

## ASTR/CHEM/GEOL/PHYS 495A/B Seminar

Spring 2017: January 9–May 12  
F 12:00 PM–12:50 PM, Room: STB 108

**Version 7:** February 16, 2017 (subject to change)

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**Professor:** Kathy Cooksey, Ph.D., STB 219; [kcooksey@hawaii.edu](mailto:kcooksey@hawaii.edu); 808-932-7195  
**Office Hours:** W 9–9:50 PM & 2–3 PM, F 11–11:50 AM, and by appointment  
**Website:** [Laulima HIL ASTR/CHEM/GEOG/PHYS-495A/B \[SP17\]](#)

### Course Description:

The course catalog has the following for ASTR495:

- A:** “Seminar presentations of topics in the physical sciences by faculty, enrolled students and invited speakers. The first semester (495A) is taken CR/NC; in the second semester (495B), students are required to present a seminar for a letter grade.  
Pre: senior standing or instructor’s consent. (Same as CHEM 495A-495B, GEOL 495A-495B, MATH 495A-495B, and PHYS 495A-495B).”
- B:** “Seminar presentations of topics in the physical sciences by faculty, enrolled students and invited speakers. Students are required to present a seminar for a letter grade.  
Pre: senior standing, or instructor’s consent. (Same as CHEM 495B, GEOL 495B, MATH 495B, and PHYS 495B).”

### Learning Objectives:

It’s an atypically low-enrollment 495B class this semester, so we’re going to run a partial “science communication” course, with the goal of developing highly transferrable skills:

- public speaking, improved by reflection on others’ presentations and by practice (to varying degrees for 495A versus 495B students);
- providing constructive criticism verbally and in writing;
- technical writing at a few levels;
- asking thoughtful and topical questions; and
- fielding questions professionally.

### Class Rules

- Be supportive and respectful of every speaker, which includes being on time to class, remaining attentive during the presentation, and asking reasonable questions during or after the talk.
- Attend and participate.
- Fill out the post-class evaluation form(s) by the following Friday at 5 PM (even if it’s a holiday).

### Email and Laulima:

- UHH considers email and Laulima an official form of communication; students are responsible for receiving and returning information in a timely manner.
- The professor will email students at their [hawaii.edu](mailto:hawaii.edu) accounts only.
- The Laulima course website is listed under “HIL ASTR/CHEM/GEOG/PHYS-495A/B [SP17].” This site will be the hub for all course information.
- The schedule of speakers was randomly determined. Any changes will be posted to the syllabus (under Laulima:Resources) and the affected speakers will be notified via email.
- Evaluation forms will be filled out using Laulima: Assignments, Tests and Surveys.

**Good-to-Know about the Professor:**

- She enjoys teaching and wants to be better at it, and she really cares about helping students be better. These aspects combined mean she is on the students' side; trust in that and knowledge that she is receptive to feedback will smooth over rough patches.
- She chooses teaching techniques based on physics-education research to support student learning as best as possible. This means she has one or more reasons for nearly every component of and action in a course. She'll gladly motivate these choices whenever necessary or asked.
- Her primary goal is to help students improve *how* they learn with the logic that if students learn how to learn, they can master any content. The related goal is to focus on transferrable skills so that time and effort spent for the class yield benefits beyond the course and semester.
- Generally, she does not answer questions directly. A student making connections and constructing a solution her- or himself will ingrain the answer more effectively, and the professor facilitates the process by asking leading questions. Since the motivation is to help the students, they should embrace and engage with this process. (It is also a transferrable skill to discuss ideas and answer questions on the fly.)
- She generally responds to email 24-to-48 hours after receipt. If the matter is urgent, the student should call (office voicemail is automatically emailed) or stop by her office (her generally weekly schedule is on her homepage: <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~kcooksey>).

**General Course Outline<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
F 13 Jan	Course Overview
F 20 Jan	Activity: What makes a good talk?
F 27 Jan	Activity: Extemporaneous speaking & asking/answering questions
F 3 Feb	Activity: Extemporaneous speaking & asking/answering questions (cont'd)
F 10 Feb	Activity: Elevator pitch
F 17 Feb	Activity: Presenting with a slide (495B students)
F 24 Feb	Activity: Presenting with a slide (cont'd; 495A students)
F 3 Mar	Student Presentation Day: Colin Milovsoroff [GEOL] & Ashley Maldonado [CHEM]
F 10 Mar	Student Presentation Day: Nathan Clark [CHEM] & Brian Anderson [GEOL]
F 17 Mar	Activity: Crafting personal statements/cover letters
F 24 Mar	Activity: Designing résumé/Curriculum Vitae (CV)
27-31 Mar	Spring recess (no class)
F 7 Apr	Student Presentation Day: Jasmin Silva & Brittany Luna [CHEM]
F 14 Apr	Good Friday (no class)
F 21 Apr	Student Presentation Day: Kyle Napoleon [PHYS] & Ashley Garnett [GEOL]
F 28 Apr	Student Presentation Day: Brooke Higa [CHEM] & Stephen Zilch [CHEM]
8-13 May	Final Exam Week (no class)

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<sup>1</sup>Subject to change.

**Grading**

495A: There are three criteria for the credit/no-credit grade:

- Attendance:<sup>†</sup> there are 13 Fridays this semester; “passing attendance” is defined as either:
  - missing two or fewer “Activity” classesor
  - missing one or no scheduled “Student Presentation Day.”

Please sign the attendance sheet.

- Participation: this means making a good-faith effort to engage with the class activity and being professional.
- Evaluation: provide reasonable and respectful feedback via the evaluation form(s) under Laulima: Assignments, Tests and Surveys.
  - For activities, there will be one evaluation. The feedback will affect the design of the course.
  - There are typically two student presentations in one class period, and there will be one evaluation for each speaker. The Speaker-Evaluation Rubric is below. Speakers may request their anonymized feedback.

They are due by 5 PM on the next Friday (even if there is no class). Attendance is not complete without proper submission of the evaluation, so please verify your Laulima submission.

Be honest in your feedback but also please realize that 495B students’ grades are affected by your numerical evaluations (see their grading policy).

<sup>†</sup> *More about Attendance:*

- If a student must miss a class for a reasonable reason, s/he must email the professor before the start of class time.
- If a student were unable to email in advance due to extreme circumstances, s/he should contact the professor as soon as possible. Such instances will be judged on a case-by-case basis.
  - In such (and similar) situations, the student is strongly encouraged to contact Student Services (info below). Student Services are liaisons between students and instructors, when Life adversely impacts Academics. If Student Services intervenes on a student’s behalf, the instructor will work to accommodate any missed content and points.

495B:

- Attendance (50%):<sup>†</sup> It is the same as the three 495B criteria with one modification:
  - 495B students may only miss (i.e., are excused from) one “Activity” class and no “Student Presentation Day.”

And a speaker may not evaluate her/himself.

Otherwise, the 50% will be distributed across Activities and Student Presentations (not days but each talk individually; i.e., each Student Presentation Day is worth twice as many points as an Activity).

- Abstract (5%): Submit the title and an 80+ word abstract by email to instructor by 5 PM on the Monday prior to the Friday you are speaking. The title and abstract will be posted to the Laulima schedule.
  - It is graded on meeting the deadline [1 pt] and the word count [4 pt].
- Presentation Preparation (5%):
  - Introduce one speaker in the week prior to your speaking date (state the name, title, major, year/graduation date, etc.) When there are two speakers, introduce the speaker corresponding to your time slot. The first speaker will introduce the final speaker. [1 pt]
  - Make an appointment to discuss your presentation with the instructor, with draft slides, one week or more before your Presentation Day. This is also an opportunity to practice the full presentation (with projector and screen) and receive detailed feedback. [4 pt]

- Presentation (15%): Give a seminar that lasts at least 15 min and no more than 20 min. [15 pt with 1 pt docked for each minute short or long, after a 1 min grace period.]

Other notes:

- Choose a presentation topic that you find interesting scientifically and would like to present. Topics can be discussed with course instructor and/or your department faculty. Ideally the topic is related to a research project you have done or are doing, but it could be a review of the science literature on a research topic you will be working on.
- If you must change your scheduled talk slot, you are responsible for swapping with another student, and both of you must inform the instructor before the talk title and abstract are due (i.e., 5 PM on the Monday prior to the Friday you are speaking.)
- Submit final slides to instructor by 5 PM on the day before the talk or bring the slides to class and load them yourself (test the system out for technical problems, especially Mac to PC issues.)
- Class and instructor feedback available upon request. They will be anonymized.
- Peer Review (25%): The weighted score of the class’s evaluations will comprise 25% of the final grade. The Speaker-Evaluation Rubric corresponds to the five questions on the evaluation. The scale is unacceptable (0), fair (1), good (2), and excellent (3).

The final letter grade will be based on the final percentage according to:

Grade	% Required
A	≥ 93
A–	[90, 93)
B+	[87, 90)
B	[83, 87)
B–	[80, 83)
C+	[77, 80)
C	[73, 77)
C–	[70, 73)
D	[60, 70)
F	< 60

where e.g., [90, 93) means ≥ 90% and < 93%.

**Speaker-Evaluation Rubric** Speakers and talks will be evaluated by the other 495A/B students on the following merits.

- **Preparedness:** Was the speaker well-prepared for the talk? Consider the following:
  - Did the speaker display mastery of the content?
  - Did the title and abstract describe the actual presentation well?
  - Did the speaker have technical difficulties that should have been taken care of before the talk?
  - Did s/he know what was on her/his slides?
  - Did s/he organize the slides so s/he did not have to flip back and forth excessively?
- **Delivery:** Did the speaker present in a professional manner? Consider the following:
  - Did s/he monitor the understanding and engagement of the audience?
  - Did s/he speak loudly and clearly?
  - Did s/he address the audience the majority of the time? In other words, did s/he face forward and not read from the slides or notes most of the time?
  - Did s/he say more than just reciting the content on the slides?
  - Did s/he describe figures carefully, detailing what was plotted and what it meant?
- **Slides:** Were the slides designed and organized well? Consider the following:
  - Was the point of each slide obvious?
  - Was mostly everything on the slide necessary to convey the point?
  - Did the content correspond to what the speaker was saying?
  - Were the slides (text, figures, etc.) legible?
  - Were facts and figures cited appropriately?
- **Efficacy:** Was the information conveyed effectively? Consider the following:
  - Did you learn why the topic is important?
  - Could you identify the central question(s) being discussed?
  - Did you understand what was done to answer the central question(s)?
  - Can you now name the main conclusions of the talk?
  - Did s/he take the time to understand and address questions appropriately? (“Address” does not mean answer; “I don’t know” is an appropriate response. Preferably, the speaker would then speak to how one might answer the question.)
- **Content:** Was the content of appropriate complexity, current interest, and relevance for a senior-level seminar? Consider the following:
  - A very skilled speaker can make very complicated information accessible so “content” should not be evaluated with a simple gut check (e.g., “I could do that == Unacceptable” or “I didn’t understand. == Excellent.”)
  - Was the topic choice well-justified in the talk?
  - Was the audience engaged in the talk?

The scale is unacceptable (0), fair (1), good (2), and excellent (3).

### Campus-wide Information

**Disability Support:** Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodation should contact the Disability Services Office—Student Services Center, E215; 932-7623 (V), 932-7002 (TTY), [uds@hawaii.edu](mailto:uds@hawaii.edu)—as early in the semester as possible.

**Advising:** Advising is a very important resource designed to help students complete the requirements of the University and their individual majors. Students should consult with their advisor at least once a semester to decide on courses, check progress towards graduation, and discuss career options and other educational opportunities provided by UH Hilo. Advising is a shared responsibility, but students have final responsibility for meeting degree requirements.

**Kilohana Academic Success Center:** The KASC provides academic support opportunities for all UH Hilo students that foster their development into independent, self-motivated learners. Students who visit Kilohana have access to subject-specific and academic skills tutoring from UHH students selected for their academic achievement and dedication to helping others succeed. Kilohana is located on the lower level of the Mookini Library and on the web at <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/kilohana/>.

**Human Rights:** The University of Hawai'i at Hilo prohibits discrimination in its education programs based on race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or associational preference. If at any time during class you feel uncomfortable about what is being talked about, or feel that your human rights have been violated, please feel free to leave the room. However, the professor asks that you confer with her as soon as possible about what happened so that appropriate action can be taken if necessary to avoid future problems. If you are uncomfortable speaking with the professor about your concern, please contact Kalei Rapoza ([kaleihii@hawaii.edu](mailto:kaleihii@hawaii.edu)), Interim EEO/AA Director, at 932-7626.

**UH Hilo Title IX Policy:** The University of Hawaii is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these, the University has staff and resources on your campus to support and assist you. Staff can also direct you to resources that are in the community. Here are some of your options:

If you wish to remain anonymous, speak with someone confidentially, or would like to receive information and support in a confidential setting, contact: • UH Hilo Counseling Services: SSC, room E-203, 932-7465; • UH Hilo Medical Services: Campus Center, room 212, 932-7369; and/or • Hawai'i Island YWCA, 935-0677.

If you wish to report an incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking as well as receive information and support,<sup>†</sup> contact: • Libby Bailey, Title IX Coordinator, 932-7818, [libby.bailey@hawaii.edu](mailto:libby.bailey@hawaii.edu); • Jennifer Stotter, Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity & Deputy Title IX Coordinator, 932-7641, [jstotter@hawaii.edu](mailto:jstotter@hawaii.edu); and/or • Kalei Rapoza, Interim Director of Human Resources, 932-7626, [kaleihii@hawaii.edu](mailto:kaleihii@hawaii.edu).

<sup>†</sup>Please note that you do not have to file a report with the University to receive institutional support or assistance.

As a member of the University faculty, the professor is required to immediately report any incidence of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. Although the Title IX Coordinator and professor cannot guarantee confidentiality, the student will still have options about how the case will be handled. The goal is to make sure the student is aware of the range of options available and has access to the necessary resources and support. For more information regarding sex discrimination and gender-based violence, the University's Title IX resources and the University's Policy, Interim EP 1.204, go to: <http://www.hawaii.edu/titleix>.

**Student Conduct:** Students are expected to follow the University of Hawai'i at Hilo Student Code of Conduct available at the following URL: <http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/catalog/student-conduct-code.html>.