

Term Paper Rubric

All students get to write a paper on any evolutionary topic of your choosing. I want you to write a paper like you are debating a hypothesis/position. Now that hypothesis can be simple along the lines of "the natural history of X is like this, etc" or more complex "X and Y are clearly not related because they do not share common ancestry in their cytochrome genes". Either is fine, but I want you to take a position on something and then defend it with the literature research you have done. You should discuss the main questions that pertain to that topic, how those questions have been studied, and what conclusions can be made. To ensure an integrative analysis, be sure to draw on the literature that pertains to a historical perspective (i.e., fossil evidence, phylogenetic relationships, biogeography) and includes the mechanistic basis for change in the trait (i.e., the evolutionary forces that have influenced it). This paper should be written in essay form, with ample citations from the primary literature (journal articles, not web pages!). You may find it helpful to use the chapters in your book or web sources like wikipedia as a source of ideas, and as a starting point into the primary scientific literature. Alternatively, you may get good ideas simply by browsing such journals as: *Evolution*, *Molecular Ecology*, *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*, etc. Mostly, I want this to be something that YOU are interested in and for you to be able to explain to me why that is so.