

EEB 2208 (Introduction to Conservation Biology)

Grading Policies

Distribution of points: Grades will be based on one midterm (worth 20% of the final grade), a final exam (worth 30% of the final grade), short in-class writing exercises (collectively worth 10% of the final grade), short weekly quizzes/homework assignments (collectively worth 10% of the final grade) and a group project presented as a poster towards the end of the semester (worth 30% of the final grade). Details of each assignment will be provided in class over the course of the first few lectures, and will be posted on the web site.

Grade assignments: I do not grade on a curve, because that approach limits the number of students who can get high grades and can therefore disadvantage students who work hard and learn all of the material: if everyone gains a superior understanding of the material, then everyone will get a good grade. Grades will be assigned according to the following scheme, assuming a total of 100 points for all course work:

Points	Grade	Interpretation*
> 90	A	Excellent
88-90	A-	Excellent
87-88	B+	Very Good
82-87	B	Good
80-82	B-	Good
78-80	C+	Good
72-78	C	Average
70-72	C-	Fair
68-70	D+	Poor
62-68	D	Poor
60-62	D-	Merely Passing
< 60	F	Failure

*Interpretations are based on the undergraduate catalog's description of each letter grade.

Re-grading: I will happily re-grade any exam if a student feels that I have made a mistake. Re-grading will involve a fresh assessment of the entire exam, to ensure that I have not made any other errors. If you would like me to re-grade an exam then you need to provide me with a written description of the problem you perceive, explaining the problem in light of the correct answers I have provided. If the problem is that I could not read, or understand, what you have written, then you are unlikely to get points (clear communication is important in all walks of life, and is your responsibility in exam answers). If I have simply added up points wrong, then please let me know as soon as possible so that I can fix things (notification of such problems does not need to be in writing). All grading appeals must be made within one week of the day on which I return exams in class.

Make-up exams: Taking an exam outside of the designated time will only be allowed under extraordinary circumstances (e.g., a serious health problem or family emergency). If you planned to be on vacation that week, well, unfortunately there's a cost to poor-planning! I am sorry to take such a draconian attitude, but I have encountered too many problems in the past with exam excuses and this policy is the only way I can make things fair and consistent for everyone. Make-up exams will take the form of long-form, essay questions that require you to synthesize information across the course material. Please note that I am not authorized to reschedule final exams. Consequently, I will only consider

allowing a make-up on the final if you have already obtained written permission from the Office of Student Services and Advocacy (486-3426; <http://www.ossa.uconn.edu/>).

Absences from class: I do not police attendance and, as adults, you are free to make your own decisions about whether or not you attend lectures. Much happens in class, however, that cannot be obtained via other media (e.g., my web notes and the text book) and my experience is that those students who regularly skip lectures get noticeably lower grades. Accommodation for missing classes in which graded activities occur will be made only under the following circumstances:

(a) You are ill or have an emergency. If this happens just once, you do not need to provide supporting documentation, but you must inform me in writing as soon as possible and no later than one week after the missed assignment. If you need to miss more than one assignment, then please provide written documentation explaining the absence.

(b) You are absent due to extra-curricular/co-curricular activities performed in the interest of the university and/or activities that support your scholarly development. Examples include participation in scholarly presentations, performing arts, and intercollegiate sports, when the participation is at the request of, or coordinated by, a University official. Students involved in such activities must, prior to the anticipated absence, inform me in writing and have the coordinating UConn official send me email confirming your participation in the activity. Guidelines for (b) are based on those laid out by the Provost's Office.

Academic misconduct and plagiarism: The penalties for anyone found to have committed plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct are severe. All students should read the Student Code (http://www.dosa.uconn.edu/student_code.html) with great care. In particular, pay attention to *Appendix A: Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research* which describes acts that constitute academic misconduct, and the penalties that can be imposed. Note, especially the following quote from section A3 in this document: "The appropriate academic consequence for serious offenses is generally considered to be **failure in the course**" (my emphasis).

If you have questions about academic misconduct, please consult the on-line FAQs available on the web site of the Office of Student Services and Advocacy (<http://www.ossa.uconn.edu/students.html>), or come and talk to me about the issue. Understanding what does and does not constitute academic misconduct is your responsibility.

For the purposes of this course anything that you write that is not phrased in your own original words will be considered plagiarism. Minor reorganization of someone else's words is plagiarism. Any time that you use someone else's words, those words should be enclosed in quotes and be attributed, or their use will be considered to be plagiarism. Extensive quotation of someone else (even if attributed) is not acceptable for any of the work in this class and also will be considered to be plagiarism. "Extensive" in this instance means more than a sentence. Please take these warnings very seriously and do not take the risk that I might not notice – the potential costs are simply not worth it.

For more information on this topic, see the separate document on plagiarism on the course website.