

**ORIENTATION
INFORMATION
FOR
UNDERGRADUATE
DEPARTMENT OF
WILDLIFE AND
FISHERIES SCIENCES
STUDENTS**



Department Website: <http://wfs.sdstate.edu>

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1. Academic Dishonesty and Department Policy

The Department and the University have taken a strong and clear stand regarding academic dishonesty. Our Department policy is a more “student friendly” approach to this issue. It provides a mechanism for internally handling issues before the procedure goes to the University Student Code level. We believe that it is unethical and unprofessional to present work done by others in a manner indicating that the student is presenting material as his or her original ideas or work.

Our Department policy is appended to each of our course syllabi. The policy can also be found on our Department Home Page (<http://wfs.sdstate.edu>).

While it is obvious that plagiarizing on tests, quizzes, research papers, etc., are forms of academic dishonesty, there are other forms of dishonesty that are often not as obvious to students. A couple examples follow. Providing information in a written or oral assignment that is the data of others, but not cited as such, is a form of academic dishonesty. If some form of team effort in completing an assignment is used, but permission is not received from the instructor beforehand for such cooperation, academic dishonesty has occurred. There are numerous other situations.

If a student is unsure if a particular activity may be regarded as a form of academic dishonesty they should consult the faculty member before undertaking such an activity.

2. Advisor and Advisee Responsibilities

Advisor:

- a. Maintain advisee records. Keep current advisee records and personal information in accordance with confidentiality requirements.
- b. Furnish accurate academic information. Provide advisees with correct and relevant information about university, college, and departmental graduation requirements.
- c. Know advisees. Know assigned advisees and their individual educational and career goals.
- d. Guide major program planning. Recommend courses that correspond with advisee’s academic background and educational goals.
- e. Monitor academic decision-making. Inform advisees about relevant alternatives, limitations, and possible consequences of academic decisions, including information on academic standards, appeals, and charges of academic dishonesty.
- f. Refer to campus and community resources. Encourage and guide advisees to utilize available campus and community student help and student development resources.
- g. Encourage timely progress toward degree. Advocate timely planning and progress toward educational goals with prompt attention to problems.
- h. Assist students with professional development.

Advisee:

- a. Responsible for initiating and advancing timely career and academic related plans and discussions with advisor.
- b. Responsible for initiating regular progress appointments and seeking advisor assistance when problems arise.
- c. Responsible for fulfilling additional requirements as agreed upon during discussions with advisor.
- d. Responsible for recognizing that the ultimate responsibility for timely completion of academic requirements rests with the advisee.

3. Application for Graduation

You will **not** graduate unless you request it. The University does not assume that you wish to graduate just because you meet or exceed the number of credit hours required.

During your last semester **you must request graduation**. Dates are published in the class schedule regarding when this needs to be completed and this deadline is also posted on Department bulletin boards. Graduation applications are available from the ABS Academic Program office in SAG 156.

4. Department Assessment Program

The Board of Regents requires each undergraduate student to complete a senior assessment in order to graduate. The first part involves an exit exam. You are not required to score at a particular level, only to complete the exam. You must also complete an exit interview. As a senior, look for posted announcements for the times and places for assessment (see Item 6). You **must** complete this requirement.

5. Building Access

Undergraduates are only allowed in the building when the building is open; thus, on late nights or weekends undergraduates are not to be in the building unless specifically authorized. Undergraduates are not to have building or room keys unless specifically authorized. We would prefer to have the building open at all times, but security reasons make this impossible.

6. Bulletin Board Information

A variety of informational items are posted in Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences space in the Northern Plains Biostress Laboratory in a variety of places. Boards used are outside Room 181, outside the Main Office (Room 138), and near the Department Reference Room (Room 164). Such items as seminar announcements, class changes, wildlife and fisheries club meetings, etc., are posted. It is advisable for all students to check on these postings at least twice a week. In addition, announcements

concerning particularly important items are posted on various other boards in the Department area.

7. Computer Room Policy (Room 143)

The computer room (Room 143) is not for use by undergraduate students. Computers in that room are purchased on grant and contract money; they are not University computers. The University has numerous campus locations where computers are available to undergraduate students. Students should strongly consider purchasing their own computer and printer.

8. Curricular Planning

Keep the General Bulletin (Catalog) from the year you start at SDSU and the Department Curriculum Sheet provided to you when you start our program. These are the requirements that you will be responsible for completing. Plan your schedule so that you and your advisor can correctly schedule courses during preregistration. As a first semester junior, you should have planned your remaining course schedule for each semester because some classes are only offered once per two years. Changes may still be made, but it will ensure that you know where you stand academically.

If you drop out of SDSU for three consecutive semesters (not counting summers) you will be responsible for the Bulletin and Curriculum Sheet in effect when you re-enter the University.

9. Department Curriculum

The curriculum that students are expected to complete is a result of many inputs. The Board of Regents and SDSU have expectations of what students should learn. The Department faculty, professional organizations, employers, and others all have expectations on what is needed by students. All affect your curriculum. It is not just a set of courses which we arbitrarily determine that you need.

A B.S. degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences is not intended to be a technical degree filled with narrow “how to do it” courses. Employers of our students have not found the vocational-technical route of use for their employees; they tried that and were dissatisfied with the result.

Each component of the curriculum has its own purpose in the curriculum. Whether it be chemistry, biology, humanities, math, or any other academic area – it is there for a reason. Our intent and purpose is to produce well rounded individuals who can effectively use their mental capabilities.

In addition, there is logic to the order in which courses are taken. Be aware that each course does not stand alone. Each course, and the material in it, is a building block for future courses. You will be in error if you believe that once you have taken a course and

demonstrated mastery of that subject, you will not be expected to apply that gained knowledge in future courses.

The Department Home Page contains current and recent curricula.

10. Department Home Page

The Department Home Page (<http://wfs.sdstate.edu>) has a wealth of information of use to students. Information included in that Home Page includes:

- information on summer, departmental, and permanent jobs,
- class syllabi,
- notes and handouts in some classes,
- curriculum requirements,
- skills matrices,
- agency and professional organization links,
- Department missions and philosophy,
- academic dishonesty policy,
- faculty information,
- scholarship and award information, and
- Department news.

Use the Department Home Page – one of its primary purposes is to assist undergraduate students.

11. Department Reference Room (Room 164)

No materials can be checked out or removed and undergraduate students need a pass from the secretary to be in the Department Reference Room. It can be used as a study area.

12. Ethics

Ethics in the classroom in regard to honesty is important. The easiest way to do well on a test, term paper, etc., may not be the best way to further your education.

As individuals who are interested in wildlife and fisheries resource welfare, we are also on the front edge of helping to maintain this resource. Not only should we follow the written laws and regulations concerning these resources, we should also be examples for their most appropriate utilization. Obviously, a game or fish violation is not an acceptable practice and students should be aware that such a violation could prevent them from obtaining a future position in wildlife and fisheries. Furthermore, our animal care and land use should go beyond just the letter of the law.

Ethical behavior should go beyond just laws and regulations. Always be aware of who you are and what you are. Others will use you as an example; make it a good example, not a bad one.

13. Hunting and Fishing Licenses

New undergraduate students from out of state are not eligible for resident hunting and fishing licenses until they have resided in South Dakota for a specific amount of time. Make sure all appropriate licenses and special stamps are legally obtained. Make sure you know the rules and regulations. A current student at SDSU can get a hunting and/or fishing license or other tags as a resident. However, if you purchase a license and apply for and receive a tag while you are a resident, and then move out of state, you are no longer a resident. Therefore, if you move out of state, and then use the resident license or tag, you can be prosecuted as a nonresident using a resident license or tag. It makes no difference that you were a resident when you obtained the tag or license.

14. Importance of Work Experience

Undergraduate students are reminded many times of the importance of work experience. There are numerous opportunities through which to gain experience. Opportunities include paid summer work with an agency, paid school year or summer work in the Department, and volunteer work during the academic year in the Department or elsewhere. Graduate students are in constant need of help. Sometimes funding is available for paid help and at other times only volunteer help can be afforded. A good idea of graduate student research projects can be obtained by attending Graduate Seminar (WL 792) on a periodic basis. You are welcome at those seminars. Positions available can be found on the Department webpage (see Section 17).

15. Material Safety Data Sheet Policy (MSDS)

In an effort to continue improvement of Department safety, please be aware of the following. We want your academic environment to be as safe as possible. It is important for you to realize that lab and field safety are important.

All materials (chemicals) that pose any potential problem to human health are required to be sold with a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). These sheets contain information such as physical data, fire hazard, toxicity, health effects, first aid, etc.

These sheets will be included in our MSDS reference book. This red, 3-ring binder will always be located above the sink in Room 163. Read these before using any material and refer to them in an emergency.

16. Office Use

The Department cannot provide support – such as computers or typewriters, stationery or postage, for job applications or such other activities. This is the responsibility of the

student. Office equipment and secretarial help are not provided for this purpose; there are no exceptions. In addition, undergraduate students cannot use computers in our computer lab (Room 143) for this purpose. Feel free, however, to ask any faculty member to proof letters of application, resumes, forms, etc.

17. Positions Available

Go to our website (<http://wfs.sdstate.edu>) and under Positions Available you can obtain information about Assistantships, BS/MS Permanent/Part Time, Internships, Ph.D. Permanent/Part Time, SDSU WL/F Department (School Year, Summer, and Volunteer), and Summer positions. These are the position announcements we have received. For other positions go to the Jobs Links portion of our webpage.

18. Safety

All students are asked to practice good safety procedures while in the building. We want your academic environment to be as safe as possible.

19. Scholarships

The University and College have a variety of scholarship programs that require application. Be familiar with that process and the benefits available. As of Spring 2009, you must apply to the University Scholarship Database to be considered for departmental scholarships.

20. Skills Matrices

Communications, statistical, computer, ethical, teamwork, and critical thinking skills are of long-term importance to our students. We include these areas to the curriculum in two ways. In some cases they are specific course requirements, such as requiring courses in communications, statistics, etc. In other cases we build these skills into our own courses.

21. Student Responsibility to Learn

The primary reason you are here is to learn. This is your responsibility. The faculty can assist you in many ways; however, the “learning” part is up to you. Take advantage of all opportunities to enhance your learning experience.

22. Student Time Planning

There is plenty of time to study and to hunt, fish, camp, hike, go to the movies, etc.; it just requires time management on your part to get your academic work done and do these other things. Your advisor can assist you if you are having difficulty managing your time, as can the Career and Academic Planning Office at Medary Commons. The University also has programs to help you with classes and use of your time. This is a service provided to students that they should use, if needed.

The course GR 143 (Mastering Lifetime Learning Skills) is also very useful. It also meets SDSU Institutional Goal 1.

23. Tolerance

One thing that becomes readily apparent to students as they progress through life is that all people are not the same. Different people have different values, beliefs, and concepts of life. While you may not agree with them, be tolerant of the positions of others.

24. Tutoring

Wintrode Tutoring Program: Coordinated through the College of General Studies. Obtain help with chemistry, writing, biology, physics, and other subjects. The tutoring website is <http://generalstudies.sdsu.edu/tutoring/index.htm>

Math Help: Math can be a challenge for some. Tutoring is available to students at the Math Help Center. Visit their website <http://www3.sdsu.edu/Academics/CollegeOfEngineering/MathematicsandStatistics/MathHelpCenter/>

25. Undergraduate Research Opportunities

There are numerous opportunities for undergraduate students to work with faculty on research. While we cannot accommodate all students in this area, many students have obtained valuable research experience as undergraduates. See individual faculty members for availability.

26. Use of Materials

Out-of-classroom-time use of bird mounts, microscopes, fishes, etc., is not allowed except as authorized by faculty members.

27. Departmental Clubs

The Department is home to the Wildlife Conservation Club (a student chapter of The Wildlife Society) and the SDSU Student Subunit of the American Fisheries Society. The University is home to the SDSU Fishing Club.

A total listing of the benefits of club participation is too lengthy to provide here. However, such things as professionalism, organizational planning, and student-faculty interaction are important aspects of the clubs.