

Grades are assigned in Biology 486 through discussion of the student's committee, with the opinion of the research mentor weighing more heavily. The work and achievements of only the current semester will be considered for that semester's grade. Students with a majority of Excellent/Very good evaluations can receive A's or B's. Students with a majority of Good/Satisfactory evaluations can receive B's or C's. Students with three or more Unacceptable evaluations will fail and no longer continue in Bio 486. Not all categories below will apply to all students (for instance second semester students have no writing or presentation and are only evaluated in the first two categories)

Rubric for student evaluation in Biology 486

Category of evaluation	Excellent/Very Good	Good/Satisfactory	Unacceptable
Student's performance in lab and meetings	Student attends all scheduled meetings with their mentor and works in lab/field the appropriate amount of time to fulfill research requirements for that semester.	Student occasionally misses meetings and does not always work in the lab/field when they are expected to. Because of this, student is behind in their work.	Student frequently misses meetings or neglects to contact their mentor. Their research is not proceeding at an acceptable pace.
Research performance	Student shows initiative and creativity. Student can easily work independently and can think critically and solve problems that arise in their research.	Student can solve simple problems and can form some of their own ideas regarding research. Can perform tasks in lab/field unsupervised.	Student cannot solve simple problems that arise in research. Students needs to be supervised when conducting research and cannot form ideas regarding research on their own.
Student's adherence to deadlines set by 486 schedule	Student adheres to all deadlines. Drafts are given to the mentor in time. Final paper given to committee in time.	Student does not give drafts to mentor according to schedule. Paper is provided to the committee in time but writing delays result in burden for committee member(s) at end of semester.	Student does not provide drafts to mentor. Paper is not provided to the committee in time before the defense. (2 days for proposals, 4 days for theses)
Quality of research paper: Content and integration of knowledge	Writing demonstrates that the student fully understands the research topic. Background information is comprehensive. Concepts are integrated with student's own understanding. Paper is well organized.	Writing shows a satisfactory understanding of the topic. Some relevant information is not included. Paper is not well-organized. Only cursory introduction or discussion sections.	Writing shows inadequate understanding of the topic. Required sections are not included. Information is poorly presented. Vital data not included.
Quality of research paper: Tables, figures, citations	Student provides all appropriate tables and figures. Student has appropriate amount of sources cited	Student is missing some relevant tables or figures. Student is missing some relevant sources.	Student is missing many appropriate tables or figures. Student has an inadequate number of sources.
Student's defense presentation	Presentation includes appropriate visual information, tables, and figures. Presentation is well organized. Student demonstrates appropriate mastery of topic.	Presentation is missing important figures, tables or visual information. Student needs frequently refer to notes to explain concepts.	Student has no visual component to presentation (slides have only text). Student makes major mistakes in the presentation of their topic.
Student's response to questions in defense	Student demonstrates full knowledge of topic. Can elaborate on questions, and mentor's help needed only infrequently.	Student doesn't elaborate on questions. Student requires extensive help from notes or their mentor at times.	Student gets multiple questions wrong and demonstrates a lack of knowledge on their topic.