Welcome to the Bachelor of Science Honours program in The School of Biological Sciences, The University of Queensland.

This handbook informs you about the Honours program, including administrative and academic details and the four courses that form the Honours program. The assessment criteria for all the courses and the form sheets used by examiners are included. You will find most of the information required to navigate through your Honours year in this document.

BIOL Honours program in a nutshell

In the BIOL Honours program you develop your own initiative and ideas in a setting of academic excellence in biological research. The program challenges you to make the transition from undergraduate student with a set course of study to postgraduate student actively involved in research and associated activities.

Under the guidance of an academic supervisor, you have the opportunity to undertake research and to develop research related skills on diverse topics.

During the Honours year you will develop and demonstrate your capabilities for critical thought and independent research within an area of biology. You will learn how to conceive, design, communicate, and carry out research.

As an Honours student, you are a member of the postgraduate community in the School and the University. You are integrated into the scientific community of the School, University and beyond, as you extend your undergraduate knowledge to professional expertise.

We, the staff of the School of Biological Sciences, trust that you will thoroughly enjoy your Honours year. We will make every effort to assist and encourage you during this time.

Dr Karyn Johnson
Honours Coordinator
School of Biological Sciences
PLEASE RETAIN THIS HANDBOOK AND REFER TO IT AS REQUIRED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. YOU MUST MEET DEADLINES WITHOUT HAVING TO BE REMINDED.

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HONOURS CONTACTS

Honours Coordinator

Dr Karyn Johnson
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Honours Administration
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## Important dates for Honours students commencing Semester 1 2010

Please make a note of all these important dates for your honours year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commencement Date &amp; Induction</td>
<td>Monday 8 February 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6401 Advanced Readings course induction</td>
<td>Thursday 18 February 3-5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6301 Research Proposal Seminar</td>
<td>Tuesday 23-25 March 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL6301 Research Proposal</td>
<td>Wednesday 31 March 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL6201 Seminar diary</td>
<td>Wednesday 22 September 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6102 Research Project</td>
<td>Wednesday 20 October 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6201 Final Seminar</td>
<td>2 - 4 November 2010</td>
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</table>

Please also read details about assessment in the course outlines
Overview of content, skills and perspectives of Honours program

The Honours program:

1. Allows you to study and carry out research at postgraduate level
2. Trains you in scientific problem-solving and innovation by learning to:
   i. select relevant and achievable objectives
   ii. retrieve information from databases, electronic media & libraries
   iii. plan, execute & analyse experimental research
   iv. process and critically evaluate scientific data
   v. appreciate biological research and innovation beyond the focus of your project
   vi. communicate research at a professional level to the scientific community and public
3. Integrates you into the scientific community, including contact with the senior researchers and leaders of innovation in your field of interest.

Four courses comprise the Honours program

To achieve a balance between a focused research project and understanding of the broader area of biology, BIOL offers a four-course Honours program. Each course has specific aims, and in combination the four courses provide you with a well-rounded program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6102/6103 Research Project</td>
<td>#10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6201 Seminar &amp; Research Communication</td>
<td># 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6301 Research Proposal</td>
<td># 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL6401 Advanced Readings</td>
<td># 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

See following pages for details of each course including objectives, form, criteria, and assessment weighting.

The forms used by examiners for each assessment component is included at the end of the handbook for your information.

Requirements and Duties of Honours Students

Enrolment requirements
As an Honours student, you are responsible for fulfilling the criteria of the Honours program. To be eligible for enrolling in the BIOL Honours program, you need to have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 4.5 in #8 (# indicates units) of relevant second and third year courses. If you are unsure about the suitability of certain units, discuss this with your supervisor.

Important considerations for Honours research & communication
You are responsible for planning your Honours year carefully, ensuring you allocate enough time to complete all tasks. The responsibility forms part of the professional skills that you develop during your Honours year, including time management and organisation of your research and associated tasks.

While you will receive help from supervisor/s and associated staff, you cannot rely on them to carry out tasks that are your responsibility. Ensure that you meet with your supervisor/s regularly; ask for feedback, and exchange ideas. Don’t expect supervisor/s to be available at short notice, rather plan your meetings ahead of time by making appointments and ensure that you can rely on other experienced staff and postgraduate students for help.

Prior to commencing research tasks, ensure that you have finalised all required protocols, ensure that ethics, biosafety and gene technology regulator approvals have been obtained where required, and that risk assessments are carried out as necessary.

Ethics approvals - Dr David Booth (D.Booth@uq.edu.au).
Biosafety and gene technology approvals – contact your supervisor.
Prior to submitting written assessments and giving oral presentations, ask your supervisor/s and others for critical feedback.

In the BIOL Honours program, you are provided with a great opportunity to excel in research and associated tasks; it is your responsibility to ensure that you make most of the vibrant research environment of BIOL!

**Role of candidate’s supervisors and examiner**

The supervisor is your primary source of guidance and input into your Honours research project. The supervisor will be a BIOL academic. Co-supervisors can be appointed by the supervisor, and these can include BIOL postdoctoral staff, University academic and postdoctoral staff, or qualified people outside the University.

The supervisor nominates two examiners to assess the research proposal and research report, following instructions on the accompanying marking sheets. The Honours coordinator will make the final decision on the examiners. At least one of the examiners must be an academic member of the School of Biological Sciences. In the event that there is a discrepancy of more than 10% in the marks from the examiners, further mediation with the examiners will occur and if a consensus is not reached, the Honours coordinator will make a recommendation, on the final mark, to the Head of School.

**Please note:**

Honours supervisors, co-supervisors and staff closely associated with the project CANNOT be appointed as examiners of the research proposal and research report.
Submission Procedures:

All assessment materials must be handed in to the School of Biological Sciences help desk no later than 4.00 pm on the due date.

You will be sent the cover sheet for your assessment item by email approximately 1 week before it is due. You must submit your work, with the cover sheet attached to the front, through the assessment slot at the BIOL help desk (Room 229, Goddard building). A receipt of submission will be sent to your UQ email and must be retained as proof of submission.

Penalties for late submission will apply for all written reports including:

1) Research Project Proposal (BIOL6301)
2) Research Report (BIOL6102/BIOL6103)
3) Advanced readings written Report (BIOL6401)

Students are also required to submit their reports for BIOL6301 and BIOL6102/6103 by Turnitin through the Honours Community website on Blackboard.

A penalty of 2 % per day late will apply for each written report. Weekends count as two days.

For example, each written report will be marked out of 100. If the report is 2 days late – the mark out of 100 for that report will be reduced by 4.

These penalties can make a difference to the level of honours obtained; therefore you must allocate sufficient time to each task to ensure that you can meet the deadlines.

Extensions:

Extensions will only rarely be given. The honours year is both exciting and demanding. One of the biggest challenges you will face is managing your project and time to ensure completion of tasks within the allocated time. All scientists encounter set-backs during research; make sure that you structure your project to allow for the adjustments required when the unexpected happens. Remember that this is part of the challenge of honours, and extensions will only be granted when there are extreme circumstances. Applications for extensions should be made to the honours coordinator well in advance of any due date and should be made at the time that difficulties are encountered. A medical certificate is required for health related extensions.

It is highly unlikely that any extension requested within a week of the due date will be granted! (Unless supported by a medical certificate in line with university policy). Extensions will not be approved retrospectively after the due date.
Administration details

Workplace Health and Safety
During the first fortnight of enrolment in the Honours program, you will need to attend a “workplace health and safety induction”. The OH&S manager, John Bertram (J.Bertram@uq.edu.au) will send you an email with details of the induction. If you are unable to attend you will need to arrange an alternative time with John.

Student Setup (building access, keys, rooms, computer email)
For building access, student card, keys, room allocation, telephone extension, computer and email access, please fill in “BIOL essentials set up” form which is available outside the finance office in the Goddard Building. All required contacts are on this form. Your supervisor is responsible for allocating desk space for you.

Tutoring
If you are interested in tutoring undergraduate students during your Honours year, talk to your supervisor to ensure that tutoring can be integrated into the time constraints of your program. If your supervisor agrees to your participation in tutoring, contact BIOL tutor coordinator Dr Louise Kuchel (l.kuchel@uq.edu.au).

Plagiarism

Library
The UQ Biosciences library offers courses designed to help you access the scientific literature and to manage references. Two courses are offered specifically for Honours students to obtain these skills, they are “Introduction to Library databases and computer access” and “Endnote – referencing”. You will be informed about dates for these courses during the Honours induction. You can also contact our liaison librarian Greg George (g.george@library.uq.edu.au) if you require further information on these courses.

UQ Student Support Services
Student Support Services offer personal counselling which is a free and confidential service for all currently enrolled students of The University of Queensland. Counselling is available to assist those who may be facing crisis situations, adjustment difficulties or problems in living that are impacting upon their ability to cope their studies at university. http://www.sss.uq.edu.au. They also run a number of workshops:


Statistical Advisor
For statistical consultation you can contact Dr Simon Blomberg in Room 320 Building 8 (336 52506 or s.blomberg1@uq.edu.au). Make sure you make a prior appointment for your consultation.

Course specifics
You will develop your research projects at the start of the Honours year in consultation with your chosen supervisor. It is your responsibility to ensure that specific requirements of your research are met, such as ethical clearance and permits for site access or collection of biota.

Note: Ethical clearance is required for all projects on vertebrates and cephalopod molluscs. This usually takes a minimum of six weeks to obtain. No experimental or field work can commence until permits are received. Field work will often also require a permit. (e.g. Queensland Parks and Marine Parks).
BIOL6102/6103 Research Project
(#10 units = 62.5% Honours grade)

Objectives

In this course, you will develop practical and theoretical research skills. You will formulate hypotheses and test them with appropriate research. You will learn to keep detailed written records of all research activities and present your findings as a research report in the form of a scientific manuscript.

Assessment of Research Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Report</td>
<td>A report on the research project is submitted in a format specified in ‘Assessment Notes’</td>
<td>85 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>A report will be submitted by the principal supervisor which addresses various specific aspects of your research performance. Additional details are listed in ‘Assessment Notes’.</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Notes

Your report should represent your own original work and clearly identify any research or analysis performed by someone else. The research report is presented in the form of a scientific manuscript of a maximum of 8000 words with the Introduction restricted to no more than 1500 words (see “Report format” below). The word count excludes; the abstract (limited to 250 words), figure legends and references. A word count must be listed on the title page and you will be penalised if in excess of 8000 words are submitted.

You have to keep appropriate laboratory/field records. These records are retained by the principal supervisor and are available for reference by the Honours Committee during the examination process.

Your supervisor will help deciding whether your research is of adequate quality and breadth for submission to a scientific journal. In practise, the research from several students and/or staff is often combined to produce a manuscript for submission. A publication in your name can be very helpful in advancing your further career.

Your research report cannot contain plagiarised sections. Inform yourself at the University of Queensland websites on plagiarism:

Two members of the academic or research staff, not associated with the research project, will examine the research report. At least one of the examiners will be an academic member of the School. The two examiners for the research report will be the same as those for your research proposal. The marking template used by examiners is at the end of the handbook for your information. The examiners will submit their assessment sheets after you have presented your final seminar.

The Research Performance is a report prepared by your principal supervisor addressing your skills and abilities in relation to your research activities. The template used by the supervisor is at the end of the handbook.
Report format

The research report is presented in the form of a scientific manuscript where you will write your report by presenting your research findings in context with the current scientific literature. The manuscript generally consists of title, abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, and references. The Title page of your report should include the following information:

1. Project title
2. Student name
3. Word count

Write in plain English and comply strictly with the format and submission requirements. Submit all pages in black type, on white A4 paper, printed on one side only with at least a 2 cm margin on each side. Use a single column, 12 point font size and 1.5 times line spacing. The figures and tables should be separate from the text and should be placed after the text and references. Colour graphs or photographs may be included.

A statement of authorship must be signed on the page following the title page. This acknowledgment should state: “The research carried out in the course of this investigation and the results presented in this report are, except where acknowledged, the original work of the author, and all research was conducted during the Honours program.” It is not unusual to use information from others in the writing of your report. However, it is important that credit is given where the work is not your own, either by citing other people’s ideas and findings in cases where the research has been published, or where someone has assisted you or provided you with unpublished data this should be clearly stated.

Referencing: For consistency, you will use the format used by the “Ecology Letters” journal. The journal’s style is available within EndNote reference program.

You must submit three bound copies of the research report and a CD copy (please label the CD not the case). Please attach a coversheet to each copy and submit all three copies bundled together (with rubber bands, clips etc). You will also need to submit a copy of your report on “Turnitin”. An email with detailed instructions of how to submit your work on Turnitin will be sent to you before the due date.

A penalty of 2% reduction of the mark per day is applied for late submission of the research report. After submission, the word count will be checked. If the report exceeds the word limit the examiners will only read the first 8000 words of text.
BIOL6201 Seminar & Research Communication
(#2 units = 12.5 % Honours grade)

Objective

The objective of this course is to develop your scientific communication skills and appreciation of the broader area of biological research and innovation.
You will learn to:

- Listen, read, analyse, and critically evaluate scientific information presented in scientific seminars, and actively participate in seminar discussions
- Take diary notes during seminars to aid comprehension and recollection of scientific presentations, and to formulate questions for the speaker
- Give clear, concise, organised and accurate oral presentations of your own research within the School and University.

Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar &amp; Seminar Notes</td>
<td>Seminar attendance &amp; seminar notes. You will attend 15 formal research seminars and maintain a seminar diary.</td>
<td>Pass / Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Seminar</td>
<td>You will present a 15 minute research seminar on your research during your Honours year, followed by 15 minutes of questions from examiners and audience.</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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Assessment Notes

**Assessment 1: Seminar and seminar notes.**
You are required to attend weekly formal scientific research seminars (15 during your Honours year). You are encouraged to attend formal seminars that are held in other Schools, Centres, Institutes or other Universities. Seminars or presentations made at research group meetings are not acceptable. PhD confirmation or completion seminars are not accepted. You are required to maintain a diary of the seminars you attend that includes:

- Date, time and place of the seminar and which seminar series it is part of
- Title of seminar and speaker's name and affiliation
- Handwritten notes (1/2 - 1 page) about the seminar
- A paragraph that states the objective(s) of the speaker's work (i.e. what was he/she trying to show) and what was achieved. This should be added after the seminar, based on the notes taken. Material copied directly from the speaker's abstract is not acceptable.

The diary must contain notes on all of the seminars you have attended. The diary is given either a Pass or Fail grade. **You must pass this section to pass the course.**
Helpful hints

- Ensure that you read the speaker’s abstract prior to the seminar to enable you to get a general overview of the major aims of the research, approaches used, and of the major conclusions.
- During the seminar, listen critically and sympathetically.
- Focus attention on the aims, hypotheses, and assumptions; the structure of the argument; and the evidence presented (or neglected).
- Make your notes brief and put them in your own words.
- Use margins for questions, comments, and notes to yourself on material that is not clear.
- Go over your notes as soon as possible after the seminar to write a summary paragraph that states the objective(s) of the speaker’s work (i.e. what was he/she trying to show) and what was achieved.
- Observe the qualities of a good speaker and try to incorporate these qualities into your own presentations.

Assessment 2: Final Seminar

You will present your research seminar after completion of your research report at the BIOL Honours Symposium. The quality of your presentation and your ability to answer questions from the audience are evaluated by qualified School members using the following criteria:

- Organisation and preparation;
- Methods, analysis and understanding;
- Presentation;
- Responses to questions from examiners and audience.

Each of the criteria contributes 25% of the final mark for this course component. Evaluation forms will be used for the seminar and for your responses to questions. The two examiners of your research report will attend the seminar and prepare questions based on the research report. You should bring your research report to the seminar in order to answer any questions the examiners may have.

The examiners and other audience members will direct questions to you during the question period. Questions will cover issues arising from the research report and from your seminar.

All Honours students will present their research at the BIOL Honours Symposium. The seminars are assessed by qualified BIOL staff, co/supervisors, and examiners.

The format of the research seminar is:

- You will give a 15 minute presentation, followed by 15 minutes of questions and discussion
- After introducing your research topic, you present results of your research, their interpretation, and explain how your findings are situated in the current state of research knowledge on the topic
- Your presentation and answers are assessed by examiners of your research report and qualified School staff attending your presentation.
- **You are expected to attend all presentations of the BIOL Honours Symposium.** School staff will attend as many seminars as possible.

You will be using the school’s laptop (PC) for the presentations so please make sure that the files are compatible. Please bring a copy (on a memory stick/CD) to the BIOL helpdesk the day before your talk. See assessment sheet for criteria used by examiners and qualified assessors in the audience.

Helpful hints

The audience will be presented with a wide range of topics over the duration of the BIOL Honours Symposium. Ensure that you clearly outline your research aims, objectives, and findings. Make your presentation easy to follow and ensure that you highlight your most exciting findings. You can demonstrate how your research has evolved by putting it in context with your initial research proposal.

The research seminars are held shortly after submission of the research reports.

You will be advised of the schedule closer to the date.
BIOL6301 Research Proposal
(#2 units = 12.5% Honours grade)

Objectives

The Honours research proposal leads you to establish the practical or theoretical significance of your research including innovation, feasibility, and appropriate experimental approaches in the proposed research. The research proposal is based on a critical review of the literature.

You will be guided in the process by your Honours supervisor/s to design appropriate literature search strategies and other elements of research proposal preparation.

You will
- Develop innovative and achievable research objectives based on thorough understanding of existing knowledge in a field
- Gain skills for preparing a high-quality research proposal by following the format of research grant proposals used by national and international grant agencies.

Assessment

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<th>Mode</th>
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<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Seminar</td>
<td>You will give a 10 minute presentation of your planned research project, followed by 5 minutes of questions from the audience.</td>
<td>Pass / Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>The research proposal will be submitted about eight weeks after commencement of the Honours year and should follow the format of grant applications submitted to national and international agencies.</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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Assessment Notes

Assessment 1: Research Proposal Seminar

This course component is not formally assessed, but allows you to introduce your proposed research, and to receive critical feedback on your intended research and presentation skills. You have the opportunity to discuss your planned research activities and understanding with experts in the field. This provides valuable directives for your Honours research proposal and research activities.

Prior to your presentation to the School you must get feedback on your presentation from your research group.

The research proposal seminar has the following format:
- Presentation of 10 minutes (this equates to about 10 –12 slides).
- At the end of your talk, 5 minutes will be allowed for you to answer questions from the audience.

Honours students are expected to attend all presentations, academic and research staff will attend as many seminars as possible. An evaluation form will be completed by members of the attending audience to provide you with feedback on presentation.

You will be using the School’s laptop (PC) for the presentations so please make sure that the files are compatible. Please bring a copy (on a memory stick/CD) to the BIOL helpdesk the day before your talk.

Helpful hints
- Clearly outline the background and importance of your planned research (this may constitute the first half of your presentation)
- Spend the second half of your presentation on your project specifics
• Make your presentation intelligible to a broad audience of biologists who are not experts in your research area
• Pace your speech and visual material allowing the audience to follow and digest information easily
• Don’t include all detail of your proposed research in the presentation, rather focus on a clear structure
• Questions and discussion after your presentation are used to elaborate on issues that are not presented in detail
• Consult your supervisor(s) for advice at all stages during the preparation of your presentation. Leave time after preparation for a practice run of your presentation with your supervisor/s and colleagues (lab group meetings, other Honours students, etc).

Assessment 2: Research Proposal

In discussion with Honours supervisor/s, you will determine the scope of the research proposal which is based on your research project. Follow the format of a research proposal similar to grant applications submitted to national and international agencies, such as the Australian Research Council (ARC). The research proposal should not exceed 4000 words. The Research Proposal will be assessed by two assessors who do not include supervisor/s or staff closely associated with the project.

Guidelines for Honours Research Proposal

The Honours research proposal follows the format of grant proposals commonly used by national and international grant agencies. The aim of the proposal is to introduce the reader to your subject area by critically reviewing the current literature, and to outline and defend your proposed research and the approach you intend to use.

1. Project title
   A short descriptive title of no more than 20 words that is precise and informative.

2. Summary
   Using a maximum of 100 words, write a concise summary of the research aims, expected outcomes, and overall significance of the research.

3. Aims, background, significance and innovation, research plan & references
   Aims: Describe the aims of the project. Ensure that you show how the planned research addresses a current research question.
   Background/Literature review/ Significance: Include in this section information about the current understanding of the field of the research based on published literature, and the relationship of this proposal to work in the field generally. Preferentially refer to refereed papers that are widely available. Make sure that you cite the literature appropriately. Detail the significance of the research and describe how the anticipated outcomes advance the knowledge of the discipline.
   Research plan, methods, and timetable: Outline how the research will be carried out and which existing or new methods are applied. Show how the research plan and methodology will address the aims of the project. Detail the conceptual framework, design, and methods, and demonstrate that these are adequately developed. Prove that your approach is feasible and achievable given the time and logistic constraints of a one year project. Include a timetable detailing when the research activities are performed.
   Cited references: Include a list of all references cited in the application. The references are not included in the 4000 word limit of this section. For consistency, you will use the format used by the “Ecology Letters” journal.

Proposal format and submission

Write in plain English and comply strictly with the format and submission requirements. Submit all pages in black type, on white A4 paper, printed on one side only with at least a 2 cm margin on each side and. Use a single column, 12 point font size and 1.5 times line spacing. The figures and tables should be separate from the text and should be placed after the text and references. Colour graphs or photographs may be included.

You must submit three copies of the research report and a CD copy (please label the CD not the case). Please attach a coversheet to each copy and submit all three copies together. You will also need to submit a copy of your report on “Turnitin”. An email with detailed instructions of how to submit your work on Turnitin will be sent to you before the due date.

A penalty of 2% reduction of the mark per day is applied for late submission of the research proposal. After submission, the word count will be checked. If the proposal exceeds the word limit the examiners will only read the first 4000 words of text.
BIOL6401 Advanced Readings in Integrative & Evolutionary Biology  
(#2 units = 12.5% Honours grade)

This course will introduce you to the broader scientific field of biology. You will read, discuss and present scientific knowledge in a diverse range of topics in biology.

The course coordinator is Dr Error! Reference source not found. (karynj@uq.edu.au).

Goals and learning objectives:

1. To develop critical thinking skills that can be applied to analysis of research from a broad range of topic areas.

2. To learn to effectively communicate scientific information through written communication, oral presentation and small group discussions.

Introductory meeting:

An induction meeting will be held from 3pm – 5pm on the 2nd Thursday of your Honours year in Room 257, Goddard Building. Please make sure you are available to attend this session. At this meeting an overview of the course including assessment will be presented and sessions will be selected.

Format:

BIOL6401 is run as series of discussion groups. The course has about 20 sessions per year, from which you will select a total of five sessions to attend. A reading list is compiled by BIOL academics who select three papers on a theme in Biological Sciences for each session. Course reading material will be available from the library (www.library.uq.edu.au course materials BIOL6401) as PDFs or from the high use desk of the library.

At the beginning of the course you will select a topic to examine in depth. You will be assigned one of the papers from that topic. At each session three Honours students each present a 15 min critique of their selected paper to the group and then lead a ~15 min discussion period.

Each student will attend five sessions during the year. For each session you attend you are expected to read all the assigned papers (usually 3). You can nominate the five sessions you would prefer to attend at the organisation/induction meeting. To ensure you choose a broad range of topics, you are required to attend sessions from at least three different research themes (as listed on the schedule).

NOTE: once your schedule of sessions is confirmed, you have a formal commitment to attend those five sessions. Speak to your advisor before signing up to check about possible conflicts with field work or other commitments.

For each session you attend (other than the one where you give an oral presentation) you will prepare a list of 6 questions arising from the readings. The questions will be handed to the academic at the start of the session to ensure all students are prepared for a lively discussion of the papers.

You will write a 1000-word report on one of the attended sessions but not the session where you have given an oral presentation. The BIOL staff member responsible for that session will mark your report.
Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Oral Presentation</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Assessment by staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Peer evaluation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Short question assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Written report</td>
<td>30%</td>
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</table>

Oral Presentation
During the course you will present one paper chosen from the reading list. Following your 15 minute presentation you will lead a short discussion session on the paper. In your presentation, focus on critically assessing the data and conclusions rather than summarising the paper (remember the other participants have already read the paper). Presentations can be made either using overhead transparencies or power point. While clarity of your visual aides is important, **the focus of your presentation should be on the scientific analysis.** You are encouraged to contact the BIOL staff member responsible for the session if you would like further guidance.

Attendance
It is a requirement of this course that each student attends and participates in the five sessions agreed to at the start of the year. Marks for attendance accumulate to a maximum of 10% of the total course grade. Failure to attend and/or participate will result in a mark of zero for that session.

Short Question Assignment
At the beginning of each session (other than your oral presentation session) you will submit to the academic six questions arising from the papers (that is, two questions per paper if three papers are assigned or three questions per paper if two papers are assigned). Marks allocated to the questions will accumulate to a maximum of 10% of the course total. Failure to submit questions at the start of the session will result in a mark of zero.

Written Assessment
You will write a 1000-word report on one of the sessions you attend (not the session in which you give an oral presentation). The purpose of the report is to critically assess the scientific material presented in the journal papers and oral presentations at your assigned session. It should be written as a report on a “conference session” aimed at a reading audience of scientists in the broad field of biology. It is important that you incorporate discussion of all papers presented at the session. The report should not simply summarize the findings of the papers but also critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of the data presented and your evaluation of the impact of the research.

The report is due at 4 pm one week (seven days) after the date of the session. Reports are submitted with a BIOL cover sheet to the BIOL Help Desk (Level 2, Goddard Building). The penalty for late submission is 2% per day late.

The report must not exceed 1000 words (excluding references, word count to be recorded on front page) and must be typed, using 1.5 line spacing on one side only of A4 paper. Leave margins of at least 2 cm. The report must have a BIOL cover sheet attached, and should clearly state:

- i) Course name (BIOL6401)
- ii) Due date
- iii) Name of academic in charge of your session
- iv) Title of session
- v) Students name and student number
- vi) Word count.
Examiners are to mark student’s final report based on three major components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that each component does not contribute equally to the final mark.

Examiners please note the general assessment criteria below when awarding final mark (see the points in the following page that may be helpful):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Mark (%)</th>
<th>Examiner</th>
<th>Examiner's signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 80 (Hons 1)</td>
<td>Work of superior quality in all aspects of the report, containing clear examples of excellent critical skills and personal insights into research area.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79 (Hons IIa)</td>
<td>Work of very good quality in all aspects of the report, but showing lesser critical skills and personal insights into research area.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69 (Hons IIb)</td>
<td>Good quality in all aspects of the report, but with inadequacies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 (Hons III)</td>
<td>Adequate quality work with significant deficiencies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 50 (Fail)</td>
<td>Inadequate quality work with significant errors and deficiencies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justification:
Examiners should consider the following questions when marking a report.

1. **Introduction**
   - Has the *most relevant* information been provided?
   - Have the rationale and aims been adequately described?
   - How well have the project’s aims been placed in the context of existing knowledge?

2. **Methods**
   - Were all procedures described clearly?
   - Is the experimental or study design appropriate for the questions being asked?
   - Did the descriptions include sufficient detail to understand the experiments, or study, and replicate the experiments?
   - Were the methods for analysing the data appropriate and clearly described?

3. **Results**
   - Do the results explicitly address the aims posed earlier?
   - Was the order and organisation of the results appropriate?
   - Were the results described with clear reference to figures and tables where appropriate?
   - What is the quality of the data?
   - Are important controls included?
   - Is irrelevant information excluded, or has data been used unduly selectively?

4. **Figures and tables**
   - Do they communicate the biological information data in the most appropriate way? Were they sufficient to give a clear summary of the data?
   - Were they neat and clear?
   - Were the legends clear and in sufficient detail?

5. **Statistical analysis of the data (if applicable)**
   - Were the statistical analyses appropriate?
   - Were adequate experiments conducted for statistical analysis?
   - Is the interpretation of the statistics clear and correct?

6. **Discussion**
   - How well has the student linked their results with the published literature?
   - Does this discussion link back to the aims posed in the introduction?
   - Is the organisation of the discussion logical?
   - How well does the student understand the strengths and limitations of the data?
   - Was there a clear conclusion?
   - Are future directions discussed?

7. **Citations and list of references**
   - Is the cited literature up-to-date?
   - Was there an over-reliance on reviews?
   - Were the references listed correctly?

8. **Standard of English expression and style**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific comments (to be transferred to student)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Suggestions</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Final Seminar Feedback

Examiners are to mark student’s presentations based on three major components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that each component does not contribute equally to the final mark.

Examiners please note the general assessment criteria below when awarding final mark (see the points in the following page that may be helpful).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 80 (Hons 1)</td>
<td>Work of superior quality in all aspects of the seminar, containing clear examples of excellent critical skills and personal insights into research area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79 (Hons IIa)</td>
<td>Work of very good quality in all aspects of the seminar, but showing lesser critical skills and personal insights into research area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69 (Hons IIb)</td>
<td>Good quality in all aspects of the seminar, but with inadequacies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59 (Hons III)</td>
<td>Adequate quality work with significant deficiencies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 50 (Fail)</td>
<td>Inadequate quality work with significant errors and deficiencies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In assigning a mark for each section, examiners should consider the following points:

**Content (60% of total)**
1. Did the introduction clearly and concisely outline the nature and scope of the problem to be investigated?
2. Did the introduction orient the listener to the relationship of the current project with existing knowledge?
3. Was the method of investigation, and if necessary, the reasons for choice of a particular method explained?
4. Were the results clearly presented and logically ordered?
5. Did the speaker use good judgement in presenting pertinent information and excluding non-essential or distracting details?
6. Did the presentation standard indicate adequate preparation and rehearsal by the speaker?
7. Were audiovisual aids clear and helpful to the audience, rather than cluttered and confusing?
8. Were the strategies and methods of investigation clearly explained?
9. Were the results adequately analysed and critically evaluated?
10. Were the display items (figures/tables/diagrams) appropriate to communicate the results clearly?
11. Where necessary, were appropriate statistical analyses used?
12. Did the student demonstrate an understanding of the distinction between statistical significance and biological importance, or did the student confuse absence of evidence with evidence absence?
13. If the results obtained were statistically significant, were they also biologically meaningful?
14. Did the conclusions relate the results to the objectives of the investigation?
15. Did the speaker place his or her results appropriately in a wider context?
16. Did the speaker appear to understand clearly the background to the study and the significance of the results?
17. Did the speaker indulge in needless speculation?
18. Did the speaker acknowledge any real shortfalls in the work and suggest ways to overcome or avoid these in future work, if appropriate?

**Presentation (20% of total)**
1. Did the speaker remember to face the audience when speaking, avoid reading the entire presentation, and avoid other distracting mannerisms?
2. Did the speaker project his/her voice clearly to the audience?
3. Were major concepts and conclusions explained clearly and precisely?
4. Did the speaker increase your interest in the topic, through personal attributes such as enthusiasm, and imagination?
5. Did the speaker keep to the allotted time and present material at a comprehensible rate?

**Questions (20% of total)**
1. Did the speaker clearly and incisively address the issues raised by the questions?
2. Did the speaker address replies to the audience as a whole?
3. Did the speaker demonstrate a deep grasp of the subject?
Specific comments (to be transferred to student)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
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<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
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</table>
Faculty of Science – Honours Program  
BIOL6301 – Research Proposal  
School of Biological Sciences  
Proposal Seminar Feedback

Examiners are to consider the following three major components when making specific comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate’s proposal seminar.

Content
1. Did the introduction clearly and concisely outline the nature and scope of the problem to be investigated?
2. Did the introduction orient the listener to the relationship of the current project with existing knowledge?
3. Was the method of investigation, and if necessary, the reasons for choice of a particular method explained?
4. Did the speaker use good judgement in presenting pertinent information and excluding non-essential or distracting details?
5. Did the presentation standard indicate adequate preparation and rehearsal by the speaker?
6. Were audiovisual aids clear and helpful to the audience, rather than cluttered and confusing?
7. Were the strategies and proposed methods of investigation clearly explained?
8. Did the speaker appear to understand clearly the background to the study?

Presentation
6. Did the speaker remember to face the audience when speaking, avoid reading the entire presentation, and avoid other distracting mannerisms?
7. Did the speaker project his/her voice clearly to the audience?
8. Were major concepts and conclusions explained clearly and precisely?
9. Did the speaker increase your interest in the topic, through personal attributes such as enthusiasm, and imagination?
10. Did the speaker keep to the allotted time and present material at a comprehensible rate?

Questions
4. Did the speaker clearly and incisively address the issues raised by the questions?
5. Did the speaker address replies to the audience as a whole?
6. Did the speaker demonstrate a deep grasp of the subject?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Examiner</th>
<th>Examiner's signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific comments (to be transferred to student)</td>
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Faculty of Science – Honours Program

BIOL6301 – Research Proposal
School of Biological Sciences

Research Proposal Feedback

Examiners are to mark student’s research proposal based on three major components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note that each component does not contribute equally to the final mark.

Examiners please note the general assessment criteria below when awarding final mark (see the points in the following page that may be helpful):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Examiner</td>
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<td>Examiner's signature</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

> 80 (Hons 1)  Work of superior quality in all aspects of the proposal, containing clear examples of excellent critical skills and personal insights into research area.

70-79 (Hons IIa)  Work of very good quality in all aspects of the proposal, but showing lesser critical skills and personal insights into research area.

60-69 (Hons IIb)  Good quality in all aspects of the proposal, but with inadequacies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.

50-59 (Hons III)  Adequate quality work with significant deficiencies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.

< 50 (Fail)  Inadequate quality work with significant errors and deficiencies in understanding, critical skills, literacy, organisation and presentation.

Justification:
Examiners should consider the following questions when marking a proposal.

1. **Content**
   - Is the background comprehensive, detailed and focused?
   - Are there clear links between the project outline and the literature?
   - Has the *most relevant* information been provided?
   - Did the student show *critical* appraisal of the literature and the project?
   - Have the rationale and aims been adequately described?
   - How well have the project's aims been placed in the context of existing knowledge?
   - Is the project design appropriate for the questions being asked?
   - Did the description include sufficient detail to understand the proposed methodology?

2. **References**
   - Is the cited literature up-to-date?
   - Was there an over-reliance on reviews?
   - Were the references listed correctly?

3. **Presentation**
   - Standard of English expression and style
   - Professional expression and style used
   - Accuracy and helpfulness of figures.
Specific comments (to be transferred to student)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
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<tr>
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<th>Suggestions</th>
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</table>
Faculty of Biological & Chemical Sciences  
School of Biological Sciences Honours Program  
BIOL6102/3 – Research Project  
Supervisor's Assessment of Student's Research Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title of project</td>
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</table>

Your assessment will be used to determine the Laboratory / Field Evaluation component of the student's assessment. Please consider your assessment carefully and ensure that it is a fair reflection of the student's performance in each area. Your assessment contributes 15% of the final mark of this unit.

Please rate the student relative to other Honours students with whom you have been associated on each of the following aspects of their performance during their Honours project.

**Outstanding** – top 5%; **excellent** – top 6% - 20%; **very good** – top 21% - 35%; **good** – top 36% - 50%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good / Average</th>
<th>Fair / below average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiative, independence</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Originality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm, self-motivation, perseverance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and preparation of experiments / field work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation of time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laboratory / field skills in techniques required</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation and analysis of data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accuracy and precision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of relevant literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application of literature to interpretation of results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of limitations of the study</td>
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<td>Appreciation of future directions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to work as a member of a research team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research ability and potential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting deadlines</td>
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</table>
### Additional comments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you received the student’s experimental records and laboratory / field notebooks?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note the report will not be accepted unless the answer to this question is ‘YES’. The records must be available from you, if required during the process of assigning grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marking criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>&gt; 80 (Hons 1)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>70-79 (Hons IIa)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>&lt; 50 (Fail)</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall mark (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisors signature</td>
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</table>

| Date |

Please complete this form and return it to Help Desk, Level 2, Goddard Building (8) via internal mail or email the results to biologyadmin@uq.edu.au
BIOL6401
Advanced Readings in Integrative & Evolutionary Biology

Oral presentation: Staff evaluation

DATE: Student:
Examiner:

The overall grade is out of 40 marks. In assigning marks please consider the following:

Clarity of presentation

Clarity of visual aids

Ability to put research into context

Comprehension of material

Critical evaluation of paper

Ability to critically discuss results

Ability to identify important discussion points

Ability to field questions

AS A GUIDE (IF APPROPRIATE) MARK EACH OF THE CRITERIA OUT OF 5
(5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 satisfactory, 2 poor, 1 very poor) and sum the total below.

ALTERNATIVELY, IF THIS SCHEME IS RESTRICTIVE/INAPPROPRIATE GIVE A MARK OUT OF 40
BELOW (32-40 excellent, 26-31 very good, 20-30 satisfactory).

TOTAL (out of 40)
Note: An important part of being a scientist is learning to be objective. Being a peer reviewer comes with the responsibility to award marks thoughtfully and fairly based on the criteria provided below.

Please hand form to staff at end of the session.

PEER REVIEWERS NAME: (providing your name is compulsory)

DATE: PRESENTER:

MARK EACH OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA OUT OF 5
(5 excellent, 4 very good, 3 satisfactory, 2 poor, 1 very poor)

Clarity of presentation

Clarity of visual aids

Ability to put research into context

Ability to critically discuss results

Ability to field questions

TOTAL (out of 25) ______________________
The Honours student gives a critical assessment of an honours readings course session. This report is written as a report on a “conference session” aimed at a reading audience of scientists in the broad discipline of biology. It should communicate a clear and critical assessment of the scientific material presented in the journal papers, oral presentations and ensuing discussion. The report should not exceed the word limit of 1000 words.

Rating the report
Has the student written a report that could be understood by a broad range of scientists?
Has the student synthesised the information from the session into a coherent report?
Has the student highlighted the most important message(s) of the papers and discussion?
Has the student commented critically on the scientific information?
Has the student presented a report with clear English expression that is within the word limit?

Justification:

24-30 Excellent ..................................................................................................................
18-24 Very good ................................................................................................................
15-18 Satisfactory .............................................................................................................
< 15 Poor............................................................................................................................

Mark (out of 30): ____________ ................................................................................................

Examiner’s Name (print) and signature

.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................