ZOL 415 Discussion Sections

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Office Hour: Thurs 12:30-1:30
or by appointment

Discussion Expectations:

- Read the paper!
- Participate! (Grade of 0, 1, or 2 each week)
- Come with 1-2 written paragraphs (safety net)
  1. The goals of the paper
  2. The strengths & weakness of the paper
  3. What the paper actually accomplishes (relative to the goals)
  4. The topics/issues/questions you would like to explore and clarify in the discussion.
- Lead one discussion. Meet with me the week before you lead.

Please...

- No switching sections except for reasonable excuses (funerals, university sanctioned travel, etc.) or health emergencies. **Let me know before class** (if possible) or asap.
- Food is okay, but try to make it quiet food.
- Once discussion is done, put the desks back in rows.

Tips for reading scientific papers:

- Look for:
  - What hypothesis they are testing and do their data support the hypothesis?
  - How does this study fit in with previous research?
  - Why is this study important?
  - What have we learned from this study?
  - Where do we go from here?
- Figures are very important!
- Don’t get bogged down (especially with the stats). If you don’t get something, try a few minutes. If you still don’t get it, move on!
Tips for leading discussion:

- Plan a strategy beforehand.
- Don’t lecture. Rather, lead the students in discussing.
- Come with twice as many questions as you think you will need.
- Don’t focus on methods! Activities/games are fine if you OK them with me beforehand. Be creative!
- Ask good questions! Examples...

Discussion Questions

- **Good** types of questions:
  - What hypothesis they are testing and do their data support the hypothesis?
  - How does this study fit in with previous research?
  - Why is this study important?
  - What have we learned from this study?
  - Where do we go from here?
- **Bad** types of questions:
  - What did you think of this paper?
  - Did everyone understand this?

Statistics Handout

- Assignment: work through handout
- We’ll post the class data.
- For discussion next week: show me a chi-squared table (page 6) and a regression graph (page 8).
- You may use Excel if you want or do it by hand.
- This will be for your participation points for today’s discussion.