

HOS 6931 Horticultural Science Seminar

Spring, 2026

Course format (Hybrid), 1 Credit

Mondays 4:05 pm to 5:05 pm; Rooms 1306-1308 Fifield Hall

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Office Hours: Zoom or in-person, Tuesdays, 10 am to 12 pm (See Canvas for Zoom link)

Seminar Zoom Link for REC Students

A Zoom link will be provided in Canvas and in seminar announcements for use by students at Research and Education Centers. Gainesville students will attend in person.

Course Description

This course provides a forum for graduate students in the Horticultural Sciences Department to present their **research proposals** to a supportive audience of faculty and peers. Constructive criticism and feedback from the audience can inform improvements in research methodology and extend the scope and impact of the proposed research.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to effectively communicate your research to scientific audiences through abstracts and oral presentations, and address audience questions and comments in a competent and professional manner. You will develop/polish these skills through preparation and delivery of a seminar based on your written research proposal. Audience comments and questions are documented, and peer evaluation, instructor evaluation, and seminar recordings are provided as feedback for your use to improve future presentations and make adjustments to proposed research as needed.

Course Overview and Purpose

Students will consult with their advisors to select an appropriate seminar title and prepare an abstract that summarizes the content of the seminar. Advisors should also be consulted regarding presentation content. You will use your written research proposal prepared in a prior semester as the basis for developing a PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates a clear rationale for the research, a command of pertinent published research, statements of the objectives and hypotheses, an informed and logical presentation of the Materials and Methods, and expected outcomes. Preliminary results are allowed but are not required and should not exceed one quarter of the presentation.

Course Prerequisite

HOS 6934 – Professional Seminar Preparation

Textbooks, Learning Materials, and Supply Fees

Required textbooks: None

Recommended textbooks:

Alley, M. 2013. The Craft of Scientific Presentations: Critical Steps to Succeed and Critical Errors to Avoid. Springer, New York.

Carter, M. 2021. Designing Science Presentations: A Visual Guide to Figures, Papers, Slides, Posters, and More. Academic Press.

Kirchoff, B. 2021. Presenting Science Concisely. CABI. Boston, MA.

Malmfors, B., P. Garnsworthy, and M. Grossman. 2004. Writing and Presenting Scientific Papers, 2nd Edition. Nottingham University Press.

Required Technology & How to Obtain the Technology

Students in Gainesville will attend class in person. Students located at Research and Education Centers will participate synchronously via Zoom. You will need Wi-Fi access capable of running Zoom. UF computer recommendations are available at: <https://it.ufl.edu/get-help/student-computer-recommendations/>. A camera, microphone, and speakers/headphones are necessary.

Technical skills

You will utilize slide presentation development and delivery skills acquired in HOS 6934 – Professional Seminar Preparation or an equivalent course. The use of PowerPoint is preferred. Other slide preparation software is acceptable if the resulting presentation can be presented using PowerPoint.

Communication Guidelines

Please reach out to me as early as possible about any challenges that are adversely affecting your performance in the course. You should use office hours or request an appointment so that I can address your questions or concerns regarding assignments and deliverables. I am happy to receive email communications as well and will aim for a response time of 48 hours or less.

Class Demeanor/Expectations

Attendance of all seminars in a fully engaged manner is required. Peer-reviews with ratings and comments that provide an informative and constructive critique is required. Students should take notes during seminars of items that can be used for questions at the end of the presentation. To facilitate engagement each student will be assigned to introduce one

presenter and will be expected to ask the first question. Additionally, all students will be expected to ask a question during at least 3 other seminars. REC students should turn on their cameras when asking a question.

Technical Support

UF Computing Help Desk & Ticket Number: All technical issues require a UF Helpdesk Ticket Number. The UF Helpdesk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

<https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> | 352-392-4357.

Weekly Course Schedule

| Week | Activity | Assessment | Due Dates |
|------|--|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Organizational meeting (Jan 12) | Selection of seminar date | Jan 16 |
| 2 | Deadline for advisor-approved seminar titles | Advisor-approved seminar title | Jan 21 |
| 3 | Deadline for draft abstracts | Draft abstract | Jan 26 |
| 4 | 2 Seminars* | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Feb 2 |
| 5 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Feb 9 |
| 6 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Feb 16 |
| 7 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Feb 23 |
| 8 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Mar 2 |
| 9 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Mar 9 |
| 10 | <i>Spring Break</i> | -- | -- |
| 11 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Mar 23 |
| 12 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Mar 30 |
| 13 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Apr 6 |
| 14 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Apr 13 |
| 15 | 2 Seminars | Attendance; Peer evaluations | Apr 20 |

* Seminar content, slide quality, and presentation delivery for each student presentation will be assessed by the instructor.

Course Outline and Deliverables

Organizational meeting: Instructor introduction, syllabus, seminar schedule, handouts, and an example of a previous presentation.

Presentation preparation: Students work independently over several weeks to prepare a presentation in consultation with their advisor and the course instructor. A written research proposal approved by your advisor is strongly recommended as source material for developing the seminar presentation. Instructor will be available during office hours or by appointment if you need assistance with developing your presentation and/or feedback on draft presentation.

Student deliverables:

1. Attend Organizational Meeting – **Jan. 12.**
2. Select a seminar date and time slot (Doodle Poll) – by **Jan. 16.**
3. Submit advisor-approved seminar title via Canvas – by **Jan. 21.**

4. Submit draft abstract via Canvas – by **Jan. 26**.
5. Submit draft PowerPoint presentation – **2 weeks prior to your seminar**.
6. Submit advisor-approved final abstract and biographical sketch – **1 week prior to your seminar**.
7. In-person seminar presentation (Masters: 20-min presentation + 5 min for questions; PhD: 25 min presentation + 5 min for questions).
8. Attendance of the entire seminar and seminar peer evaluation are required. Upload evaluations to Canvas by 12 noon on Tuesday (the day after the seminar).
9. Do the speaker introduction for 1 presentation and ask the first question at the conclusion of the presentation.
10. Ask a question during at least 3 additional presentations during the semester.

Grading Policy

Course grading is consistent with [UF grading policies](#).

Course Grading Structure

Students will be assigned a grade of satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Point values and percents provided in the table below reflect the expected time and effort needed for assignments.

| Assignment Type | Point Value | Percent of Final Grade |
|--|-------------|------------------------|
| Draft Seminar Abstract | 20 | 10 |
| Attendance/Peer Evaluation | 40 | 20 |
| 1 question during at least 3 presentations | 20 | 10 |
| Presenter Introduction and First Question | 20 | 10 |
| Research Proposal Seminar Presentation | 100 | 50 |

Grading Scale

Students with a satisfactory performance in all assignment types will be assigned a grade of satisfactory.

Academic Policies and Resources

Academic policies for this course are consistent with university policies. See <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>.

Campus Health and Wellness Resources

Visit <https://one.uf.edu/whole-gator/topics> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

Please contact [UMatterWeCare](#) for additional and immediate support.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Zoom Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Zoom Accessibility](#)