

# OEB 399 - Fall 2024

## Topics in Organismic and Evolutionary Biology

Wednesday 5:30-7:30pm (*TBD*)

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### Teaching Staff:

- Jack Edwards, OEB 399 TF, jedwards1@fas.harvard.edu
- Jared Richards, OEB Pedagogy Fellow, jrichards@g.harvard.edu

### Objectives:

This course has been designed as a way for first year graduate students to get to know one another, meet faculty from OEB in an informal setting, learn about teaching/department requirements in OEB, and engage in broader pedagogical and professional development.

OEB 399 is held in the fall and spring semesters of the 2024-2025 academic year. Each week, we will alternate between peer workshops/discussions and faculty meetings, all over dinner provided by the department. By the end of the course, we hope that you will:

- Get to know your cohort and OEB faculty members better to develop a community that will support you throughout your time at Harvard.
- Discover the many resources available to you within the department and university that will help you plan, execute, and communicate your work as a scientist.
- Practice teaching skills that will prepare you for your upcoming role as a Teaching Fellow. Our goal is to help you become a more efficient and effective teacher, which will help both you and your future students!

Sessions in the spring will focus on teaching. Students from other class years, OEB professors, and professionals from within OEB and Harvard will frequently be invited to lead discussions on topics within their field of expertise.

Importantly, we value your input and participation. Most of the classes will involve group discussions. As a class of actively engaged graduate students, we can foster insightful and meaningful dialogues about these topics.

**Grading:** This course is required of all first-year OEB graduate students. Students must complete both semesters within the same academic year to receive credit. OEB399 will be graded Sat/Unsat. You must attend weekly and participate in all course activities to obtain a satisfactory grade. If you must miss a class, please send an email in advance to the teaching staff, so that we can work out what you missed and support you through your absence.

*Note:* Completion of this practicum counts towards the Bok Center Teaching Certificate. To learn more details, visit <https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/teaching-certificate>.

## Week-by-Week Course Overview

### Sep 4: Introductions/Icebreakers

**Goals:** Get to know each other and familiarize yourself with the course's format and objectives

**Activities:** Icebreaker; (maybe) Scavenger Hunt

### Sep 11: Faculty Visit

Professor Ben de Bivort

### Sep 18: Resources at Harvard

**Goals:** Learn about the many types of resources at Harvard ranging from academic, financial, teaching, career, health, and more

**Activities:** Group Jigsaw Scenarios, (maybe) Scavenger Hunt

### Sep 25: Faculty Visit

TBD

### Oct 2: OEB Community

**Goals:** Learn about the OEB undergraduate experience and visit often-frequented facilities

**Activities:** IB Undergraduate Panel; Collections/Facilities Tour

### Oct 9: Faculty Visit

TBD

### Oct 16: Work/Life Balance

**Goals:** Demystify the work/life balance of graduate students and think about personal schedules, motivation, and time management

**Activities:** Mini "Student Seminar"

### Oct 23: Faculty Visit

TBD

### October 30: Qualifying Exam Prep

**Goals:** Discuss expectations for the qualifying exam, learn how others have prepared in the past, and develop strategies for choosing a dissertation project

**Activities:** "Coffee Chats"; Graduate Student Panel

### Nov 6: Faculty Visit

TBD

### Nov 13: History of OEB

**Goals:** Discover the wild journey of OEB from origins to modern day, and set the stage for next semester's teaching-focused sessions

**Activities:** Introduction to Pedagogy

### Nov 20: Faculty Visit

TBD

Nov 27: No Class - Thanksgiving Holiday

### December 4th: Last Day of Class

**Goals:** TBD

**Activities:** TBD

*\*Faculty visitors are tentative and subject to change based on faculty availability*

**G1 Retreat:** During either the fall or spring semester, we will also schedule a G1 overnight "Retreat" to the Harvard Forest, based on everyone's schedules.