Department Name: Biological Sciences
College of: Science

**Recommended Course Identification:**
- **Prefix:** (3 alpha characters) BSC
- **Level:** (1 number) 6
- **Course Number:** (3 numbers) 544
- **Lab Code:** (L or C?) C

**Complete Course Title:** Seminar in Avian Ecology

**Effective Date (first term course will be offered):** Fall 2009

**Credits:** 1  **Lab/Discussion:** 1  **Written material comes only from the recent primary scientific literature.**

**Lecture:** 0  **Field Work:** 0  **Primary Journals include Ecology, Auk, Condor, Wilson Bull., J. Wildl. Mgt.**

**Grading:** (X in front of option)  **X Regular**

**Course Description, no more than 3 lines:**
Primarily student-led discussions of recent papers on selected topics in avian ecology. Students that have completed the course will possess an awareness of major areas of study in avian ecology and a deep understanding of at least one those major areas.

**Prerequisites:** None  **Corequisites:** None

**Minimum qualifications needed to teach this course:**
Ph.D. in a relevant field (Biology, Ecology, Wildlife Science)

Any other departments and/or colleges that might be affected by the new course must be consulted.
List entities that have been consulted and attach written comments from each.
None

Faculty Contact, Email, Complete Phone Number:
Dale Gawlik, dgawlik@fau.edu, 561-297-3333

**Signatures**

**Approved by:**

Department Chair: __________________________
College Curriculum Chair: ______________________
College Dean: ________________________________
UGPC Chair: _________________________________
Dean of Graduate Studies: ______________________

**Date:** 10.07.08

**Syllabus—must include course objectives. See UGPC Guidelines.**

**Written Comments—required from all departments affected.**

Go to: http://graduate.fau.edu/gpc/ to download this form.

Email this form and syllabus to csinady@fau.edu one week before the University Graduate Programs Committee meeting so that materials may be viewed on the UGPC website by committee members prior to the meeting.
Syllabus

Seminar in Avian Ecology (BSC-6XXX)
1 credit, no pre-requisites

Department of Biological Sciences
Charles E. Schmidt College of Science
Florida Atlantic University

Instructor
Dr. Dale Gawlik, Sanson Science 271, dgawlik@fau.edu, 297-3333

Online resource
Blackboard for BSC 6936 Seminar in Avian Ecology. Students should check the site weekly to keep current with any changes in the course and to download assigned papers.

Required text
None. There will be weekly assigned reading of recent papers from the primary literature. All papers will be posted as pdfs in Blackboard.

Suggested reading

Course objectives
Students that have completed the course will possess:
1. An awareness of major areas of study in avian ecology.
2. An improved ability to critically evaluate a scientific paper.
3. A thorough knowledge of a selected topic in avian ecology

**Course components and procedures**

*Leading journal article discussions:* The purpose of the journal article discussions is to get students reading the most current avian ecology literature, honing their reading and critical evaluation skills, and developing a deep understanding of one aspect of avian ecology, rather than to briefly cover a broad range of topics. The specific focal topic within avian ecology varies from year to year and includes emerging or revisited topics such as avian optimal foraging, avian resource selection and avian social foraging. Each student will be responsible for leading about 3 class discussions of papers as well as regularly participating in discussions led by others. To lead a discussion, students will search the literature for a recent (within last 3 years) paper on that subject from a high quality scientific journal. Older foundation papers may be assigned to several students to facilitate interpretation of more recent works. Students will post a pdf of the article on Blackboard at least one week prior to the discussion. Discussions should evaluate the scientific approach, major results, significance, and overall strengths and weaknesses.

*Class participation:* The success and worthiness of this type of seminar course largely depends on the students enrolled in it. Each student brings to class valuable experiences and a unique perspective on research in avian ecology. Thoughtfulness and engagement in the topics are both appreciated and accounted for in the final grade.

**Time requirements**

Students should expect to spend an average of about two hours per week on this course outside of class. Students should allocate time for finding a suitable paper, reading assigned papers, and preparing to lead the discussion of their paper.

**Grading criteria**

Grades will be based on a student’s performance on two course components, with each component accounting for a percentage of the grade as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course component</th>
<th>Max points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership of class discussion</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final percentages will be converted to letter grades as below. Grades may be viewed through Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Final Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communication devices**
In keeping with University policy and professional courtesy, cell phones, beepers, and pagers should be disabled in class.

**Students with disabilities**
Students who require special accommodations to properly complete the course should register with the Office for Students with Disabilities so their accommodation needs can be met.

**Course schedule**
The syllabus contains only a general course schedule. Students should monitor the calendar in Blackboard for specifics on the topic and person leading discussions on a given date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Course activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Introduction, syllabus review, topic assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Instructor-led background discussion on topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-course</td>
<td>Student-led journal article discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last</td>
<td>Instructor-led synthesis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>