



Course Syllabus: **Araneology**
College of Science and Mathematics
BIOL 5743 Section 280
Spring 2025

Contact Information

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Course Description

Classification physiology, ecology, food habits, and distribution of spiders and related forms. Emphasis on local fauna.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Lecture Text is: Biology of Spiders, 3rd Edition, by Rainer F. Foelix, 2010. Lab Text is: Spiders of North America: an identification manual, 2nd Edition, by D. Ubick, P. Paquin, P.E. Cushing and V. Roth, 2017.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook 2024-2025](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Student Handbook 2024-2025](#)

Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment.

Assignments	Percentage
Anatomy Exam	5
Family Identification Exam	10
Final Lab Exam (Key to Species)	20

Assignments	Percentage
Spider Collection	40
Paper Presentation	10
Lecture Final Exam	15
Total Percentage	100

Table 2: Total percentage for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	90 to 100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	Less than 60

Exams

There will be three lab exams and one lecture exam that collectively will comprise 50% of your overall grade for the class. The single lecture exam will be a comprehensive final exam over material primarily from the lecture textbook. This exam will consist of various types of testing formats (i.e. multiple choice, matching, true/false, fill in the blank, listing, drawing/labeling, and short answer). The three lab exams will consist of a spider anatomy exam, family identification exam and a final lab exam that involves keying down spider specimens to the species level. See "Grading" for a breakdown of what each testing component is worth. **DO NOT MISS AN EXAM!!!!** Academic honesty must be practiced at all times. Any instances of academic dishonesty may result in a zero being assigned for a test or assignment and repeated dishonesty can result in an F as a final course grade.

Spider Collection

Students will be awarded 5 points for the 1st representative of each correctly identified family, 3 points for the first representative of each correctly identified genus, and 4 points for each correctly identified species of spider. The total number of points possible is unlimited (on average, about 350 points will usually earn an A). Points will be deducted for improper curation. Grade assignment on collections will vary due to seasonal fluctuation that affects availability of specimens.

Paper Presentation

You will be required to give a 15-minute oral presentation over any arachnid-related paper (or collection of papers) on your choice of such topics as behavior, physiology, evolution, paleontology, taxonomy, biological control, etc. Please try to focus on more recent research to enlighten the class concerning more current topics in arachnology. There are some resources in the Invertebrate Collection

room (room 221) that are available to aid you in this venture. This includes all issues of the Journal of Arachnology (JOA) and most of the Bulletins of the British Arachnological Society. Almost all issues of JOA are available online with searchable free access. A handout that includes an abstract of your presentation and citation of the article(s) that you are presenting should be prepared to give to your instructor and pass out to all class members on the day of your presentation. Make sure you are prepared to answer questions about your presentation topic. You are also expected to listen and ask questions when others give their presentations. In order to prevent duplications, please inform the instructor of your title as soon as you have decided on the topic/article that you want to use for your presentation.

Final Exams

The final lecture exam will be comprehensive and will count 15% of your overall grade for the class, will consist of various types of testing formats (i.e. multiple choice, matching, true/false, fill in the blank, listing, drawing/labeling, and short answer), and will be administered from 3:30-5:30PM on Tuesday, May 13, 2025. The final lab exam will consist of keying a series of unknown spider specimens to the species level of identification using a dissection microscope and primary and secondary scientific literature sources. This exam will occur from 5:30-8:20PM on Thursday, May 8, 2025.

Extra Credit

Extra credit assignments are not available.

Make Up Tests

Make-up exams will be administered **ONLY FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES OR UNIVERSITY-AUTHORIZED ABSENCES**. You **MUST** present a valid university excuse to me and/or make arrangements with me **BEFORE** the exam is missed in order to be able to make up a missed lecture exam. If a make-up exam is granted, it should be taken immediately (i.e. before exams are passed back to the class).

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: January 24, 2025.

Deadline to file for graduation: February 17, 2025.

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 30, 2025.

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes and utilize all of the scheduled time wisely. The majority of this class entails you working with spiders directly with the aid of a microscope. A lot of time is required and devoted to the identification of spiders that you will be collecting on your own and as a class.

Aids for Success

During lab, utilize the **ENTIRE** lab time working with your spider specimens!!! There is no substitute for the amount of knowledge and experience you will gain by simply spending a lot of concentrated time devoted to studying, observing, and identifying the spiders. During lecture, take thorough lecture notes to make sure you get material covered in lecture that is not in the text. Most of the material for exams will be derived from the textbooks, handouts, and notes. Lectures should correspond to the chapters indicated on this syllabus.

Class Policies

Class Prerequisite: Graduate standing or consent of the instructor.

Class Requirements: This class contains both a lecture and lab component to it. Spider collection required. Upon submission, your spider collection will be retained by the Department of Biology.

ALL PHONES SHOULD BE OFF IN THE CLASSROOM

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students With Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Week or Date	Topics/Exams	Chapters
Week 1 1/21 to 1/23	Course Orientation; Introduction to Spiders; Lab Work	1
Week 2 1/28 to 1/30	Orders of Arachnida; Lab Work	N/A
Week 3 2/4 to 2/6	Functional Anatomy; Lab Work	2
Week 4 2/11	Metabolism; Lab Work	3
2/13	Spider Anatomy Test	
Week 5 2/18 to 2/20	Neurobiology; Lab Work	4
Week 6 2/25 to 2/27	Spider Webs; Lab Work	5
Week 7 3/4	Locomotion and Prey Capture; Lab Work	6
3/6	Spider Family Identification Exam	
Week 8 3/11 to 3/13	SPRING BREAK	Have fun!
3/18 to 3/20	Reproduction; Lab Work	7
Week 9 3/25 to 3/27	Development; Lab Work	8
Week 10 4/1 to 4/3	Ecology; Lab Work	9
Week 11 4/8 to 4/10	Phylogeny and Systematics; Lab Work	10
Week 12 4/15	Student Paper Presentations; Lab Work	N/A
4/17	EASTER	Enjoy!
Week 13 4/22 to 4/24	Student Paper Presentations; Lab Work	N/A
Week 14 4/29 to 5/1	Student Paper Presentations; Lab Work	N/A
Week 15 5/6	Student Paper Presentations; Lab Work	N/A
5/8	Lab Final Exam; Spider Collection Due By End Of Lab	
5/13	Lecture Final Exam	