



Department of Biology
BIOL 4436G Evolutionary Behavioural Ecology
Winter 2022

Draft 1/5/2022

This course overview has been created to communicate expectations for 2021/2022 courses offered by the Biology department to help you plan your semesters. Complete and final details will be reflected in the full syllabus beginning on the following page.

Instructor/coordinator: Prof. Yolanda Morbey

Email: ymorbey@uwo.ca

Course description

The official course description can be found in the [Academic Calendar](#). Instructors may or may not adhere to the Extra Information found in the Academic Calendar in terms of the number of lecture/tutorial/lab hours. See below for more information about course delivery mode and time estimates. These time estimates do not include assessments or independent study.

Required:



Stable internet connection



Laptop or computer



Working microphone

The following **interfaces** could be used for assessments: Owl quizzes, Owl assignments, Turnitin, Powerpoint, VoiceThread

Delivery mode:

Mode	Dates	Time	Frequency**	Attendance
Virtual asynchronous	All term	Up to 5-8 h	per week	N/A
Virtual synchronous	All term	1 h	per week	Yes
In person	All term	Up to 3 h	per week	Yes

Assessments:

Examples of assessments that **could** be assigned in this course are **highlighted in yellow**; these examples are based on previous offerings of the course and the learning outcomes that have been set.

Weekly quizzes

Written assignments

Oral presentations

Participation

Discussion forums

Groupwork

Take home tests/exams

Timed tests/exams

Proctored tests/exams



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1. General Course Information

Instructor: Prof. Yolanda Morbey

Mode of delivery: blended

Weekly meet: M 9:30-10:30 am, NCB 293 (Zoom until Jan 31)

Office hours & shared working space: W 9:30-10:30 am, NCB 293 (after Jan 31)

Lab & shared working space: W 2:30-5:30 pm, CHB 386 (after Jan 31)

Pre-requisites

Biology 3436F/G or Psychology 3221F/G and either completion of at least 1.5 Biology courses from the 3000 level or above, or registration in year 4 of the Honours Specialization in Animal Behaviour.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your faculty's Academic Counselling office to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Mode of delivery

Blended: lectures and most labs will be done online & asynchronously. Weekly orientation meetings, oral presentations, and some labs will be done in-person & synchronously. All course material will be posted to OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>.

If students need assistance with Owl, they can seek support on the [OWL Help page](#). Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#). They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

[Google Chrome](#) or [Mozilla Firefox](#) are the preferred browsers to optimally use OWL; update your browsers frequently. Students interested in evaluating their internet speed, please click [here](#).

2. Contact Information

Instructor: Prof. Yolanda Morbey, ymorbey@uwo.ca; Office: BGS 2074, contact via Messages in Owl.

TA: Patricia Rokitnicki, contact via Messages in Owl.

During the semester, all electronic correspondence about Bio 4436G should be done using the Message tool in Owl. Students emailing their instructors directly must use their Western (@uwo.ca) email addresses.

Office hours: W 9:30-10:30 am, Zoom by appointment (before Jan 31) or NCB 293 (after Jan 31).

3. Course Description/Syllabus

A study of the relationships between animal behavior, ecology and evolution. Topics will include: evolution, optimization theory, survival strategies, game theory, reproductive strategies, and social behaviour.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Recall and explain the discipline of behavioural ecology and how it relates to ecology, evolution, and behaviour.
2. Recall and explain the main behavioural ecology theories that are covered.
3. Critically evaluate text in the context of behavioural ecology theories.
4. Independently collect and synthesize information on a topic in the field of behavioural ecology.
5. Communicate scientific knowledge in written and oral forms.

Class structure

This course is taught in a blended format. Online and asynchronous components include lecture and some lab content. In-person and synchronous components include weekly meetings, oral presentations, and some labs (after Jan 31). Topics are organized by week on Owl. Each week will have a variety of study materials, including content slides and activities.

Classes begin: January 10

Reading Week: February 19-27

Last day of classes: April 8

4. Course Materials

Required

Laptop: Use your own.

Owl: Students should check OWL (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. Students are responsible for checking OWL on a regular basis.

Book: Davies, N.B., J.R. Krebs, and S.A. West. 2012. An introduction to behavioural ecology. 4th edn. Wiley-Blackwell (the e-text is available for purchase for \$53.99 from the bookstore)

Software: SimUText for Evolutionary Behavioural Ecology (\$10 USD)

It is important that you review the information below *before* you subscribe to the SimUText for **Evolutionary Behavioural Ecology** at **University of Western Ontario**. **To avoid possible problems, do not wait until the last minute.**

1. **CHECK YOUR TECH!**

Visit <https://simutext.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/200170134-Check-Your-Tech-> to confirm that the SimUText application will work on your computer, and/or to explore your options if there is a problem.

2. **SimUText Voucher Code (optional)**

If you purchased a SimUText Voucher from your bookstore, be sure to have it with you when subscribing, as you will need to enter your voucher code.

3. **Registration Link**

When you are ready to subscribe and download installers, follow this link to initiate the process. Note that this link may not work when accessed via a pdf document due to the conversion of the hyphens, so you may need to re-type the hyphens in the address bar of your browser: <https://www.simutextca2.com/student/register.html#/key/CrXZ-hwT7-Ag8G-qg7s-3pwz>

4. **SimUText Application Installers**

After you have completed the subscription process, if you need to download the SimUText application installers again, you will be able to access them by logging into the [SimUText Student Portal](https://www.simutextca2.com/student/) (<https://www.simutextca2.com/student/>).

Save this email! Should you encounter problems, you may need your course-specific Access Key. It is: **CrXZ-hwT7-Ag8G-qg7s-3pwz**

Problems or questions? Visit [SimUText Support](http://simbio.com/support/simutext) (<http://simbio.com/support/simutext>)

Technical Requirements

Stable internet connection, computer with working microphone (for Zoom office hours).

5. Methods of Evaluation

Assessment

25%	Midterm exam (February 16, 9:30-10:20, NCB 293)
35%	Final exam
40%	Project
5%	Fact sheet (due January 31, 11:50 pm)
5%	Draft presentation (due January 31, 11:50 pm)
5%	Final presentation (due February 9, 2:30 pm)
15%	Draft essay (due March 14, 11:50 pm)
10%	Final essay (due April 8, 4:30 pm)

Extra: SimBio assignments (2% per assignment x 5 assignments = 10%). These credits can be used to boost the 35% allocation. I will assign the higher of your final exam alone (35%) **OR** your final exam (25%) + SimBio (10%).

The final exam will be in person if possible. Otherwise, it will be done using Proctortrack. As per policy, take-home examinations will be scheduled with permission of the Dean of the Faculty offering the course. The exam will cover all lecture and lab content of course.

Written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin (statement in policies below)

- Students will have 1 submission to Turnitin
- Rubrics will be used to evaluate assessments and will be posted with the instructions
- After an assessment is returned, students should wait 24 hours to digest feedback before contacting their evaluator

Click [here](#) for a detailed and comprehensive set of policies and regulations concerning examinations and grading. The table below outlines the University-wide grade descriptors.

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Accommodated Evaluations

Late penalties (1% of course grade per 24 h) will accrue immediately after a deadline. Deadlines to complete the fact sheet, draft presentation, and draft essay will be subject to a 48 h grace period when accrued late penalties will not be deducted. For example, if you hand in your fact sheet 40 h after the deadline, a 2% late penalty will have accrued but this late penalty will not be applied. If you hand in your fact sheet 50 h after the deadline, a 3% late penalty will have accrued and this late penalty will be applied (i.e., the maximum grade you can achieve will be 2/5).

6. EDI statement

The pronouns used by:

- Yolanda Morbey are: she/her

7. Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples (e.g. First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

More information about Indigenous Services (<https://indigenous.uwo.ca/>) and this Land Acknowledgement (<https://communications.uwo.ca/comms/land-acknowledgement/>) are available.

8. Accommodation and Accessibility

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities policy can be found at: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

The following policy will apply only to the midterm. The makeup date for the midterm will be February 28, 9:30-10:30 am, NCB 293. If you miss the make-up midterm, your final exam will be worth 50% and your SimBio assignments will be worth 10%.

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the semester, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs, see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar:

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (see http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/exam_schedule.html).

[optional] If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

9. Academic Policies

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy, <http://www.uwo.ca/its/identity/activatenonstudent.html>, the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at his/her official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record Zoom help sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf. Students are expected to know what plagiarism is at this stage of their programme, and will also be required to get 10/10 on an online quiz about plagiarism prior to accessing the Independent Project assignment.

Turnitin ***aids*** in identifying plagiarism. All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Any accusation of academic misconduct will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be based on all evidence that can be gathered (including incriminating activity on non-sanctioned apps). **All cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Associate Chair Undergraduate, Department of Biology.** The penalty for an academic offence will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Academic offences come with the maximum penalty of failing the course and a permanent record in your transcript.

Appeals

Grades are earned and, in the interest of fairness, additional points will not be granted because you need a certain GPA or because you expected better performance from yourself. Grades will be rounded to the nearest 0.1 then to the nearest integer (79.45% will become 80%; 79.44% will become 79%).

Professionalism & Privacy:

Western students are expected to follow the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Additionally, the following expectations and professional conduct apply to this course:

- Students are expected to follow online etiquette expectations provided on OWL
- All course materials created by the instructor(s) are copyrighted and cannot be sold/shared
- Recordings are not permitted (audio or video) without explicit permission
- Permitted recordings are not to be distributed
- Students may be expected to take an academic integrity pledge before some assessments

Online Etiquette:

Some components of this course will involve online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- “arrive” to class on time
- use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- to minimize background noise, mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- In order to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, turn off your video camera for the entire class unless you are invited to speak
- please be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor’s request if the internet connection becomes unstable
- unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, use the “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question.
- Please remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking.
- Please remember to mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise).

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor and peers.
- Be professional and scholarly in all online postings. Use proper grammar and spelling. Cite the ideas of others appropriately.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

10. Support Services

Please visit the Science & Basic Medical Sciences Academic Counselling webpage for information on add/drop courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: <https://www.uwo.ca/sci/counselling/>

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 661-2147 if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

The policy on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

The policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be found here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf

Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

Learning-skills counsellors at the Student Development Centre (<http://www.sdc.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <http://westernusc.ca/services>.

The following links provide information about support services at Western University:

[Academic Counselling \(Science and Basic Medical Sciences\)](#)

[Appeal Procedures](#)

[Registrarial Services](#)

[Student Development Services](#)

[Student Health Services](#)