Checklist for All Assignments (Biology)

Please complete this checklist and hand it in stapled to your assignment.

- Text is in 11- or 12-point font and is double-spaced.
- Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence.
- Spelling has been checked.
- All paraphrased, summarized, and quoted ideas and statements of an author other than you are cited (author, year) in text.
- Data, findings, and/or discoveries are discussed as evidence, not proof. The word proof is used appropriately in courtrooms and in math, but not in scientific writing.
- Slang, jargon, and wordiness are avoided. For example, try not to use as to, due to, in order to, it is suggested that, first of all, the fact that, with regard to, etc. If you use to, that, in or of in a phrase, try choosing a more precise word. For example, in order to could be better said because or so. First of all is better said first. Previous to is better said before. In some cases is better said sometimes.
- Genus and species names (e.g. Gorilla gorilla, Drosophila melanogaster) are italicized with the first word (the genus) capitalized and the second word (the species) in lowercase.
- If used, i.e. is followed by an explanation and e.g. is followed by one or more examples.
- The Latin i.e. (id est) translates to “in other words” in English, and e.g. (exempli gratia) means “for example.”
- Correct plurals are used. Note the examples below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correct</th>
<th>Wrong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>these data</td>
<td>this data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data are</td>
<td>data is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one phenomenon, two phenomena</td>
<td>phenomenons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one genus, two genera</td>
<td>genera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one taxon, two taxa</td>
<td>taxons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one phylum, two phyla</td>
<td>phylums</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- The tone of your writing is professional.
- No conjunctions (don’t, won’t, etc.) are used. They make writing too casual for essays. Also note: “its” is a possessive pronoun (e.g. its fauna). By contrast, “it’s” means “it is.”
- “Which” and “that” are used correctly. “Which” usually refers to a whole group and is used in a general case (and with a comma) while “that” is used in a specific case.
- Examples:
  (1) The neighborhood dogs, which bark, wake me up at night.
  (2) The neighborhood dogs that bark wake me up at night.
  In (1) all neighborhood dogs bark and wake me up at night. In (2) the dogs that bark are a subset of all neighborhood dogs, and only the barking dogs wake me up at night.