BIO 674 Syllabus
Honor Research
[Spring 2018 – Spring 2019]

Instructor: Marian M. Furimsky   Office Phone: 724-946 - 7207
Office: Hoyt 219    e-mail: furimsmm@westminster.edu

Course Description: An experience planned cooperatively between an Honors Scholar, their biology Honors faculty advisor, and their Honors Board. The biology faculty member serves as the primary supervisor for the Honors Scholar's research project. The student is expected to complete their research and Honors thesis during this portion of the Honors experience. The research is expected to contribute to some type of novel discovery or understanding within the Honors Scholars selected field of study. Honors status will be assessed and reviewed at various points during the Honors research project by an Honors Committee and select members of the biology department (see below).

Prerequisite: Successful completion of BIO 201, 202, 203, 206, BIO 662, HON 201, and a minimum GPA of 3.500 (total GPA, and GPA of courses in the major) are required to be considered for Honors Research.

Course Objectives: The outcomes of the biology independent study are achieved in students who:

- demonstrate an ability to apply biological concepts and principles learned from Westminster courses in an independent and productive manner;
- utilize observational, investigational, and critical-thinking skills, including the ability to evaluate, interpret, and assess information and data with minimal guidance from the Honors faculty advisor;
- acquire and utilize knowledge and skills that enhance future success within the corresponding field;
- demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and accountability;
- demonstrate a capacity for decision-making;
- communicate their experience using a poster or oral presentation at a regional or national undergraduate or professional conference.

Course Details: Honors scholars who have made sufficient progress with their research prior to the spring semester of their junior year may register for Honors Research credit (2 sh maximum) at the same time as BIO 662. It is the responsibility of the Honors Advisor to determine whether or not this option is feasible and then present it to all Honors Board members for approval during the semester prior to taking BIO 662.

While the standard number of course credits attempted by Honors Scholars during the fall semester of their senior year is typically 4 sh, a minimum of 2 sh of research must be completed during this semester in order to fulfill the equivalent of the BIO 602 graduation requirement. The Honors Advisor and Honors Scholar are responsible for making sure
enough Honors research credits are completed in order to fulfill Honors and/or departmental requirements (see below). The Honors student must attend, participate in, and complete all BIO 602 course assignments, with the exception of assignments that pertain to the Capstone poster. BIO 690 fulfills the BIO 602 graduation requirement. Biology and Molecular Biology Honors scholars must complete a minimum of 8 sh of Honors credit (BIO 662 + BIO 690). Molecular biology Honors scholars who successfully complete 8 sh of Honors research credit (BIO 690) can use 4 sh of this credit to fulfill their research requirement.

Honors Fall Qualifier (senior year, fall semester). Honors scholars must schedule an oral presentation of their current research progress with their Honors board and a minimum of two other non-Board representatives from the biology department. Presentations must occur between midterm and two weeks prior to the BIO 602 capstone poster presentation. Honors scholars who successfully pass their fall qualifier will be allowed to continue with their Honors research and thesis during the following spring semester. Passing the Honors Qualifier will be determined by a majority vote and approval by the Honors Advisor. The Honors Scholar cannot be in attendance during the vote. (Honors scholars who fail to satisfy the requirements of the Honors Fall Qualifier will be withdrawn from the All College Honors Program and reassessed as a capstone student. BIO 602 will be used in place of the BIO 690 course designation on the transcript and the student will be required to present what they have as a capstone poster in accordance with BIO 602 expectations. Students who fail to satisfy the requirements for BIO 602 will be required to repeat BIO 602.)

Course Grade: A grade will be earned for each completed semester of Honors research (e.g., letter grade, Incomplete, Temporary) and will be determined by the Honors Advisor and Honors Board members. Faculty should note that a T or I grade will temporarily prevent the student from being considered for the Dean’s List.