Syllabus
8 August 2018

Course title (number)
Seminar in Avian Ecology (ZOO-6544C)

Term/credit hours
Fall 2018, 1 credit

Instructor
Dr. Dale Gawlik, Sanson Science 220, dgawlik@fau.edu, 297-3333

Office hours
Wednesdays 1:30-3:30 and other times by appointment. Because an occasional conflict with regular office hours could occur, students may wish to call ahead to confirm a visit.

Class period
Wednesday 12:30-1:20, SC building, room 119

Online resource
Canvas for ZOO-6544C 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 Canvas or distributed by email.

Prerequisites
Graduate status

Course objectives
Students that have completed the course will possess:

1. An awareness of a major area of study in avian ecology.
2. An improved ability to critically evaluate a scientific paper.
3. A thorough knowledge of recent advances in the understanding of *meta-analyses* in avian ecology.

Course description
The purpose of the course is to get students reading 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. This year the class will focus on the use of *meta-analyses* in avian ecology. Although the use of meta-analyses in ecology goes back to the mid-1990s, only recently have they become prevalent. Meta-analyses were initially restricted to experiments but are now being applied to a wider range of study designs. This trend will almost certainly increase as our discipline grapples with large-scale problems that cannot be addressed at a single site or over short time periods. Despite the outsized importance that meta-

analyses will likely take on in the future, these techniques are not covered in traditional statistics classes. This course will start with an instructor-led introduction to the topic, followed by student-led discussions of avian ecology papers that used meta-analyses. Each student will be responsible for leading approximately one class discussion of a paper, regularly participating in discussions led by others, and contributing to a synthesis report. One or more students will volunteer to serve as an editor that will produce a final team synthesis report, which will be the basis of the final exam discussion.

Leading journal article discussions: To lead a discussion, students will search high quality scientific journals for a recent (within 5 years) paper on avian ecology that used a meta-analysis. Students will post a pdf of the article in Canvas or distribute it to the class via email at least one week prior to the discussion. Discussions should evaluate how well the paper followed best practices of applying meta-analyses, reliable insights gained from the analysis, significance of the questions, 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 each class period are both appreciated and accounted for in the final grade.

Individual summary report: Each student will submit a 1-2 page summary of what they consider to be the main trends that emerged from the collective body of literature reviewed in class. Students who produce the best individual reports typically note the main discussion points from class after each paper review.

Team synthesis report: Students will then work as a team with one or two lead editors to craft a concise synthesis report (3-5 pages) that reflects their consensus. The team synthesis report can be in outline form with meaningful subheadings and summary statements.

Final exam: The final exam will be an oral discussion of the team synthesis report. Each student is responsible for discussing the points they contributed to the team synthesis report, as well as the report overall.

Time requirements

Students should expect to spend an average of about three hours per week on this course outside of class. Students should allocate time for finding suitable papers, reading assigned papers, preparing to lead the discussion of their papers, and for summarizing the main points revealed by the literature review.

Course topical outline

The syllabus contains only a general course schedule. Students should monitor Canvas for specifics on the paper and person leading discussions on a given date.

Date	Course activity
22 Aug	Introduction, syllabus review, assign dates for leading discussions (Dr. Petersen)
29 Aug	Instructor-led foundation paper on the use of Meta-analyses in ecology

5 Sep	Instructor-led foundation paper on the use of Meta-analyses in ecology
12 Sep	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
19 Sep	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
26 Sep	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
3 Oct	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
10 Oct	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
17 Oct	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
24 Oct	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
31 Oct	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
7 Nov	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
14 Nov	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
21 Nov	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
28 Nov	Student-led journal article discussions- Weekly student-selected journal article on the use of meta-analyses in avian ecology
30 Nov	Individual Summary Report due
5 Dec	Team Synthesis Report due
7 Dec (10:30-1:00)	Final exam

Course evaluation method

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

Course component	**Max points**	**% of Grade**
Leadership of class discussions	40	40
Class participation	30	30
Individual Summary Report	10	10
Team Synthesis Report	10	10
Final exam	10	10
Total	100	100

Grading Scale: Final percentages will be converted to letter grades as below. Grades may be viewed through Canvas.

Grade	Final Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	<60

Code of Academic Integrity
Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001.
https://www.fau.edu/ctl/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf

Attendance Policy Statement: Attendance Policy Statement Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

Communication devices
In keeping with University policy, cell phones should be disabled or set to silent in class.

Disability Policy Statement
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has

offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center
Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to http://www.fau,edu/counseling/.