CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPT. OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES  

BIOLOGY 565  

SEMINAR IN ECOLOGY  

INSTRUCTOR  
Dr. Tracey K. Brown  
Office: Science Hall I – Room 318 (third floor, enter through 320)  
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Office Hours: M 4 to 6 pm or by appointment  

TEXT  
None – All assignments will be pdf. or Xeroxed book chapters and journal articles.  

COURSE PREREQUISITES  
In order to participate in this course, students must have completed the introductory biology series 210 and 211. Preferably students will also have completed an upper-division ecology course such as Biol. 354 or its equivalent. This course is primarily designed for graduate students and advanced undergraduates.  

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
The focus of the Ecology Seminar changes each time it is offered. The primary purpose of this semester’s seminar is to survey current technologies and methods in ecological research. While each of us has an interest (hopefully!) in ecology, we still comes from many sub-disciplines. This semester we will take a tour of current methodologies used in ecological research. Each student will present a technique/approach of their choice, teach this technique to the class and provide relevant literature. You will also turn in a brief write-up on the techniques for distribution to the rest of the course.  

LEARNING OUTCOMES  
Upon completion of this course, a successful student should:  
• be comfortable in giving extended presentations to a group of peers  
• be able to critically review the design and statistical analyses of literature reviewed in class  
• be more familiar with current ecological methodologies used in research  
• undergraduates will have a more complete understanding of the process of peer-review  
• graduate students will be more able to recognize design flaws in their own research
COURSE STRUCTURE & ASSESSMENT

Students will be responsible for leading the class discussions. At the beginning of the course, we will jointly assign topics and time slots. The number of students in the course will dictate how many times each student will present. Students will be responsible for selecting an appropriate topic and papers. These papers must be approved by me prior to delivery to other course participants (via WebCT). Your grade in the class will be determined by your presentation and participation in the course. It is likely we will have one student per week, so be prepared to have a two-hour discussion (hour presentation, hour on papers). Out of respect for the presenter, you must read the required articles BEFORE coming to class so that you can participate in the group discussion. Do not leave your preparation to the last minute. Part of your grade will depend on how organized you are, talking with me in advance, getting the papers distributed to everyone etc.

COURSE WEBSITE

This course will use the campus WebCT system for the delivery of lecture outlines, readings, study guides, grade keeping etc. To access WebCT go to http://courses.csusm.edu and use your student i.d. (the prefix of your campus email account) and password to login. If you have difficulty you may need to contact the student helpdesk.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism: Copying of other student’s work or plagiarism will be punished to the fullest degree. You will receive no warning if the instructor feels that plagiarism and/or copying has occurred. The instructor reserves the right to do everything in her power to punish this offence, but at a minimum, you will receive zero (0) points for plagiarized or copied work. REVIEW THE CAMPUS GUIDELINES ON PLAGIARISM IN THE MOST RECENT ISSUE OF THE CSUSM COURSE CATALOG.

Schedule

TBD on the first day of class according to topic and availability