Grading Criteria for Undergraduate Papers  
Molecular Ecology  
Fall 2006

1. Your paper should be concise and clear. Come up with a single, major thesis and gear your entire paper toward addressing this one point.
2. Use multiple sources. You should have at least 5 citations, most of which come from primary, peer reviewed literature.
3. Analyze the articles rather than just describing the articles. Don’t just recapitulate their findings. Interpret them based on all of the research you have done on your topic.
4. Your paper should be written so that other students in the class can easily understand it. You can assume that the reader has a basic understanding of biology and genetics similar to that of students in this class.
5. Focus on valid use of molecular techniques in ecological research.
6. Use a clear and logical writing style. It is fine to try and make the paper interesting and fun to read, but please try to keep it professional as well.
7. Use correct grammar and spelling.
8. Make sure your facts are accurate and your arguments are logical.
9. Support all of your factual statements with citations from the literature.

**Suggested Format**

A) Introduction (1 page) Background and Definitions.

The introduction should clearly and carefully describe the important question in Molecular Ecology that you are addressing in your paper.

B) Analysis of the literature (3 pages)

Describe the findings of the research papers that you have read, including your own interpretations. Be sure to point out controversies within the field and provide historical context.

C) Conclusions (1 page)

State clear conclusions about where the field currently stands, the most important findings to date, and try to anticipate where the field is headed.

D) Citations (no page limit)
Grading

____1) Statements supported with logical arguments and appropriate citations. (10 points)

____2) Uses a clear and logical writing style. (10 points)

____3) Written at a level appropriate for the class. (10 pts)

____4) Covers valid use of molecular techniques in ecological research. (10 pts)

____5) Analyzes the articles, rather than just describing them. (10 pts)

____6) Uses correct grammar and spelling. (10 points)

____7) Accurate facts. (10 points)

____Total Score

Specific Comments: