AGRO/HORT/SOIL 590/694—Graduate Seminar
Spring 2021
Friday, 3:30-4:20 pm on Zoom

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COURSE OVERVIEW
The purpose of seminar is to teach and refine science communication skills through graduate student presentations, guest scholar lectures and peer evaluation.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, students:
-will have presented a science presentation to an audience
-will learn to give objective and constructive criticism
-evaluate presentations for completeness and clarity

COURSE MATERIALS:

There are no required materials for this course.

Canvas: (http://learn.nmsu.edu) will be the main communication tool for this course. Get in the habit of checking it frequently. You will submit your evaluation of speakers via canvas.

COURSE ZOOM ADDRESS:
https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/91908980736
MEETING ID: 919 0898 0736
PASSCODE: 174292

Grading Policy

Below are listed the assignments from which your grade will be derived.

Assignments in this course:

Assignments	How many	Points each/total	Weight
Attendance at all class meetings	14	50/700	25%
Peer evaluations of all speakers	13*	50/700	25%
Your presentation	1	100	50%
Total		**1,450**	**100%**

Grading Scale:

Percentage	Points	Grade
90-100%	1,305-1450	A
80-89%	1,160-1,304	B
70-79%	1,015-1,159	C
60-69%	870-1,014	D
59% and Below	Below 869	F

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

Attendance

All students are expected to attend every seminar via zoom. This is mandatory. I recognize that you may have other obligations during the semester which will preclude you from attending synchronously but please make every effort to attend 'live' if possible. If you're unable to attend live, please watch the zoom recording of the speaker and then provide your feedback.

Peer evaluations

Learning to give and receive constructive feedback is a large part of this course. You will be required to submit through Canvas feedback on every presentation, both other students and guest lecturers. Evaluation comments on student presentations will be shared anonymously with the student presenter so they may know what they're doing well and areas where they can improve. It is important to remember that learning to communicate your science is as important as doing the science. The most groundbreaking science advancements mean nothing if they can't be communicated (especially to those who have funding to provide!)

You will also be asked to evaluate guest lecturers, though this will not be shared with them. Learning to evaluate the communication skills of others helps refine your own skills.

Your presentation

Masters and early-stage PhD students will be assigned 20 minute time slots with 5 minutes each for questions. PhD students nearing completion of their degrees will be assigned 40

minute slots with 10 minutes for questions. If you are a Masters candidate or early-stage PhD student, you will share the presentation time slot with another student, so 2 presenters on some days.

Your major advisor is expected to 'attend' your presentation and introduce you, therefore, **please be sure to ask them if there are days they are not available prior to letting me know your available dates.** If they are not available, you may choose someone else on your committee to present you. If neither of those work, you may choose someone else on faculty, or ask me to present you. Your presenter is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

You are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to have a "rehearsal" prior to your presentation with your advisor and/or others who can provide you with helpful feedback before your assigned day. I am happy to be one of those people if you choose. (I was in theatre for 20 years, and I sit on two editorial boards so am happy to help even if I don't know your specific research.)
Please be sure to have a good strong WiFi signal, as well as a good microphone, on your presentation day; do not try to do your presentation on your phone.

Everyone must present their abstract no less than 1 week prior to their presentation.

The key to a good scientific presentation is to place your research in a larger context. The majority of your audience will not know why your science is important, so providing background information and explaining the importance of your project is vital. Explain why your research is interesting and how it relates to other areas. Don't forget to summarize your research and talk about what next steps are, either in your research or for other researchers to consider. Provide a take-home message! Remember to use language and terminology that everyone understands and don't use abbreviations unless you explain what they mean. Using jargon alienates the audience and makes your presentation less successful.

NMSU Student Resources and Policies
Please visit *https://provost.nmsu.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources/syllabus/policies* for university policies and student services, including Discrimination and Disability Accommodation, academic misconduct, student services, final exam schedule, grading policies and more.