

## EEB 2208E (Introduction to Conservation Biology)

### Homework Overview

**Background.** The goal of these homework assignments is to help you to learn the material and to prepare you to use it in exams (and beyond). Educational research shows that frequent testing is a good way to help people remember information and my goal in these assignments is to help you learn, rather than to assess your knowledge (I'll do the latter in exams and the poster project, so getting points on those will be harder).

**Content.** Most assignments will involve questions similar to those that will be found on the exams. A few will require you to do things to synthesize class material that the educational research literature suggests helps people to learn. Most questions will be based on the material presented during the previous week, but I will also include a couple of questions each time that are based on earlier material. The reason for making the assignments partly cumulative is to encourage you to look back at previous weeks' notes, which will help you to build knowledge over the course of the semester.

Before you start the first assignment, make sure you read (and understand) the document titled "Exam Format Information", which will be posted on the web site under "Important course documents". That document explains how to answer questions on my exams. Because I do not use a standard multiple-choice format, the homework assignments will also provide you with practice answering the type of exam questions that I write.

**Grading.** Homework grades will be based simply on whether you complete each assignment before the deadline, not on how many questions you get right. Homework will be posted online on HuskyCT after Thursday's class. You should complete the assessment before 8 pm on the following Sunday. Answers that are time-stamped after 8:00 pm will be considered late and will not receive any points.

Each assignment is worth 1% of the final class grade and you are required to complete any 10 of the 13 assignments. I encourage you to do all assignments though, because that should help you to do better on other graded activities. To get points you must turn your answers in on time and answer all questions. There are no exceptions unless you have a medical or family emergency that requires you to be out of class for a significant portion of the semester, in which case you should talk to me as soon as possible. Everyone gets three free passes to accommodate times when you are sick, when your computer eats your homework 2 minutes before it is due, or when life otherwise interferes. My advice is to not waste these passes.

**Instructions:** All homework assignments will be posted on HuskyCT in the folder for the topic they are associated with on the schedule. To find a homework, follow these steps:

- Log into HuskyCT.
- Go to "Course Content" in the left sidebar.
- Scroll down to the folder labelled "Lecture materials".
- Find the folder for the topic that is listed in the schedule for the day of the homework.

- Scroll down to find the item labelled “Homework 1” (or whatever number applies).
- If you don’t see the week’s homework by 3:30 pm on Thursday’s, contact your instructor or TA so we can help!

Once you click on the homework, you should see some general instructions and the due date. Click the “Begin” button and you will see more detailed instructions and the questions. Work through the questions, taking care to follow the instructions carefully, and then submit the answers. Once you do that, you will be able to review the results by clicking the small “OK” in the bottom right corner of the window.

You can repeat a homework as often as you want to, even after the deadline. Your grade, however, will be based on the last submission prior to the deadline.

Once you have submitted a homework, you will be able to see your score on each set of questions and read some feedback. For grouped true/false questions you will get a score out of 5 (1 point for each part) for each group. Below each set of questions there will also be some feedback on how to answer the questions correctly, and what my goals were in asking them. For open-ended, short answer questions there will be guidance on how to answer the questions, or where to look for the relevant information. Note that HuskyCT cannot providing meaningful grades for short answer questions, so you can ignore the score it assigns you. (By default, any answer containing a period (.) will be listed as correct, although this does not mean your specific response was correct). Talk with your peers, TA, or instructor to get further feedback on your answer.

Some weeks, however, the homework format will be a little different and you will either have just a series of open-ended questions, or you will be required to submit a “mind map” (details on what these are and how to create them will be given). For the mind map assignments, you will need to create a separate document (either a .jpg or .pdf file) and submit that document as an attachment. Instructions will be given in the homework on how to do this.

**Advice.** At this point, you are perhaps thinking that you could just submit any old rubbish each week because you will still get the points. Or, that you could copy your friends’ answers and I will be none the wiser. In both cases you would be correct – as long as you follow the instructions carefully, these are essentially free points. If you do not take the homework seriously, however, you will probably not enjoy the exams.