Purpose – The three journal article critiques are short exercises designed to have you carefully read and evaluate a key article from the primary literature that is associated with your research project. The purpose of the assignment is threefold: (1) to foster specific skills in evaluation of primary sources, (2) to generate a critical review of an article that is central to your research project, and (3) to examine carefully how the authors constructed their scientific paper. Regarding purpose #3 – these critiques will have you examine the details of how a scientific paper is constructed, which can help you develop your own scientific papers for this course.

For each of the three critiques – Choose an article that is directly and centrally related to your research project from any of the ecological, behavioral, or evolutionary journals available at the Bertrand Library or available electronically. In 1 to 2 single-spaced typewritten pages, summarize the article in your own words. Specifically address the following points:

- What did the author(s) assert? How did he/she show it? What did they find? What questions were left unanswered? If the author(s) provided a hypothesis or hypotheses, did he/she/they provide an adequate and complete test of the hypothesis or hypotheses?

- Evaluate the article. Were the authors clear? Did they do what they said they would do? Judge the adequacy of the method, approach, or arguments. Would you do anything differently?

- Note the use of the various sections of the paper – the introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, and literature cited. Examining the critiqued article in this way will help you formulate similar sections for your paper reporting your research project.

Attach a photocopy of the article’s abstract or summary to your critique.