UMBC UGC Change in Existing Course: BIOL 481 – Advanced Topics in Evolutionary Biology

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COURSE INFORMATION: (please provide all information in the "current" column, and only the information changing in the "proposed" column)

change		current	proposed
☐	Course Number(s)	BIOL 481	
☐	Formal Title	Advanced Topics in Evolutionary Biology	
☐	Transcript Title (≤30c)	Adv. Topics in Evolutionary Biol.	
☒	Recommended Course Preparation	You must have completed BIOL 142 and BIOL 302	
☒	Prerequisite **NOTE:** Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.		You must have completed BIOL 142, BIOL 302 and BIOL 303 with a grade of "C" or better.
☐	Credits	4.00	
☒	Repeatable?	☒ Yes ☐ No	☒ Yes ☐ No
☒	Max. Total Credits	4.00	8.00 **Max. Total Credits:** This should be equal to the number **of** credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
☐	Grading Method(s)	☒ Reg (A-F) ☐ Audit ☐ Pass-Fail	☐ Reg (A-F) ☐ Audit ☐ Pass-Fail

CURRENT CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This advanced course analyzes principles of and current topics in evolutionary biology. The study of evolution informs every facet of biological inquiry and every level of biological organization, from molecules to ecosystems. Topics will vary across semesters according to current research and the interests of faculty. Representative topics may include the origin of species, natural and sexual selection, neutral theory, comparative methods, and evolutionary ecology. The course is a mix of lectures, problem-based learning, and student-led presentations of primary research literature. This course is repeatable for credit.

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words**):** leave blank if no changes are being proposed to the catalog description. NOTE: information about prerequisites should NOT appear in the catalog description.)

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RATIONALE FOR CHANGE:

"The BIOL core courses are in a sequence BIOL 141-> BIOL 142 -> BIOL 302 -> BIOL 303, with BIOL 303 serving as a capstone course for the Biology core. The curriculum was designed such that only after completing this course and showing mastery of the core course content, would students move on in the major and take 400 level courses. However, we have a number of 400 level courses offered that do not explicitly require the content of BIOL 303 for student success in the course and therefore do not currently have it listed as an academic prerequisite. Some students have been taking these courses before completing BIOL 303 and the core, and some of these students have gone on to fail BIOL 303 two times, showing that they do not have mastery of the material and perhaps should be in another major. We would like to make BIOL 303 a prerequisite for all of our 400 level courses, regardless of content, to make this maneuver impossible. We prefer students to show they should be in the major before taking these upper level courses."