

# Course Syllabus

Spring 2024

## Instructor Information

Dr. Scott Grubbs  
Professor of Biology  
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## Contacting me

Please feel free to contact me whenever you want via e-mail. My intent is to reply within 24 hours.

## Course restriction and notes

Graduate standing. BIOL 500 is required for the MS in Biology for both non-thesis and thesis options. BIOL 500 will no longer count towards the Graduate Certificate Program starting fall 2022

## University Policies

As a WKU student enrolled in this course you have certain rights and entitlements established by federal law and described in University policies.

Information regarding the request of an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act can be found by clicking on the "ADA Accommodation" tab at:  
<https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/>

Information regarding the reporting of discrimination or harassment under Title IX of the Equal Opportunity in Education Act can be found by clicking on the "Title IX Discrimination/Harassment" tab at:  
<https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/>

Students are required to maintain a civil and professional conduct in class. Information regarding academic integrity and the student code of conduct as described in the student handbook can be found by clicking the

"Things you should know" tab at:  
<https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/>

## BIOL 500: Introduction to Graduate Study & Research WEB

## Course Description and Expectations

The main theme of this course is an introduction to a graduate research program.

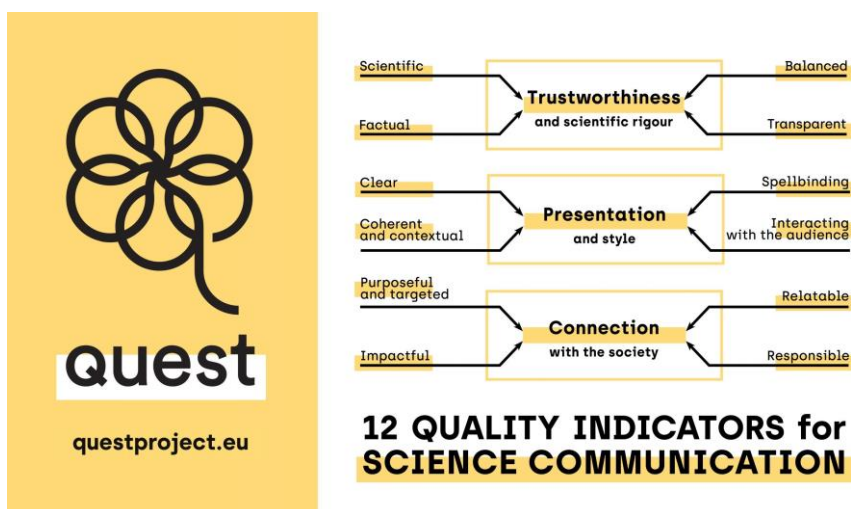
All course activities will occur asynchronously but within a framework of weekly deadlines.

## Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- 1. Continue in the WKU Graduate Program and remain in good standing**  
How – You? Completion of forms and development of timeline.  
How – Me? Signature of your forms
- 2. Critically evaluate scientific literature**  
How – You? Complete critical literature reviews  
How – Me? Grading of your reviews
- 3. Comprehend and communicate scientific information**  
How – You? All elements of course topics  
How – Me? Grading and assessment of participation
- 4. Prepare and write a rigorous research proposal**  
How – You? Assignments and submission of your proposal  
How – Me? Grading and feedback on proposal
- 5. Become a serious graduate student**  
How – You? Develop time management skills  
How – Me? Credit for participation and personal assessment
- 6. Demonstrate proficiency with important biological topics**  
How – You? Focused effort  
How – Me? Online biology exam – requirement of the MS in Biology

## Technological Requirements

Access to online content via a reliable internet connection is required for this course.



## Expanded Course Overview

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Welcome to the WKU non-thesis MS program in Biology. BIOL 500 is required of all first-semester thesis and non-thesis MS students and is designed to help prepare you generally for your graduate program. While some of you will complete your coursework over a “longer” time period (> 3 years), this course is especially intended to help students who (a) are transferring in credits from another institution and (b) wish to complete in < 3 years. One vital aspect of this course is establishing a relationship with a research mentor (= Biology faculty member). BIOL 500W and BIOL 516 (Investigations/Biology) are “bookend” courses to your graduate curriculum. Hence, the earlier you have a connection with a mentor the better the quality of your eventual BIOL 516 project. This course will provide you the direct pathway to establish this connection.

## Grading

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- Biology Assessment exam: 50 points
- BIOL 500W-516 mentor agreement form: 25 points
- Participation in discussion boards (2): 25 points each
- Resume – draft: 25 points
- Resume – final: 25 points
- Research proposal – bibliography: 25 points
- Research proposal – draft outline (1 page): 25 points
- Research proposal – final: 100 points

**Please refer to your course Blackboard site to keep up with deadlines!**

**Grading scale: A (≥ 90%), B (80–89%), C (70–79%), D (60–69%), F (< 60%).**

**Note: If you wish to withdraw, you must do this by the WKU deadline**

## RSI (Regular and Substantive Interaction) statements

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In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- My participation and feedback in discussion boards,
- Weekly announcements, and
- Timely and detailed feedback on assignments provided within two weeks of submission.