

Syllabus

BIOS 594 Systems Ecology Graduate Student Seminar

Thursdays, 3:30 pm to 5:20 pm

Location: In person (LA 303) or via Remote delivery

[Zoom link](#)

(<https://umontana.zoom.us/j/99564458842?pwd=ai9BZi9PeUtxZHd2cDNjRXh1NW5ldz09>)

Meeting ID: 995 6445 8842

Passcode: 016654

Course information:

- Instructor: Ben Colman
- Email: ben.colman@umontana.edu
- Phone: (406) 243-6315
- Office Hours: Flexible, sign up at: <https://ben-colman.youcanbook.me>

Course overview:

Communicating our work is one of the most challenging things we do as students, professionals, and academics. The Systems Ecology Seminar alternates between spring, where you have a chance to hear people presenting their research and fall where you, the students, will serve as the presenters. It will be a chance for you to craft a new talk, hone an existing talk, or desensitize yourself to stage-fright. It doesn't matter whether you are a beginning student, an established student, or wrapping up; you have things that you can craft a talk about.

The exact time limits will depend a little on the type of talk you're working on, but in general there will be: ~45 minutes for each student to present their research; 5-10 minutes to catch your breath; 15-30 minutes for questions/discussion from/with the audience about the science of your presentation; and at the end there will be 15-30 minutes for the audience to give you constructive criticism about how to improve your talk.

Course objectives:

Students will:

1. Create an environment for the exchange of ideas among graduate students
2. Develop a broader understanding for the work of other students in Systems Ecology and related programs
3. Build community among Systems Ecology and associated scholars at UM
4. Increase their comfort and proficiency with giving and critiquing oral presentations

Course outcomes:

1. Students will improve their ability to communicate their work clearly and concisely
2. Students will learn strategies for communicating criticism in a constructive manner

3. Students will generate a talk and ideas on how it can be honed

Expectations of students:

1. Give a talk: Once during the semester you will be asked to give a ~45 minute talk. This talk can be about ideas that are coalescing to be your thesis proposal, your actual thesis proposal, the work you are doing, the work that you've done, or a practice lecture for a class that you're TAing.
2. Attendance: If you need to miss class, let me know in advance. Your first absence will be excused. After that first absence, you will be asked to complete a makeup assignment (a written synopsis and critique of a public seminar at the University from that week due on Monday by 9 am). Missing one third of classes will automatically result in failing the course.
3. Engagement: Actively engaging in the class is essential to the success of the class. All that is required is that you ask questions about the talks that people give and/or give feedback to your classmates over the course of the semester. This is an integrative measure, and I will let you know if you need to boost your level of engagement.

Academic Honesty:

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#)

(http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

Students with Disabilities:

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance and you have not already registered with ODE, please contact them by:

Option 1: Submit [the inquiry form](#)

Option 2: Email them at ode@umontana.edu

Option 3: Call them at (406) 243-2243

Grading:

This course is credit/no credit only. In accordance with the above stated expectations, students must attend class regularly, participate in class, and present a talk to get credit.