

# BIOL683 Experimental Design in Biology

**Instructor:**

Dr. Heath Blackmon  
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Office Hours: by appointment

**Time and Location:**

TR 2:20-3:35  
BSBW B25

**Learning Objectives:**

This course is intended to provide a foundation in the proper design of scientific research projects in the field of biology. A wide range of biological experiments will be covered, and each type of experiment will be designed with an eye toward choosing the appropriate statistical technique for analysis. By the end of the course, successful students will be able to design biological studies that are statistically tractable and perform basic statistical analyses using the programming language R.

**Prerequisites**

STAT651 Statistics in research

**Required Textbook:**

The Analysis of Biological Data, Second Edition by Michael C. Whitlock and Dolph Schluter (ISBN-10: 1936221489, ISBN-13: 978-1936221586).

**Suggested reading:**

Various articles will be posted during the course

**Grading:**

A total of 400 points are available in the course: 5 homework assignments (20 points each), two exams (100 points each), and class participation (100 points). The breakdown of grades will be:

A = 90%-100%  
B = 80%-90%  
C = 70%-80%  
D = 60%-70%  
F = 0-60%

**Makeup Assignments:**

Makeup assignments will be given only for excused absences. Written documentation will be necessary to show that an absence qualifies as an official excused absence according to TAMU policy. The student must contact the course instructor within 3 days to arrange a makeup assignment or the grade will be converted to a zero.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

**Aggie Honor Code:**

An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do. See <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>.

**Topics: (corresponding roughly to one topic per week)**

Week 1 (Jan. 15): Introduction to R and Statistics, Reading: W&S Ch. 1–2

Week 2 (Jan. 22): Introduction to R

Week 3 (Jan. 29): Summaries and Estimates, W&S Ch. 3–4

Week 4 (Feb. 5): Probability and Bayes' theorem, W&S Ch. 5

Week 5 (Feb. 12): Hypothesis Testing, W&S Ch. 6–9

Week 6 (Feb. 19): Continuously Distributed Variables, W&S Ch. 10–13

Week 7 (Feb. 26): Experimental Design, ANOVA, Correlation, W&S Ch. 14–16

Week 8 (Mar. 5): Review, Exam I

SPRING BREAK (Mar. 11–15)

Week 9 (Mar. 19): Regression and Multiple Factors, W&S Ch. 17–18

Week 10 (Mar. 26): Mixed Models

Week 11 (Apr. 2): Non-Gaussian Response Variables

Week 12 (Apr. 9): Species as data points

Week 13 (Apr. 16): Special Topics

Week 14 (Apr. 23): Special Topics

Final Exam: May 7, 1–3pm.