

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

NRSC 644 (GRADUATE SEMINAR 2) MSc RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT
NRSC 753 (GRADUATE SEMINAR 6) PHD RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCES, MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Semester:	Fall 2021
Prerequisite	NRSC 643 or NRSC 752 for MSc and PhD students, respectively
Time:	Thursdays, 10:05 am – 11:25 am
Place:	R3-048 or Zoom
Coordinator:	Brian Driscoll (MS3-038; brian.driscoll@mcgill.ca)

Course description:

This course offers Department of Natural Resource Sciences MSc (second or third semester) and PhD (fourth or fifth semester, following completion of NRSC 752) students the opportunity to further develop skills **related** to oral presentation and get feedback on their research projects. Therefore, **students are encouraged to present preliminary data and even confusing results.**

Learning objectives:

1. Further develop presentation skills through presentation of a seminar and observation of seminars presented by other students.
2. Develop evaluation skills and the use of constructive criticism via peer evaluation of the seminars.

Evaluation (all elements required for course credit):

- A. Abstract: 10%
- B. Oral Presentation: 50%
- C. Poster: 40% (Tentative date/time: **December 2 or 9, 2021 (TBD)** from 10:00-11:30 am)
- D. Seminar attendance and peer evaluation

A. Abstract:

A maximum 110-word Abstract (plus 80-word bio) must be submitted on myCourses no later than one week before your scheduled presentation. The abstract should include introduction, hypotheses and objectives (or, problem and objectives), and proposed methodologies. **The abstract must be formatted** (see example below) using the **Abstract_template_NRS_F2021.potx** template for PowerPoint available on myCourses. Once you create your abstract submit it to myCourses in **pptx format**: I can view pptx files online on myCourses but not potx files and I cannot fix typos in pdf versions. Try to keep your abstract file from getting too big (1-2 MB should be big enough), via watching the size (resolution) of images imbedded in it. **Late submissions** will be subject to late penalty of 10% per day (weekends included).

B. Oral Presentation:

The oral presentation should include an introduction to your research topic, your hypotheses and objectives; or, problem and objectives, your results, a discussion of the results and conclusions. Careful explanation of methodologies used will enhance others' understanding of the results. Discussion of the

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

results should include suggested additional experiments needed to complete the objectives. Presentations are expected to be **20 minutes** in length and will be followed by a five-minute question period, for a total of **25 minutes** (maximum).

Please use a 4x3 layout (16x9 is default in PowerPoint but not recommended) and include slide numbers.

The following tips are more useful for in-person than Zoom presentations but are worth thinking about regardless of the mode of delivery. When presenting, move away from the podium and interact with the audience, especially via eye contact. Try to use the entire width of the presentation area to interact with the whole class and interact with the presentation screen, not your computer screen: when you need to read from a slide, read it from the presentation screen not the computer. I do not recommend the use of on-screen presenter notes: they can anchor you to the podium and computer screen.

To explain figures (define axes, etc), point to items on the screen with your hand or a laser pointer, whether an actual laser pointer in your hand or the Zoom laser pointer tool. Do not use the computer cursor using the mouse – it is not easy to see, especially on a bigger screen in a classroom. Laser pointers are less useful on small screens in small rooms – if you can reach, use your hand to point things out.

Go over your presentation with your supervisor – indeed, run anything you do for this class (abstract, seminar, written proposal, poster) by your supervisor, and your peers i.e., never submit a first draft, never submit unreviewed work. Oral presentation grades will be calculated from the average grades provided by the professors in attendance.

C. Poster:

You will also present your progress in the form of a poster at the end of the semester. Posters are not printed but are normally projected onto white screens in the Active Learning classroom **MSB-016** and presented in person: this semester the poster presentations will be done remotely via Zoom (details to follow, likely on **December 2, 2021**). If some students wish to present in person, and that is still possible in December, we may also have an in-person session in MSB-106, likely on **December 9, 2021**. The in-person session would not be required for students who prefer to do this course partially or completely remotely.

Format: use a regular PowerPoint format (on-screen show 4:3). Examples of some posters will be posted on myCourses. All students in NRSC 644 and NRSC 753 are asked to evaluate each other's posters using the form (**644-753_Poster_evaluation_form.docx**) available on myCourses. Grades will be calculated from the average of marks provided by professors who have provided a mark. I normally form a jury of professors to grade posters, and they will take into account the oral explanation of the poster in the Zoom session as well as elements of the poster itself via examination of the supplied poster file.

Please **submit final versions** of your posters (as presented) as **pptx files** to myCourses **no later than 24 hours before the poster session**. Poster file size can be kept in check via the "Compress pictures" function in PowerPoint, which trims off cropped areas. I can more easily resize files from pptx format

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

than from pdf and maintain resolution, if you submit a pdf that is a massive file, I may not be able to compress it, and if you submit a pdf file that is highly compressed, it may not have sufficient resolution for grading. I may use some of the posters as examples (never as an example of what not to do, but as alternatives for various poster elements) for future students. Please let me know if you object to me providing your poster as an example.

The following is some general advice I wrote in response to some questions – some of it is irrelevant for remote presentation. Please don't feel too much pressure – do something that feels like it is right for you, give it a try, get some feedback, and learn from the experience (including from the posters of other students).

You are encouraged to try out your poster on a projector in any classroom that is not being used (easier once classes are over). You might be able to access MSB-016 to test out those projectors (and the connections and controls) which are not as bright as some of the newer ones in the classrooms: the size is similar to the projectors/screens in the smaller classrooms.

There is no need for paragraphs as people don't tend to read dense posters. Methods can be cited unless it is the method itself that is an exciting development. Most people judge whether they wish to spend time with a poster in a couple of seconds – dense writing tends to dissuade general interest although it might be necessary at a very specialized meeting. References can be presented via a link or a QR code (i.e., to a sharable link).

Look at the example posters provided on myCourses and talk to any of those people who are still around. Those posters all have strengths and weaknesses. Some posters are very dense with text, and the supervisors often love this, but it is less impactful to non-experts. It is a fine balance. No posters were included as bad examples – I included some because they had an interesting design or colour scheme. Some of these posters are the first ones these students have prepared done, so you can see all levels of experience. It is a process, and you may change your style over the years or for different purposes.

Posters should be **stand-alone**. You may choose to leave out things that you might prefer to add when you are talking to people visiting your poster, or as details to people in your area who might appreciate them and would ask, but the poster must be understandable to a reader looking at it when you are not present to add explanations. Minimalistic posters can be beautiful and work well but they are a challenge to produce and be stand-alone. If you want to try something like that, this is the time as the stakes aren't as high as they would be for an important conference.

The poster session is also a fun competition: the winner receives a prize, which is just a letter from me, but it's official and can go on your cv if you want.

D. Seminar attendance, evaluation and schedule:

Students are expected to attend and evaluate the seminar presentations of their peers. A seminar evaluation form (**Seminar_evaluation_form_F2021.docx**) is to be completed for each presentation attended and submitted on myCourses within 24 hours. When submitting your evaluations, please submit a separate one for each talk and name the file such that the filename begins with the speaker's

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

surname (it can also include your surname, second). Please submit as a docx file (do not submit a pdf!). For example, if I just saw a seminar by Joe Duplantier, I would name my file as “**duplantier_driscoll.docx**” before submitting it to myCourses.

The seminars can be done in groups under one Zoom link or separately via different Zoom links. The suggested dates and times can be changed in consultation with your supervisor. You do not need my permission to reschedule but it must be arranged with your supervisor. If you are going to reschedule, please do not delay the presentation date too long as we do not want to have a large number of the seminars in the last couple of weeks, with conflicting times.

You may set up your own Zoom link, but **I highly recommend that if your seminar will be delivered remotely, the Zoom sessions be set up by your supervisor**, as there are many advantages to using the Pro Zoom licence and I want to ensure that the supervisor is present for the seminar. If you organize to present with more than one student in the same session, the length of time may be too long for a student Zoom license and thus you should get one of your supervisors to schedule the meeting. Please include your Zoom link on your Abstract, along with the other required information. I will distribute the Abstracts and updated seminar schedule on a weekly basis via email to all registered students and all NRS profs.

Oral presentation grades will be calculated from the average grades provided by the professors in attendance. It is very important that there are at least two professors at each seminar to provide grades (one must be your supervisor). Your **supervisor** must ensure that a second grader be present.

Confirm that the seminar slot from the preliminary schedule also works for your supervisor and then please send an email to me confirming this, along with the Zoom link (if not doing an in-person seminar).

Schedule link:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/nrs/graduate-students/seminar/graduate-seminar-schedule>

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

Statements

Statements required by McGill policy to be included in the course outline are:

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.”

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

“In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.”

Other statements

COVID-19:

McGill’s up-to-date information regarding the prevention of transmission of COVID-19 and the protocols for individuals who may have symptoms (<https://www.mcgill.ca/coronavirus/>)

Academic Integrity:

By submitting this work, I certify that the work represents solely my own efforts. I confirm that I understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, and am aware of my responsibilities under the Student Assessment Policy.

Privacy on Zoom:

Although Zoom publishes a privacy policy applicable to their individual customers, as an institutional account McGill uses an integrated solution to deliver Zoom services for remote teaching. As part of this integrated solution, the information shared with Zoom is limited to the following: first name, last name, full name, McGill user email address, participant’s role (instructor or student), course name. Recordings of online sessions are temporarily stored on Zoom infrastructure before they are automatically extracted and imported into McGill systems and deleted from the Zoom infrastructure once the transfer is complete. Information and privacy protections provided by Zoom have been reviewed and are monitored through the University’s continuous improvement process.

Copyright:

Please note that the format for the delivery of this course is unusual. It is justified by our current extraordinary circumstances, and aims to allow you, as students, to start and complete this term with the requisite knowledge for this course, and to succeed in your assessments. I ask for everyone’s collaboration and cooperation in ensuring that course materials prepared explicitly for this course (lecture notes, PPTs, videos, etc) are not reproduced or placed in the public domain. This means that each of you can use it for your own personal purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it, by putting it up on the internet or by giving it or selling it to others who will copy it and make it available.

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

Accommodations for missed assessments during the term

a. "Sickness/illness during the term:

Students currently in the province of Quebec seeking the support of a Local Wellness Advisor (LWA) can now secure an intake appointment by filling out the appropriate webform at <http://mcgill.ca/lwa>. Because clinical agreements limit our 1:1 sessions to students who are physically located in the province of Quebec at the time of their appointments, we continue to invite all students to refer to <http://mcgill.ca/covidsupport> for an updated list of virtual support services which they can access from anywhere in the world.

If you need to seek accommodation for in-course assignments, for medical or other health emergencies, please send medical documentation along with the filled out form for medical accommodation (<https://www.mcgill.ca/macdonald/studentinfo/undergrads/forms>) by email to the Macdonald Campus Student Affairs Office (meline.chatoyan@mcgill.ca). When approved, the professor(s) will be notified by SAO and by email to accommodate the student.

b. Non-medical:

Please refer to the following guidelines in assessing non-medical accommodations.

https://www.mcgill.ca/coronavirus/files/coronavirus/academicconsideration_june2021_final.pdf

It is at the discretion of the instructor to arrange accommodation for students who have missed in-term exams or due dates for non-medical reasons (e.g. travel constraints, slept in, etc.). Complicated cases can be directed to SAO.

c. Religious:

The Policy for the Accommodation of Religious Holy Days

(https://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/religious_holy_days_policy_on_accomodation_of.pdf) applies to these situations. "Students are not to be penalized if they cannot write examinations or be otherwise evaluated on their religious holy days where such activities conflict with their religious observances." A student seeking accommodation must contact the instructor at least 14 days in advance so that arrangements can be made.

Department of Natural Resource Sciences

Day, Date | Time

Zoom link

Title of Seminar

Presenter

Position, Affiliation

ABSTRACT: MAX 110 WORDS @ 11 pts. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Donec consectetur, sapien et scelerisque mattis, ante ante venenatis nibh, ac scelerisque urna dolor id purus. Suspendisse potenti. Sed tristique tellus vitae lacus. In mi enim, dictum sed, mollis sed, accumsan feugiat, justo. Praesent sollicitudin mi congue enim. Ut porta, augue ut volutpat semper, nunc nisl malesuada nisl, eu aliquet mauris lorem in turpis. Mauris malesuada. Curabitur bibendum. Maecenas vel tellus facilisis lacus euismod pharetra. Quisque cursus massa ut erat. Sed fermentum. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. In consectetur sagittis mauris. Pellentesque sit amet nibh vitae velit ornare sodales. Aliquam libero ligula, porttitor.

Insert
illustrative picture

Insert
Presenter photo

Insert and information
about person,
eg PhD candidate, etc

BIO: MAX 80 WORDS @ 9 pts. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Donec consectetur, sapien et scelerisque mattis, ante ante venenatis nibh, ac scelerisque urna dolor id purus. Suspendisse potenti. Sed tristique tellus vitae lacus. In mi enim, dictum sed, mollis sed, accumsan feugiat, justo. Praesent sollicitudin mi congue enim. Ut porta, augue ut volutpat semper, nunc nisl malesuada nisl, eu aliquet mauris lorem in turpis. Mauris malesuada. Curabitur bibendum. Maecenas vel tellus facilisis lacus euismod pharetra. Quisque cursus massa ut erat. Sed fermentum.

INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION



McGill
MACDONALD CAMPUS