

BIOL 460 – Honours Seminar

Dept. of Biology, University of Victoria – Fall 2026

Meetings: Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 12:30 – 1:20 p.m. – CUN 146

Biology Honours Advisors: Dr. Terri Lacourse (tlacours@uvic.ca, CUN 155)

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The Honours Seminar has three main objectives:

- To share information about undertaking a research project and creating a research-based thesis.
- To provide an opportunity to learn and improve scientific presentation and communication skills.
- To create a cohort and peer group among Biology Honours students.

Evaluation

BIOL 460 has zero units and no grade. It is evaluated as ‘complete’ (COM) or ‘incomplete’ (INC). To receive a grade of ‘complete’, students must:

1. attend and participate in our weekly Tuesday/Wednesday meetings;
2. submit a 2-page research project proposal (due October 6); and,
3. present a 15-minute research seminar to the class.

Honours students are also strongly encouraged to attend Biology Research Seminars on Friday afternoons. These will be announced on the BIOL 460 Brightspace page.

BIOL 499A and 499B receive the same grade at the end of the academic year. Successful completion of these courses requires a written thesis and an oral defense of the thesis adjudicated by an Examining Committee. The final grade is based on the Examining Committee’s evaluation of the written thesis (50%) and oral defense (30%), and the Supervisor’s evaluation of student performance over the year (20%).

2026 Schedule for BIOL 460

Sep 9	Introduction to the Honours Program
Sep 16	Effective Literature Searches with Monique Grenier (Biology Librarian)
Sep 22	Scientific Presentations
Sep 29	Publishing Papers in Science
Oct 6	Research Project Proposal due
Oct 6 – Nov 24	Student Presentations (Note: no Seminar Nov 10 & 11 due to Reading Break)
Dec 1	Thesis Writing Overview

Academic Integrity

The University has a strict Policy on Academic Integrity, which includes provisions for the “Unauthorized Use of an Editor or Content Generator”. All students are required to familiarize themselves and abide by this policy, which is described in detail in the University Calendar: www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html. All student work – including the research proposal, presentation and thesis text – must be the product of each student's individual efforts alone. Use of generative AI or AI-assisted writing and editing tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly, etc) to generate, complete, revise or correct that work is not authorized and is considered a violation of the Policy on Academic Integrity. This prohibition does not extend to assistive technologies or accommodations approved through the Centre for Accessible Learning; however, students relying on such supports must confirm arrangements with the Course Instructors and acknowledge/reference all such supports in each instance of use.

We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and X̱sepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.