

## Microbiology Graduate Seminar (MICROBIO 791)

Course no. 30434, 1 credit

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Office hours:

- By appointment, N435 LSL
- Mondays 1 to 2:30pm, ISB Cafe

Pre-requisites:

Open to graduate students only.

The seminar is intended to provide microbiology graduate students with experience in presentation of scientific data with an emphasis on defense of data and interpretation. The oral dissemination and defense of scientific concepts is a fundamental communication tool that you will employ throughout your professional career as microbiologists. The seminar consists of presentations and discussions by faculty, guest speakers, and graduate students on current topics in all areas of microbiology.

### Learning objectives.

- Develop into an active and engaged participant by analyzing, reconstructing and evaluating information presented in this seminar.
- Design, develop and present a quality scientific presentation using a presentation software such as PowerPoint, Prezi (<http://prezi.com>), Acrobat, or other appropriate computer software
- Evaluate other students' work and your own using the rubric provided.
- Critically evaluate research approaches and conclusions based on experimental rationale, controls, and alternate interpretations of data

### Academic Honesty Statement.

Academic honesty is expected and required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Students are expected to be familiar with this policy, as ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent ([http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/)).

### Accommodation Statement.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, learning, or psychological disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements. Please reach out to Disability Services or the UMass Dean of Students if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in your course work.

**Assessment** is pass/fail, based on participation in the course **activities**. The course schedule is [posted online](#). We will not meet on dates when there are no speakers scheduled.

## Activities

- Attendance
  - Students are expected to attend all scheduled meetings according to the posted schedule. If you cannot make a course meeting, email the instructor. One absence may be excused for any reason, but additional absences should be cleared by the instructor by email.
- Participation in discussions.
  - Write down questions for speakers in each seminar presentation, and ask questions when it might best benefit the group to discuss the answer.
  - Only interrupt the speaker if you require clarification to understand their presentation.
- Attend lunches with the speakers.
  - All students should expect to attend at least one and not more than three lunches per semester.
  - A group of 3-5 graduate students (or interested undergraduate students) host the visiting outside speakers for lunch. The instructor will coordinate sign-ups. Lunches will be held in the first floor microbiology conference room unless otherwise noted.
- For the student speakers, complete the [online rubric](#) (also listed at the end).
- Present a short (25m) research presentation at one time during the year.
  - **Prepare your presentation** following [best practices of design](#) (link is merely a suggestion; good presentation style is highly subjective).
  - Write an **Abstract**, to be submitted via Moodle no later than 7 days before your scheduled presentation date. The abstract should be 200 to 250 words in length and provide a brief but informative synopsis of your presentation. The abstract should consist of (1) a rationale or justification for the study, (2) an objectives statement, (3) a brief account of the methodologies employed, (4) the results, and (5) the conclusions which emphasize the significance of the work, including any new theories, interpretations, evaluations, or applications.
  - **Faculty Review of Your Presentation:** You are expected to work closely with your faculty mentor in the development of a professional scientific presentation. Your presentation (PowerPoint slides) shall be reviewed by a faculty mentor (PI or committee member).
  - **Instructor Critique Conference:** Each student shall schedule a conference with the instructor to occur during the week following his or her presentation. During this time, the instructor and student critiques will be shared and feed-back will be offered relative to the areas within the presentation that were well done and areas could be improved upon.
- Complete an Individual Development Plan (My IDP), in conjunction with your PI.
  - Use this activity to set goals to follow the career path that fits you best.
  - Consider career possibilities and map networks of colleagues to build your own network in a new field

## **Rubric for evaluating presentations**

### **Organization (20%)**

- [20] Consistently clear, concise, well organized. Points were easy to follow because of the organization. Transitions between sections smooth and coordinated.
- [15] Usually clear, concise, well organized. Most of the presentation was easy to follow. Transitions between sections usually coordinated
- [10] Not always clear or concise. Organization was adequate, but weak. Occasionally wandered and was sometimes difficult to follow. Transitions between sections weak.
- [5] Often unclear and disorganized rambled too much. The presentation was confusing and difficult to follow. Transitions between sections awkward.

### **Topic Knowledge (20%)**

- [20] Displayed an excellent grasp of the material. Demonstrated excellent mastery of content, application and implications. Excellent research depth.
- [15] Displayed a general grasp of the material. Demonstrated good mastery of content, application and implications. Good research depth.
- [10] Displayed some grasp of the material. Demonstrated adequate mastery of content, application and implications. Research not very deep.
- [5] Displayed a poor grasp of the material. Demonstrated a superficial handling of content, application and implications. Little depth of research.

### **Creativity & Visual Aids (20%)**

- [20] Very creative and original. Imaginative design and use of materials. Novel handouts, visual aids, or methods. Visual aids are easy to interpret, easy to read, well-coordinated with content, well designed, used very effectively.
- [15] Exhibited some originality and creativity. Usually clear, easy to interpret, easy to read. Generally coordinated with content. Design was okay, generally used effectively.
- [10] Routine treatment, minimal thought given to originality or creativity. Visual aids were too complex, crowded, difficult to read or interpret. Adequate coordination with content.
- [5] Lacked creativity. Visual aids were hard to read, technically inaccurate, poorly constructed, with poor coordination with content.

### **Summary (20%)**

- [20] Clear, concise, major points emphasized, strong conclusion or call for action.
- [15] Referred to main points, recommendations unclear, weak conclusion/call for action.
- [10] Vague mention of major points, no recommendations, weak or no call for action.
- [5] No summary, no recommendations, no conclusions, no call for action.

### **Stage Presence (20%)**

- [20] Excellent stage presence. Confident, used notes well, at ease, excellent gestures, good audience attention, good eye contact.
- [15] Good stage presence. Fairly confident, used notes fairly well, good gestures, acceptable audience attention and eye contact.
- [10] Adequate stage presence. Read parts, fumbled with notes, several distracting mannerisms, minimal gestures, minimal eye contact, too many um's.
- [5] Poor stage presence. Unprepared, awkward, shuffled papers, poor eye contact, lots of um's, turned from audience to read PowerPoint, shuffled feet, fidgeted. Poor gestures.

Comments: