

WILD 494 - 01 – Senior Wildlife Seminar
Spring 2023
Wednesday: 1:00 – 2:50 PM in Forestry 106

Dr. Chad Bishop

Office: FOR 312

Contact: 406-243-4374 (office), 970-237-1769 (cell), chad.bishop@umontana.edu (email)

Office Hours/Appointments: Tuesday 11:00 am – 1:00 pm or by appointment (catch me after class or send me an email or text)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Effective communication skills are critical for professionals in wildlife biology. Biologists who excel at verbal communication are better positioned to be selected for jobs, to meaningfully explain the results of research, and to compel others to take actions that benefit wildlife. The goal of this course is to enhance students' oral communication skills through instruction and practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Learn skills to communicate effectively and strategically in various professional settings
- Gain experience giving professional-oriented oral presentations
- Practice self-critique and constructive critique of peers to improve communication skills
- Learn about wildlife biology and conservation topics

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Communicate effectively and strategically. Students should be able to:

- identify necessary steps in preparing professional seminars and speeches;
- identify techniques for engaging audiences and delivering key messages;
- tailor oral presentations to diverse audiences; and
- understand linkages between oral communication and leadership.

Gain experience speaking in front of peers. Students should be able to:

- prepare and deliver oral presentations in front of others;
- appreciate concepts of channeling inner-purpose and nerves into positive energy when preparing and delivering speeches; and
- overcome basic anxieties associated with public speaking.

Critique presentations. Students should be able to use their knowledge of public speaking to constructively critique presentations given by themselves and others, in ways that lead to meaningful improvement.

Expand knowledge of wildlife biology and conservation. Students should have a broader knowledge of current wildlife science and management issues.

TEXT BOOK

The Honest Broker: Making Sense of Science in Policy and Politics, by Roger A. Pielke, Jr.

Reading assignments will be given in class.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Each student is required to prepare and deliver three oral presentations over the course of the semester. The first presentation is a 60-90 second “elevator speech” that will be given on **February 22**. The purpose of an elevator speech is to succinctly and effectively communicate something about yourself or describe something you care about. The other two presentations are ~15-minute oral seminars focused on a wildlife biology or conservation topic. The first 15-minute seminar requires a Powerpoint presentation and should be prepared for an audience of your peers (i.e., fellow wildlife biologists). The second 15-minute seminar will be given without Powerpoint and should be prepared for a “lay” audience who lack technical training in wildlife biology. Each student will also be required to submit short (1-2 page) evaluations of their own seminar presentations after reviewing them on video. Additionally, students will evaluate the seminar presentations of other students during class. A separate “course requirements” document will be provided to you that sets forth these expectations in detail and provides guidance for preparing presentations.

*You will choose ONE wildlife/conservation topic for your two 15-minute, oral seminars. That is, both seminars will be on the same topic but prepared for different audiences. **By February 15, you must submit in Moodle your presentation topic and FOUR preferred seminar presentation dates. See the “course requirements” document for guidance.** Attendance is mandatory, unless there is an exceptional circumstance and the absence is approved in advance by the instructor. There will be no final for those who have attended each class or received an instructor-approved absence. **Grading is CR/NCR.***

SCHEDULE

January 18	Review syllabus and course requirements; Introduction to Effective Communication
January 25	Videos and Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How to Write & Deliver Great Speeches</i>, Ross Shafer (Review BEFORE Class);• <i>The Perfect Storm: Factors Influencing Conservation in the 21st Century</i>, Jim Martin (Review in class);• <i>Nature for All</i>, Mamie Parker (Review in class).
February 1	Knowing your audience and knowing your purpose: communicating strategically and finding common ground.
February 8	Communication scenarios and discussion. Instruction for Elevator speeches. Instructor models elevator speeches.
February 15	NO CLASS – Prepare and practice elevator speech. Presentation topic

and preferred seminar presentation dates due to Professor via Moodle.

February 22 **Students Deliver Elevator Speeches.** After elevator speeches, instructor models the two types of seminar presentations that students will be required to give during the remainder of course.

March 1 **NO CLASS** – Prepare and practice your seminar presentations

Mar 8 – Apr 5 **Student “Technical/Powerpoint” seminars** (3/8, 3/15, 3/29, 4/5)

NO CLASS on March 22 (Spring Break)!

Apr 12 – May 3 **Student “Lay” seminars w/o Powerpoint** (4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3)

May 3 Conclude seminars and final lecture; course evaluations.

COVID-19 Related Considerations:

- Masks are optional in the classroom. Refer to [Curry Health COVID-19](#) for information pertaining to COVID.
- Attendance is mandatory. However, if you are sick, exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, or in isolation, **you may reach out to me via email to request a Zoom link to attend class remotely.**
- The course may be recorded via Zoom, in which case I will let you know in advance.

Office for Disability Equity (ODE):

- The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [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 ODE in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and ODE to provide an appropriate modification.

Student Conduct Code

- 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. The Code is available for review online at [Student Conduct Code](#)

Dropping/Adding:

Drop/Add dates are posted at [Office of Registrar: Calendar](#).

Important Dates Regarding Opportunities to Drop a Course during Spring 2023 Semester:

Date	Description	Date Range
To 15 th instructional day	Students can drop classes on Cyberbear with refund and with no "W"	January 17 to February 6
16 th to 45 th instructional day	Drop requires instructor and advisor approvals (via Cyberbear), and there is a \$10 fee; student will receive a 'W' on transcript and no refund.	February 7 to March 28
46 th to last instructional day	Students are only allowed to drop a class under very limited and unusual circumstances. Requests to drop must be approved by the instructor, advisor, and Dean and a \$10 fee applies. A WP or WF will appear on the student's transcript.	March 29 to May 5