

Research Reviews

Ecol 8990

(call number: 29-967; 1 credit)

Spring 2015

Organizer: *Craig Osenberg*

What: This seminar is designed to facilitate critical discussion of research projects at various stages of their development. Each term I hope to attract ~8-12 participants (i.e., primarily graduate students, but post-docs and faculty also are welcome) with various backgrounds who are interested in helping colleagues work through problems they have encountered in their research (such as the formulation of hypotheses, synthesis of existing research, design of experiments, analysis of experimental and comparative data, interpretation of complex data).

Format: We will meet for 2 hours at my home during one evening for 10 or so weeks of the semester. During the first 20-30 minutes of each evening, the lead discussant will introduce a problem. The introduction should include: a) 5-10 minutes during which they lay out the conceptual framework for their research (this should emphasize general ideas, concepts, theory; it should not involve reference to the specific study system); b) 10-15 minutes during which they provide the necessary detail about the study and background data. This introduction should be specific and focused - it will establish the foundation and focus for the evening's discussion. The presentation should end with specific statement about the evening's goals: what problems do you want the group to help resolve? The remaining 1.5 hours will be spent in lively and critical discussion with the primary purpose of improving the discussion leader's research program, and indirectly helping all of us improve our own research by further developing our abilities to (i) ask compelling ecological and evolutionary questions, (ii) apply appropriate tools to resolve those questions; (iii) detect flaws in methodology, approaches and inference, and (iv) suggest insightful solutions to these problems (i.e., propose alternative methods, approaches, and interpretations). Short readings might be assigned to provide background and/or to facilitate discussion, but I mostly anticipate detailed discussions focused on the student's research: i.e., participants should not have to "prepare" (but I expect the discussion leader to do considerable preparation).

Who: Graduate students, faculty, post-docs, as well as advanced undergraduates with research experience. Because feedback at all stages in a research project is critical to its successful fruition, I hope to have a cross-section of students at all stages in their graduate training. Because diverse feedback from people with different perspectives also is critical, I hope to attract students from a wide range of labs and interests. [Although this format is much like a "lab meeting", it is designed to provide a broader base of critical feedback and to include more novel perspectives than you might get from a smaller group of "like-minded" peers.] This class is open to students from any unit on campus. Although I expect most participants to be interested in ecological questions, I welcome participants with any interests in ecology, environmental science, comparative biology, or evolutionary biology.

When and Where: Wednesday evenings (730-930pm) at my home. FYI -- I live in the Silverleaf subdivision just north of Epps Bridge Parkway and Jimmy Daniel Road (just outside of the western portion of the loop).

How to sign up: Email me (osenberg 'at' uga 'dot' edu) asap. Because space is limited and I want to ensure a diverse group of participants, I will then select a group of participants and open up registration to those folks. That said, I'm hopeful I can accommodate all interested students.

Schedule:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Discussion leader</u>
Jan 7	--no class
Jan 14	--Anya Brown
Jan 21	--Greg Jacobs
Jan 28	--Elizabeth Hamman
Feb 04	--No class
Feb 11	--Cecilia Sanchez

Feb 18	--No class (CWO at GoMRI conference)
Feb 25	--Class cancelled (due to weather)
Mar 04	--No class (Benthic Ecology Meeting)
Mar 11	--No class (UGA Spring Break)
Mar 18	--Alyssa Gehman
Mar 25	--Daniel Becker
Apr 01	--Tad Dallas
Apr 08	--Courtney Murdock
Apr 15	--Rachel Smith
Apr 22	--TBA & end of semester pot luck

Other Participants:

Chao Song
Ashton Griffin
Rebecca Atkins
Jenna Malek
Carrie Keogh

last update: 15 Jan 2015 by CWO