

Updated Information for Introduction to Evolution and Scientific Inquiry (Section 4, Spring 2020)

READ THE CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY. Please post questions or clarifications in the #logistical-questions Slack channel.

If you have not yet joined the class Slack workspace, please do so ASAP:

- [Link to join class workspace](#)
- Please download the Slack app for your computer and phone - will be very helpful and is WAY better than the browser version.

Weekly class

- Every week, you can expect 1-3 lecture videos to debut **each Monday** with that week's materials, and two assignments due each week, with deadlines spread out on **Thursdays at 11:59 pm** and **Sundays at 11:59 pm** (more info in next section).
- As before, materials will be hosted on the class website [here](#), and submissions will be on Blackboard.

Updated Grading Scheme

Your final grade will now be determined from the following:

- First Midterm (15%)
- Assignments (85%)

Details on assignments

- You will stop drop the lowest grade!!
- In the end, there will be **15** assignments total, meaning each assignment is ~5.6% of your final grade (16 listed below, you drop the lowest automatically):
 - Already assigned (6)
 - * Proof of Safety Training Submission
 - * Termite Lab
 - * Stickleback Lab
 - * EvoDots Activity
 - * Concepts in Natural Selection “Quiz”
 - * Population Genetics Assignment
 - **10** assignment grades will be forthcoming after break.
 - * There will be two assignments each week, due respectively on Thursdays at 11:59 pm and Sundays at 11:59 pm (it will be clear which is which!). Effectively, in-class worksheets (as well as existing HW assignments that would have been assigned anyways) will be converted to smaller assignments. This will ensure regular engagement with material.
 - * The final assignment will count **DOUBLE AS TWO ASSIGNMENTS** (aka a total of ~11% to your final grade, still less than a real exam at 15%!), and will be analogous in SCOPE (aka, it is cumulative) to a final exam.
- You will be organized into Teams for the rest of the semester so you have a stable group to work on assignments with. You are always welcome to work with those students outside your team, but you are **strongly encouraged** to coordinate with your formal team members as working groups. You will receive information within the next week about who is in your Team (yes, I am picking for you).
- Please assume the following rules for all upcoming submissions:
 - Open-note, open-book, open-friends! *Be careful with the internet* - the temptation to use random internet materials and videos will be much higher. Please use the **#resources** channel to ask me if materials you find are legit!!
 - As always you must submit **YOUR OWN WORK IN YOUR OWN WORDS** (including teams - each team member should present their OWN work).

Communication

Virtual Meetings

- There will be two kinds of office hours, for which all scheduling will be done via **Google Calendar**. Join the calendar [here](#) (you must be logged into your Rowan account). Please use the GOOGLE CHROME BROWSER!! Not Internet Explorer, not Safari, not Firefox - they are not guaranteed to work cleanly with the Google services that we will use. Each meeting will either take place via Google Hangouts (likely for small one-on-one meetings), and larger class meetings will take place via Zoom.
 - Every **Wednesday from 1-2:30 pm** there will be an open session for anyone to join. Links to join these meetings will be embedded in the calendar event.
 - Every **Tuesday 1-2:30 pm** and **Friday 1-2:30 pm** there will be opportunities to book individual (or team!!!) remote meetings with me, again via the class google calendar. These bi-weekly events are scheduled in the calendar. To make an appointment, click the event, and then click “Go to appointment page for this calendar.” You can then book 1 or more (but please don’t overbook!!) 15-minute time slots. Once you have made an appointment and I am notified, I will be able to turn on a meeting link for the meeting. Make sure to book meetings in a timely fashion!!
 - If you are unable to make any of those times, please DM me on Slack and we will find another suitable time to meet.
 - To facilitate scheduling, I highly recommend you install the “Google Calendar” app to your Slack. See [here](#) for information.
 - **When coming to your personal meetings, please start initiating the process to join the meeting a few minutes early. It may take some time to set up. Don’t take away from the next person’s meeting time.**

For other types of communication (questions, emails), please default to the Slack Workspace for all communications:

- DM me on the app for individualized conversation. If any conversation appears important enough to merit being on email, I will transition the conversation accordingly.
- Use the **#channels** to direct flow of information and general discussions (topics below represent what we will be covering for the rest of the semester)
 - **#general**: The baseline place to ask questions when there is no other specific # channel more appropriate.
 - **#logistical-questions**: Questions about deadlines and similar class logistics
 - **#random**: Fun and at least marginally relevant things (memes? articles? whatever!) you find that would be fun to share with the class. **Keep this SFW.**
 - **#assignments**: Questions that pertain to weekly assignments should go here. **All questions about completing assignment questions should be directed here!!** Previous rules of “only use email for logistical questions rather than content questions” are now suspended. Use this channel!!!
 - **#resources**: Questions about whether a specific resource you have found is ok to use!
 - **#speciation**: Questions that specifically pertain to speciation, reproductive isolation, etc. *Not for specific assignment questions.*
 - **#phylogenetics**: Questions that specifically pertain to interpreting and using phylogenetic trees and/or working with character matrices/sequence alignments. *Not for specific assignment questions.*
 - **#biogeography**: Questions that specifically pertain to biogeography (includes “phylogenetics of speciation” content). *Not for specific assignment questions.*
 - **#pathogen-evolution**: Questions that specifically pertain to pathogen evolution *and their associated phylogenetics.* *Not for specific assignment questions.*
 - **#origins-transitions**: Questions that specifically pertain to origins of life and major evolutionary transitions, including fossils. *Not for specific assignment questions.*
 - **#human-evolution**: Questions that specifically pertain to human origins and evolution. *Not for specific assignment questions.*
- Protip! For each message you send to a **#channel**, there is an option to reply directly and start a thread - this keeps conversations grouped! If/when you start a thread, please be sure to click the button that shares responses with everyone in the class.

What should you NOT worry about?

- Attendance. There are no required in-person meeting times. As long as you get the work in on time, you’ll be set.

- Time to complete assignments. While there are deadlines, nothing will be within the context of a *timed* Blackboard test. In other words, nothing will be a “do this in Blackboard and you get cut off in 45 minutes.” Not happening.
- If you get severely ill and are unable to complete assignments, please reach out to me ASAP. I may ask for a *brief* video chat to confirm your circumstances. **Extensions will be liberally granted when they are appropriate.** Please do not assume an extension is granted unless I explicitly tell you so - asking for one is not the same as receiving one.
 - If an extension is not feasible given the circumstances, there will be a possibility to exempt you from the given assignment entirely.