What are Project Courses?

- An opportunity for students to actively participate in the research process – in the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge. Students frame the question or questions that will guide their research and design, while conducting research to find answers and communicating the results of their work.
- The original research project requires the prior consent of a faculty member within or cross-appointed to the Department to supervise the project. The topic is to be one mutually agreed upon by the student and supervisor. The expectation is that the student, aided and advised by the supervisor, will (1) read and review the relevant literature on the research topic and (2) plan, execute, analyze and report on experimental or descriptive investigations of an appropriate topic. A literature review alone is not sufficient.

Who can take them?

- EEB497H1, EEB498Y1/EEB499Y1 are generally open only to Fourth-Year students with adequate background in Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and/or Behaviour.
- Earlier-stage students may enrol in other research project courses (ROP program, REP program, EEB397Y1 research project).

What is the time commitment?

- Faculty members estimate that students spend 10-12 hours per week on their independent research project. Some students may spend more time as they immerse themselves in their projects.

When are they offered?

- Students who undertake projects from September to April enrol in EEB498Y1 or EEB499Y1.
- Students who wish to enrol in a project course from May to August can enrol in a full-credit course (EEB498Y1) if the extent of the project and time commitment is the same as projects completed in the fall-winter session.
- EEB497H1 (for a half-credit) is a literature based research studies course that the supervisor and student mutually agree require half of the time commitment to complete than EEB498Y1. Students are not required to present a final poster or oral
presentation. EEB497H1 can take place in both the first or second sessions of the summer session, or in the fall or winter sessions.

- Students can perform a second full-credit independent project (EEB499Y1) in another year; however, it must be with a different supervisor and on a different research topic from the first project course taken.

How are students evaluated?

- Evaluation consists of (1) a written proposal 3-5 pages in length, (2) a poster presentation (oral presentation in summer session) for EEB397Y1, EEB498Y1 & EEB499Y1, (3) a substantive written report, and (4) evaluation of the quality of the project work, including statistical analysis of data and participation in lab meetings.
- The Registration Form is completed and signed by the supervisor and student and submitted to the EEB Undergraduate Office.
- The supervisor in conjunction with the department will determine the marking scheme that will calculate the final grade. The written proposal is 15% and the oral or poster presentation is 20% of the overall final grade (EEB497H1 exempted). The final written report and presentation combined must be worth a minimum of 50% of the final grade.
- The expectations for an acceptable length for the written report will be communicated to the student by the supervisor. Written reports by past students have been approximately 20-25 double-spaced pages and are often written in the format of a manuscript to be submitted for publication to a journal. The submission date for the final report will be determined by the supervisor; the submission deadline is generally sometime after the presentation date.
- The poster presentation will take place during the EEB Undergraduate Research Fair, at the end of the winter session for students enrolled in project courses. The oral presentation for summer session project courses will take place at an appropriate date. EEB397Y1 students can participate in the Undergraduate Research Fair, but it is not mandatory.
- Poster Specifications: The dimensions of the poster for the final presentation should be a maximum of 2.5’ wide by 4’ tall (30 inches x 48 inches). The posters should not be laminated. Black and white or colour posters are acceptable.
- The supervisor must submit to the Undergraduate Administrator: a final grade and a brief (approximately one-page) critique of the student’s work, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the work, and a rationale for the mark assigned. Typically, the due date for the final grade is two weeks after the last day of classes.

How are students enrolled?

- Interested students should first find a supervisor who is willing to supervise their project. Student and supervisor must complete an application form. Application forms are available on the EEB Undergraduate website.
- Refer to the application form to determine what other documents/components are required.
• Once a student has submitted the completed application form to the EEB Undergraduate Office, the office will enrol the student on ACORN. Students cannot add EEB397Y1/497H1/498Y1/499Y1 on ACORN themselves.
• Once enrolled on ACORN, the student and supervisor should meet to discuss lab work including where and when performed and provision of any materials. Once the details are agreed upon, a Registration Form must be completed (Project courses only).
• The Registration Form (available on the EEB Undergraduate website) must be submitted to the EEB Undergraduate Office by the date indicated on the form.

Important Notes:
• Contact potential supervisor and discuss project ideas.
• Submit Application Form to EEB Undergraduate Office by appropriate deadline.
• Submit Registration Form to EEB Undergraduate Office by appropriate deadline.
• Meet with supervisor no later than the last date to drop a course to discuss the progress to date and assess the expectations for successful completion.
• Proposal due to supervisor during first term (for EEB498Y/499Y).
• Poster presentation will take place at the end of the winter session (or an equivalent week in summer session for oral) for project courses.
• Final written report due shortly after the date of the presentation date (exact date determined by supervisor). Final report for EEB497H1 research course due on agreed upon date between student and supervisor.
• Supervisor submits grade to the Undergraduate Administrator and written critique to the student.

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