to online, you should complete the appropriate learn BlackBoard module.
- 4) Knowledge of and ability to upload and download files
- 5) Knowledge of how to embed photos when assignments are in the Online Text Submission format (only .png and .jpeg files can be embedded, .doc does NOT work)
- 5) Knowledge of how to take a screen shot (Google it, if you're unsure)

- 6) The proper software: **ALL attached file work MUST be in a .doc, .docx, .rtf (photos cannot be downloaded in .rtf format, only text), .pdf, .jpeg, or .png format. Files submitted in other formats, including, but not limited to .txt and .odt WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED (I won't even bother trying to open the files).**
- 7) Significant technical issues must be documented using screen shots. Issues should be handled through UNL's online BlackBoard help desk.

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Instructions and rubrics for major projects can be found on the course BlackBoard site.

Exams: Four exams will be given throughout the semester. The lowest exam grade will be dropped. No make-ups are offered.

Book Club: Students will participate in weekly discussion forums of the assigned readings from the Book Club book (Dr. Zak) each week. Students will submit an initial post summarizing the reading, including their thoughts every Wednesday. Students will then respond to at least two classmates' posts by Saturday.

Research Proposal: Groups of students will write a 3-4 page research proposal on a forensic entomology topic of their choice. The proposal will include a short literature review. The review should cover 3-5 journal articles. An experiment will then be conducted. Students will view photos and videos, as well as identify specimens collected during the experiment.

Experiment Journal: Each week, students will enter the important findings and data in a journal. The journal entries will be used to write the Lab Report.

Lab Report: Groups of students will write a 3-5 page lab report in the style of a scientific journal article. The lab report will be based on the experiment designed and conducted over the course of the semester.

Letter Grades: Your grade will be determined by dividing the points you earn by the total number of points possible.

Letter Grade Breakdown

Exams	50%
Book Club Synopses	15%
Research Proposal	15%
Experiment Journal	10%
Report	10%

Total

100%

Final grade distribution:

Letter	Numeric
A	93 - 100
A-	90 - 92.9
B+	87 - 89.9
B	83 - 86.9
B-	80 - 82.9
C+	77 - 79.9
C	73 - 76.9
C-	70 - 72.9
D+	67 - 69.9
D	60 - 66.9
F	0 - 59

NO EXTRA CREDIT IS AVAILABLE**CLASS POLICIES:****STUDENT CONDUCT**

The expectations of college student conduct are discussed in the Student Handbook.

Disrespectful/Rude Behavior: These behaviors include, but are not limited to, monopolizing the discussion, whining, uncivil remarks directed towards other students or myself, crude language or behavior. I **will not tolerate** these behaviors. You will be asked **ONCE** to stop. If reprimanded a second time, access to the course will follow the rules of student misconduct as outlined by UNL policies.

Explosive Behavior/Refusal to leave: Students who are exhibiting aggressive, harrassing, or violent behavior will receive no warning, and will be blocked from the course. Future, access to the course will follow the rules of student misconduct as outlined by UNL policies.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating is submitting work that is not your own. Plagiarism is one form of cheating and is illegal. The circumstance will determine the instructor's action in terms of a grade. All instances of cheating and/or plagiarism will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs. The class will follow the University of

Nebraska's policy on academic dishonesty. Anyone suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

STUDENT WORK

Work Format:

ALL uploaded work MUST be in a .doc, .docx, .rtf (photos cannot be downloaded in .rtf format, only text), .pdf, .jpeg, or .png format. Files submitted in other formats, including, but not limited to .txt and .odt WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Late assignments:

- All work must be submitted through BlackBoard. I do not accept late assignments or re-open exams. Good time management and planning are your responsibility. All students will be allowed to drop one exam and one Book Club discussion.
- Late term papers and projects will lose 10% for each day they are late, including weekends.

Incompletes: I do not offer incompletes (I)

ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS

- I do not take attendance or drop students for nonactivity
- You must withdraw from the course or receive an «F»

Disability Accommodation

University of Nebraska-Lincoln complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Sect 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you have a disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, you will need to obtain the proper paperwork with recommendations for accommodations from the appropriate office for students with disabilities. Retroactive requests for accommodations will not be honored.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: *You MUST submit your University ADA paperwork—paperwork from other sources will not be honored*

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Christy Horn for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability

to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY (updated 8/20/07)

Dead Week

This class follows University of Nebraska's Dead Week policy.

Harassment and Discrimination

University of Nebraska strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment based upon race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a U.S. veteran. Any student who has concerns about such behavior should contact his/her instructor, or the appropriate office.

Religious Accommodation

If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and your instructor or supervisor will review the request. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the Dean of Students Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance.

NOTE: The course outline and various assignments are subject to change by the instructor at any time deemed necessary.

ENTO: 414/814 Forensic Entomology

WEEK	LECTURE TOPIC	READING	MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS	Dr. Zak Reading
1	Introduction Forensic Science History of Forensic Ent.	Chapter 1 Chapter 2		Chapter 1
2	Forensic Entomology Uses Literature Review	Chapter 3		pp. 22-33
3	Arthropod Basics Proposal	Handout		pp. 33-48
4	Basic Entomology Lab Journaling	Chapter 4	LITERATURE REVIEW & PROPOSAL DUE	pp. 49-60
5	Behavior and Evolution Insect Orders Experimental Setup	Handout Handout	EXAM #1 (WK 1-4)	pp. 60-74
6	Forensically Important Orders Data Collection	Chapter 5		Chapter 4
7	Fly Sex Communication Data Collection	Chapter 6 Chapter 7		pp. 97-109
8	Fly Babies Temperature Data Collection	Chapter 8 Chapter 9	EXAM #2 (WK 5- 7)	pp. 109-123
9	Decomposition Insect Succession Data Collection	Chapter 10 Chapter 11	INTRODUCTION DUE	pp. 124-142
10	PMI	Chapter 12	MATERIALS AND METHODS DUE	pp. 142-157
11	Bloodstain Evidence Neglect and Abuse	Chapter 13 Chapter 14	EXAM #3 (WK 7-10)	Chapter 7
12	DNA Molecular Methods	Handout Chapter 15	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION DUE	pp. 177-190
13	BREAK			pp. 190-200 Chapter 9
14	Archaeoentomology	Chapter 16		pp. 224-239
15	Deadly Insects	Chapter 18	FINAL LAB REPORT and JOURNAL DUE	pp. 239-248
	FINALS		EXAM #4 (WK 11-14)	