



Thesis II: Defense – BIOL 5306-B-005

Instructor: Davida Smyth

M-F: SciTech 342

Meeting Times: Variable

Course Description and Prerequisites:

This course enables dedicated hours for finalizing research and thesis writing activities, culminating in a completed thesis document and thesis defense.

Prerequisites: BIOL 5306-A and BIOL 5307.

Required: Instructor Approval.

Learning Objectives

- Finalize thesis related research activities, thesis defense and thesis document.
- Learn the peer review process by submitting thesis document for review and approval by the Thesis Committee.
- Enhance oral communication skills through defense of thesis research to the public and Thesis Committee.
- Enhance written communication skills through revision and finalizing thesis document for submission towards degree completion.

Required Textbook and Course Material:

There are no required textbooks. Materials and guidelines will be posted on the learning management system Blackboard for course administration and assessment.

Attendance Policy:

Weekly or bi-weekly meetings will be held to discuss progress and review submitted documents with Faculty Mentor.

COURSE POLICIES

Expectations: Personal and academic integrity, to be open to new ideas, and to share in a community where individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures help one another grow intellectually, socially, and personally is always expected throughout the course. TAMUSA faculty and are here to help; however, students must take responsibility for their own learning. Students should strive for a high level of academic performance and to be responsible, respectful, contributing citizens within the university and in outside communities. Above all, students should develop a love of learning that will last a lifetime, along with a life-long interest in maintaining emotional and physical wellness.

Active Participation: Students are expected to work with a high level of self-motivation. Successful students exercise initiative and exhibit strong communication skills in working with their advisors and committee members. This course requires individual effort that is overseen by Faculty Mentor/Committee Chair. The thesis document should be written and revised iteratively between the student and thesis advisor until the document(s) is/are ready for submission to the Thesis Committee. **The course should culminate with a completed thesis document for review by the Thesis Committee no later than March 1 and a Thesis Defense date no later than March 15.**

Assessment: There are no formal assignments in this course. In consultation with Faculty Mentor, students develop a personal work schedule with specified deliverables. Weekly or bi-weekly individual meetings will be held to discuss submitted deliverables and revise the work plan if needed. Completion of this course is determined when the thesis has been reviewed and approved by the Thesis Committee, with a public oral defense.

Grading:

A grade in this course presents as *Credit*, *No Credit*.

- *Credit* indicates that all course requirements were met, including submission to and approval of the thesis by the Thesis Committee and completion of the oral thesis defense prior to April 1 (Spring) or November 1 (Fall) deadlines.
- *No Credit* indicates that course requirements were not met. Student must enroll in BIOL 5101 – Thesis Continuation. Once thesis requirements are met (i.e., approved thesis and/or public thesis defense), a grade change will be administered to approve degree completion.

Blackboard and Course Communication:

Students must login regularly to both the Blackboard site and to their TAMUSA email account to keep updated on information or changes related to the class. Each student **MUST** have an active TAMUSA e-mail account. This will be the e-mail address that is used for any communication between you and your instructor. Students who e-mail the instructor Monday-Thursday ordinarily can expect a response within 24 hours. Students who e-mail Friday-Sunday ordinarily can expect a response by Monday morning. The preferred method of communication will always be e-mail or making an appointment (in person or virtually).

Course Schedule:

In consultation with the Faculty Mentor, the student will develop a work schedule for the course. There are three timeline options to follow in this course.

Week 1	Meet with advisor and prepare writing and research schedule.
Week 2–5	Finalize data collection and analyses. Prepare Thesis draft via iterative section submission to advisor for review.
Week 6–7	Submit Thesis to Thesis Committee, March 1 (Spring) or October 1 (Fall)
Week 8–10	Public Presentation and Thesis Defense (at least 10 days before Final Thesis Submission Deadline)
Week 9–11	Final Revisions
Week 10–12	Final Thesis Submission to Office of Graduate Studies Spring: April 1 , or first Monday in April (May Graduation) Fall: November 1 , or first Monday in November (December Graduation)
Week 13–15	Edits/Suggestions back to the student from Office of Graduate Studies Spring: April 15th , or following Monday if date falls on a Saturday Fall: November 15th , or following Monday if date falls on a Saturday
Week 14–16	Final Draft (with all corrections made) due to the Office of Graduate Studies Spring: April 22nd , or following Monday if date falls on a Saturday Fall: November 22nd , or following Monday in November