

Cedar Crest College  
Biology 354: Thesis and Presentation (1 credit OR 0 credit)  
Fall 2008

Instructor:

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Office hours: Tuesday 3-4 PM, Thursday 11 AM-12 PM or by appointment

Introduction and description:

Welcome to the Department of Biological Science's Thesis and Presentation course.

This course serves as the capstone course for the Thesis Option for all majors in the Department of Biological Sciences. Completion of this course requires (1) submission of a written thesis to the faculty supervising the student's thesis research (and, for students conducting research in another department, to the Biological Sciences co-advisor) and (2) an oral or poster presentation of the student's research project to the college community at the Biological Sciences Research Symposium. Submission of electronic copies of the final thesis and final presentation (oral or poster) to the BIO 354 instructor for archival and department assessment purposes is also required.

Prerequisites: permission of the faculty supervising the research and 4 credits of BIO 353 (2 credits of BIO 353 may be taken concurrently).

Students concurrently or previously enrolled in HON 350/351 will generally enroll in BIO 354 (and BIO 353) for 0 credits. If you are conducting research on a separate topic for an Honors thesis, you may enroll in BIO 354 for 1 credit. All Honors students should inform the BIO 354 instructor of their status.

Students concurrently or previously enrolled in CHE 390/391 should enroll in BIO 354 for 0 credits.

Course objectives:

1. To improve critical thinking and scientific analysis skills by providing a conclusion to a student's independent research project.
2. To improve scientific writing skills through the preparation of rough drafts and a final written thesis.
3. To improve oral presentation skills by giving a final research talk or presenting a poster at the annual Biological Science Research Symposium.

4. To acknowledge the additional effort and commitment that senior students have undertaken by choosing the Thesis Option within their majors.

Student Assessment:

Your grade in this course will be based on evaluation of your written thesis and oral presentation ONLY. Your overall research effort will be included in your BIO 353, CHE 391, or HON 351 grade. Grades will be assigned by the professor supervising your research.

Student responsibilities:

1. Students are expected to follow the Department of Biological Sciences guidelines regarding preparation of the thesis (as distributed to you in Junior Colloquium), available at <http://www2.cedarcrest.edu/academic/bio/thesisoption.htm> . Style guidelines for the final thesis document will be provided.
2. Students working in labs outside the Department of Biological Sciences are required to have an additional advisor within the Department. That advisor should be given copies of all rough drafts and the final thesis.
3. Students must submit electronic copies of the final thesis and presentation for archival and departmental assessment use before a final grade will be recorded.
4. Students are expected to answer any emails sent to their Cedar Crest email address regarding this course.
5. Students are expected to adhere to the Cedar Crest College Honor Code and plagiarism policy. In particular, students should be precise in citing published material in the final thesis. Your advisor will instruct you in the appropriate citation format; I have several reference books in my office that you are welcome to consult, as well, and there are many websites concerning proper citation form.

Important deadlines and dates:

The dates given here apply to ALL research students UNLESS your advisor assigns an alternative date IN WRITING.

Friday

Oct. 10            Methods section draft DUE

Friday

Oct. 17            Introduction and Literature Cited sections draft DUE (You should be READING the papers on the lit cited list; also remember that you will need to add additional references for your Discussion section)

Friday  
Oct. 31            Abstract and Results (including figures) draft DUE

Friday  
Nov. 14           Discussion Draft and updated Literature Cited section due

Monday  
Dec. 1            COMPLETE draft of thesis DUE

Friday  
Dec. 5            Draft version of final talk DUE

To Be Scheduled:    Research Presentation. This will likely take place on December 9 or 10.

I will be in contact with you well in advance of this date to schedule your talk.

Your final PowerPoint presentation must be submitted to me electronically before your grade will be recorded.

Friday  
Dec. 12           Final thesis DUE.

You will submit the final version of your thesis to your research advisor; consult him/her to determine whether this should be in electronic or paper form.

You must also submit a copy of your final thesis to me electronically. Your grade for the course will not be recorded until I have received this document.