

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Department of Biosystems Engineering
BE 696A **Biosystems Engineering Graduate Seminar I**
Seminar: M: 12-12:50 pm., Shantz 440

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

BE 696A Biosystems Engineering Graduate Seminar I (1 unit) is dedicated to the exchange of scholarly work. The scope of work shall consist of participation in the seminar by course registrants, with the exchange of ideas through discussion, evaluation, and peer-review feedback. Each registrant will present one 15-20-minute seminar on their graduate research during the current semester.

PREREQUISITES: Enrollment as a graduate student at the University of Arizona.

INSTRUCTOR and Contact information:

Kamel Didan
Office: Shantz 501A
Office hours: By appointment
Phone: (520) 621-8514
Email Address: didan@arizona.edu

COURSE FORMAT AND TEACHING METHODS:

1. Seminar presentations by guests and students in BE 696A
2. Group discussion and a possible group manuscript

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The main goal of this course is to provide BE graduate students with an opportunity and experience in presenting scholarly research proposals and results to an audience of peers. A secondary goal is to expose BE graduate students to current research in the field. A tertiary goal is to help them develop experience in organizing, managing, and conducting successful seminars.

Course Objectives are:

1. To give graduate students in BE and other disciplines exposure to research and development projects and programs conducted by leading researchers in the field at the University of Arizona and elsewhere.
2. To provide students with the experience of developing and presenting a seminar on the topic of their graduate research.
3. To provide students with experience in critical evaluation of oral presentations and providing oral and written feedback to speakers.

Expected Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will be expected to:

1. Be able to organize, develop and present a seminar on their research.
2. Be able to organize and conduct a technical seminar.
3. Be able to evaluate oral presentations and provide constructive feedback.
4. Be conversant in current research topics in Biosystems Engineering and related topics at the University of Arizona

TEXT: No text is required for this class.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS:

There are no formal homework assignments or exams for this course. Students will be graded on their attendance and participation in the class and their satisfactory performance of assigned duties. Please see GRADING below for details.

There will be weekly presentations of one or more seminars each class period. Registrants will either present a seminar or provide support for the seminar speakers and attendees. After each seminar presentation registrants will participate in the discussion of the topic presented. At the end of each seminar, registrants will fill an evaluation form to provide feedback to each speaker.

Work Required:

1. Each presenting student registered for 696a will **prepare a brief proposal describing the subject of their seminar. This proposal should be approved and signed by their major professor and submitted to the instructor by the 4th class meeting or before their seminar date if earlier. Proposals should be brief.**
2. Students need to prepare a 15-20-minutes PowerPoint (or similar) presentation (or alternative formats such as a panel discussion, debate, etc.). Students should also try to schedule a time with their major professor, committee, or lab. colleagues for a practice presentation well before the date of their presentation. A limited audience of other students and instructors may also be present if they wish and can manage to organize. The practice presentation should be thoroughly critiqued and evaluated to give the presenting student a chance to improve and make corrections. **NOTE:** Please work with your major professor, committee, and lab mates on your practice session and request their attendance.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and institutional safety measures and regulations, the following will be observed:

3. The Course will starting Fall 2021, return to the In-Person modality.
4. The class will be recorded and broadcasted via ZOOM for students who cannot attend in person
5. Each student will prepare an abstract and information to be used in a flyer publicizing their seminar. This information should be submitted to the student assigned to preside at the seminar **no later than two weeks before the presentation** so that it may be advertised if possible in *Lo Que Pasa and the Arizona Daily Wildcat* (it has been quite hard to do so recently). The abstract should follow the format used by the Transactions of the ASABE, Irrigation, and Drainage Engineering Journal, ASCE, or topic of proper journals of your choosing. This abstract can be like the proposal under No. 1, above, but must be submitted separately and coordinated with the seminar presiding student.
6. Unless otherwise stipulated, students should prepare for a 15-min presentation and no more than 20 minutes, to allow adequate time for discussion (not to exceed five minutes).
7. All presentations will be via ZOOM (use the weekly recurring link) and the presenting student must be familiar with ZOOM controls (I highly suggest practicing using ZOOM). All other activities will be like the F2F sessions, except to note all sessions will be recorded and if any students require special arrangements or have issues with privacy to please coordinate with the instructor and/or department.

8. Assuming the student has tested and confirmed ZOOM capabilities and equipment and internet performance and in the event, the student develops issues before or during the ZOOM session to please reach out to the instructor via cell phone immediately (520-440-9939). If all fail the student presentation may have to be rescheduled so arrange with the instructor.

Special Assignment (starting Fall 2020)

Starting Fall 2020 the instructor would like to experiment with a new type of class assignment aimed at promoting group work and scholarly activities. Starting this semester all graduate students registered for the 696B class (696A students are also welcome) will need to organize themselves into writing groups (numbers permitting) to conduct the following activities culminating in a publishable draft manuscript:

- Identify a current and hopefully ‘hot’ topic of interest related to biosystems engineering
- Agree on a manuscript writing approach based on reviewing current literature, criticizing a paper, results, or work, or opening a debate in the form of a letter to the editor about that topic
- Organize yourselves into writing groups (to meet regularly outside the course hours via ZOOM for example) to come up with a full draft manuscript and coordinate all of this with the instructor
- What matters is to contribute as it is normal that only a few will lead these efforts
- And finally, send the draft for publication to a leading peer-review venue

This is only an experiment that we will evaluate and see how to improve it next time around or cancel it. The purpose is to make effective use of the Seminar and learn more about our fields of interest.

Required Texts or Readings

There is no text or required readings for this course.

Required or Special Materials

There are no required or special materials for this course, except that during this ZOOM-based presentation students must ensure access to a reliable computer and internet connection.

Required Extracurricular Activities (if any)

There are no extracurricular activities for this course.

Final Examination or Project

There is no final exam or project for this course.

GRADING: Grades will be based upon the following considerations:

For those presenting a seminar in BE 696A, in addition to attendance, they will be graded for their presentation and will receive a grade of A, B, or C. They will be evaluated by their peers and any faculty attending the seminar.

Grades will consider:

- quality of presentation (see evaluation sheet for criteria),
- abstract produced for the flyer or announcement,
- attendance (see below under attendance), and
- adequacy and timeliness of progress report as defined in the classroom operating procedures.

- Students with two unexcused absences will have their letter grades decreased by one letter (e.g. from A to B, B to C, etc.). For each unexcused absence thereafter, the grade will be decreased by an additional letter.
- In addition to the above, the overall grade will also be based on contribution to the writing group effort as judged by peers

TOPICS TO BE COVERED IN THIS COURSE:

(Please refer to the seminar schedule for this course, BE 696a, for specific topics and dates)

Absence and Class Participation Policy

Attendance: Attendance by students enrolled in this course is mandatory and comprises part of the grade for the course. Please see the section on Grading. **Note:** Excessive absences (more than four unexcused absences) may result in a student being administratively dropped at the discretion of the instructor (see University's General Catalog). If a student is administratively dropped AFTER the end of the FOURTH week of classes, it will result in a failing grade of "F" being awarded in the course. Keep your instructor informed if you have any special circumstances to avoid unnecessary complications.

The UA's policy concerning Class Attendance, Participation, and Administrative Drops is available at: <http://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/class-attendance-participation-and-administrative-drop>

The UA policy regarding absences for any sincerely held religious belief, observance, or practice will be accommodated where reasonable, <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/religious-accommodation-policy>.

Absences pre-approved by the UA Dean of Students (or Dean Designee) will be honored. See: <https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/absences>

Participating in the course and attending the class and other course events are vital to the learning process. As such, attendance is required at all course meetings. Students who miss class due to illness or emergency are required to bring documentation from their healthcare provider or other relevant, professional third parties. Failure to submit third-party documentation will result in unexcused absences.

Course Communications

Online communication will be via D2L and email.

Presenters can reach out to the instructor via cell phone (**520-440-9939**) in the event of serious issues during the ZOOM presentations.

WITHDRAWALS: You may withdraw without the permission of the instructor up to the allowable date (usually the first week of September) - although your courtesy in notifying the instructor will be appreciated. Please refer to the academic calendar

(http://registrar.arizona.edu/dates-and-deadlines/view-dates?field_display_term_value=154) for permissions required after this date. An ***incomplete*** will be given only if the student is doing passing work and is prevented from completing a small portion of the coursework by illness or other legitimate emergency. Note that students wishing to drop the course, AT ANY TIME, must follow the University's procedure. Ceasing attendance does not automatically drop you from the course.

TIME AND PLACE:

- Regular F2F: The class meets from 12:00- 12:50 p.m. Shantz 440
- During the still ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, and if needed, we may move to ZOOM, please check the link on D2L

ON-LINE SECTION REQUIREMENTS

- 1 The seminars will be recorded (by ZOOM and possibly in **Panopto**) as well as synchronously webcast during the class period.
- 2 You may schedule a Chat with the instructor via D2L if you need assistance.
- 3 During the still ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, and if needed, we may switch all class activities to online

Information on how to use D2L

1. Go to <http://d2l.arizona.edu/> to access D2L
2. Enter your netID login and password
3. Go to “My Academic Courses” If your course does not appear:
 - a. Click on the down arrow beside the current semester.
 - b. Click on the down arrow beside the department name, and then
 - c. Click on your course name.
 - d. You should now be at your D2L Course Home Page.

Links to the Directions for all assignments are under the content heading in the course site found in the lower toolbar.

If you have difficulty with D2L, please read the D2L Tip Sheet at <http://eebweb.arizona.edu/faculty/dornhaus/courses/d2l%20tip%20sheet%20students.pdf>

Problems using D2L can also be reported using this Weblink

<http://help.d2l.arizona.edu/node/153> .

Additionally, you can contact UITS 24/7 at: <http://uits.arizona.edu/departments/the247> or directly at - (520) 626-TECH (8324)

General course policies and requirements

1. Students must have a reliable computer, internet, and access to D2L and ZOOM.
2. You should check D2L for new information related to the course.
3. E-mails will be answered as soon as possible.
4. Weekly announcements and/or changes in the seminar schedules or special assignments will be posted regularly so it is your responsibility to check the D2L page.

Online Student Interaction Guidelines:

1. The Arizona Board of Regents' Student Code of Conduct <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-code-conduct-student-faqs> , ABOR policy 5-308, prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including one's self. See <http://policy.arizona.edu/threatening-behavior-students> .
2. It is expected that students may disagree with the research presented or the opinions of their classmates. To disagree is fine but to disparage others' views is unacceptable. All comments should be kept civil and thoughtful.
3. **This Class runs under university policies regarding disruptive behavior.** <http://policy.arizona.edu/disruptive-behavior-instructional> .

Classroom Behavior Policy

To foster a positive learning environment, students and instructors have a shared responsibility. We want a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment where all of us feel comfortable with each other and where we can challenge ourselves to succeed. To that end, our focus is on the tasks at hand and not on extraneous activities (e.g., texting, chatting, reading a newspaper, making phone calls, web surfing, etc.).

Students are asked to refrain from disruptive conversations with people sitting around them during the seminar. Students who engage in disruptive activity will be asked to cease this behavior. Those who continue to disrupt the class will be asked to leave lectures or discussions and may be reported to the Dean of Students.

Threatening Behavior Policy

The UA Threatening Behavior by Students Policy prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the University community, including to oneself. See <http://policy.arizona.edu/education-and-student-affairs/threatening-behavior-students>.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Our goal in this classroom is that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also welcome to contact the Disability Resource Center (520-621-3268) to establish reasonable accommodations. For additional information on the Disability Resource Center and reasonable accommodations, please visit <http://drc.arizona.edu>.

If you have reasonable accommodations, please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Please be aware that the accessible table and chairs in this room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not usable.

Code of Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to share intellectual views and discuss freely the principles and applications of course materials. However, graded work/exercises must be the product of independent effort unless otherwise instructed. Students are expected to adhere to the UA

Code of Academic Integrity as described in the UA General Catalog. See <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/academic-integrity/students/academic-integrity>.

The University Libraries have some excellent tips for avoiding plagiarism, available at <http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>.

Selling class notes and/or other course materials to other students or a third party for resale is not permitted without the instructor's express written consent. Violations to this and other course rules are subject to the Code of Academic Integrity and may result in course sanctions. Additionally, students who use D2L or UA e-mail to sell or buy these copyrighted materials are subject to Code of Conduct Violations for misuse of student e-mail addresses. This conduct may also constitute copyright infringement.

UA Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment Policy

The University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free of discrimination; see <http://policy.arizona.edu/human-resources/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>

Our classroom is a place where everyone is encouraged to express well-formed opinions and their reasons for those opinions. We also want to create a tolerant and open environment where such opinions can be expressed without resorting to bullying or discrimination of others.

Additional Resources for Students

UA Academic policies and procedures are available at <http://catalog.arizona.edu/policies>

Student Assistance and Advocacy information is available at <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/student-assistance/students/student-assistance>

Confidentiality of Student Records

<http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/personal-information/family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-1974-ferpa?topic=ferpa>

Subject to Change Statement

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade and absence policy, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Statement of Copyrighted materials:

Students are advised that all lecture notes, lectures, study guides, and other course materials disseminated by the instructor to the students, whether in class or online, are original materials and as such reflect the intellectual property of the instructor or author of those works. All readings, study guides, lecture notes, and handouts are intended for individual use by the student. Students may not distribute or reproduce these materials for commercial purposes without the express written consent of the instructor. Students who sell or distribute these materials for any use other than their own are in violation of the University's Intellectual Property Policy (available at <http://techlaunch.arizona.edu/university-arizona-intellectual-property-policy>). Violations

of the instructor's copyright may result in course sanctions and violate the Code of Academic Integrity.

Confidentiality of Student Records:

<http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/ferpa/default.htm> . Students should have read and been aware of federal regulations regarding the privacy of their academic records.

Special Needs Policy:

Students needing special accommodations or special services should contact the Disability Resources Center, 1224 East Lowell Street, Tucson AZ 85721, (520)621-3268, FAX (520)621-9423, email: uadrc@email.arizona.edu , <http://drc.arizona.edu/> . Resources/CDRR (621-5227). You must register and request that the center or DRC send the instructor official notification of your needs as soon as possible. Please plan to meet with me via phone or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how this course's requirements may impact your ability to fully participate. **The need for accommodations must be documented by the appropriate office.**

Subject to Change Statement

Information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grade policies, maybe subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.