Short Answer Essay Help session

LN-SB-CC

▶ Week 4: Evolution & Mendel

▶ Week 5: Population Genetics

▶ Week 6: Complex inheritance

▶ Week 7: Reading week

Specific dates of live sessions

- Week 4: 06 OCT (FRI) 23:59: **Short answer essay plan due**

- Week 5: 09 OCT (MON) 16:05-17:55: Population genetics lab

- Week 6: 16 OCT (MON) 17:05-17:55: Essay plan review

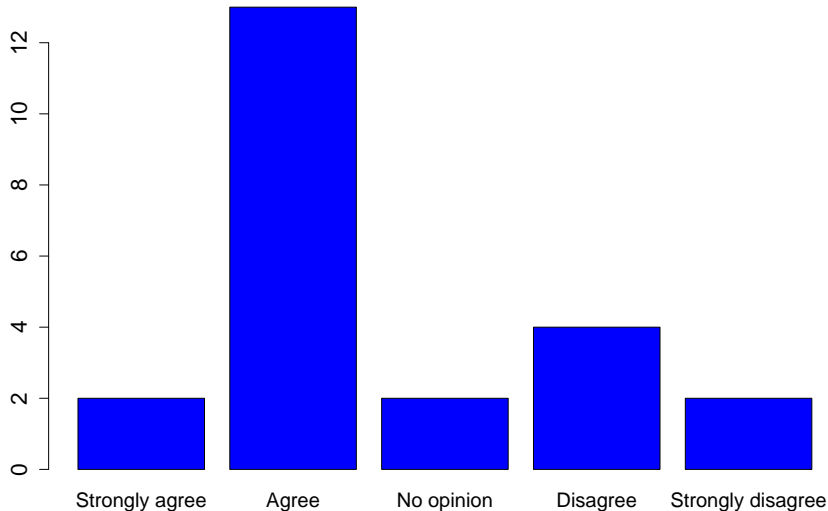- Week 6: 20 OCT (FRI) 23:59: **Population genetics assignment due**

The learning materials of BIOU3GE are clear
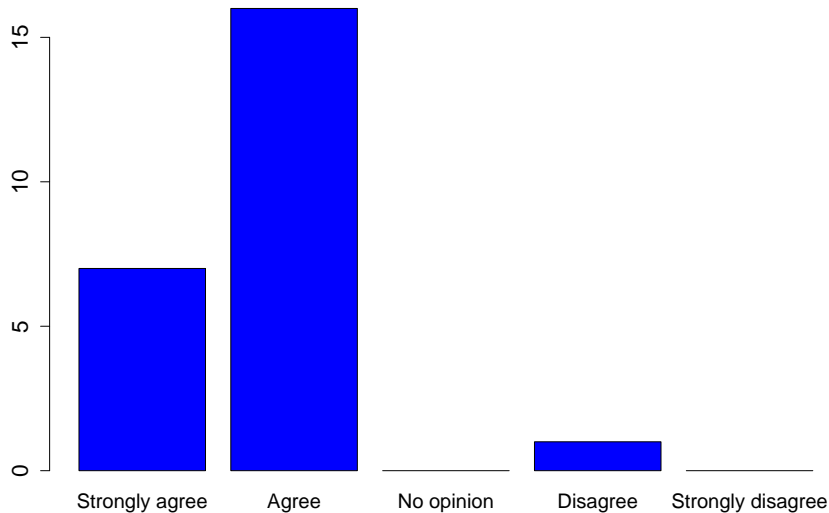
I know what I need to do each week in BIOU3GE
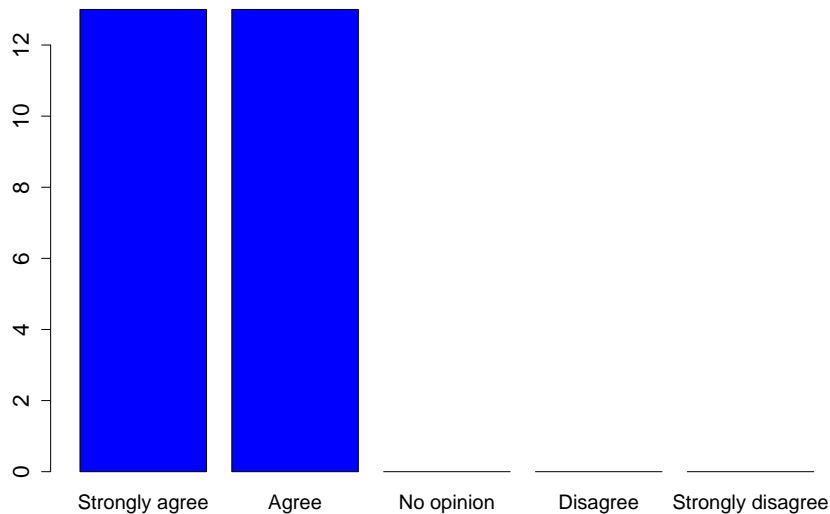
I am able to manage my time and keep up with the BIOU3GE learning material

How to approach short answer essay questions

1. **Read the question** several times to understand what the question is asking

2. **Read and revise relevant literature**, including lectures, text books, scientific papers

3. **Summarise your notes** from step 2 and organise them to synthesise what you have learned

4. **Make an essay plan** structuring your answer as a series of ordered bullet points

Recommended structure for a short answer essay

Introduction

- ▶ Demonstrate that you understand the question
- ▶ Explain the context of the question & significance of the topic
- ▶ Clearly state the aim of the essay

Body

- ▶ Fully answer the question with relevant evidence and clear logic that supports a well-reasoned conclusion
- ▶ If applicable, provide interesting and relevant examples

Conclusion

- ▶ Summarise the conclusion answering the question

Example short answer essay plan

Introduction

- ▶ Introduce that two theories that might explain life on earth (Darwinian evolution versus intelligent design)
- ▶ Define Darwinian evolution and intelligent design; emphasise the contrast (Coyne 2010)
- ▶ State the aim of the essay is to provide evidence in support of Darwinian evolution

Body Paragraph 1

- ▶ Evidence for speciation supports Darwinian evolution
- ▶ Case study of Darwin's finches (Grant & Grant 2022)
- ▶ Explain why example supports Darwinian evolution but not intelligent design

Body Paragraph 2

- ▶ Homologies among species supports a common ancestor of life
- ▶ Example of genetic changes showing common ancestor of all eukaryotes (Chernikova et al. 2011)
- ▶ Explain why genetic similarity predicted by Darwinian evolution but not intelligent design

Conclusion

- ▶ Summarise that observations from Biogeography and supports Darwinain evolution but not intelligent design
- ▶ Conclusion that life on earth has arisen through Darwinian evolution

References

- ▶ Chernikova, D, et al. (2011). Biol Direct. 6:1-18.
- ▶ Coyne, J. A. (2010). Why evolution is true. Oxford University Press.
- ▶ Grant, P. R., & Grant, B. R. (2002). Am Sci, 90:130–139.