

Senior Seminar BSC 4931-B52 Spring 2017

Course Time: Wednesday 2:00 PM- 3:15 PM

Course Location: MSB 110

Instructor: Helena Schmidtmayerova, Ph.D.

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Office hours: Mon: 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Wed: 10:00 AM- 1:30 PM

Tue/Thur: 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (except for the 2nd Thursday of the month) or by the appointment

Course Description: A one-credit seminar course designed to help senior biology majors integrate the skills learned during their undergraduate studies. The course teaches skills in conducting scientific research, writing, and public speaking.

Course Objectives: To carry through scientific research from investigating a specific topic from virology, immunology, or genetics, to writing a clear and articulate research paper. You will start with choosing a topic to write a properly cited paper. You will then share these results with the class in the form of an oral presentation worthy of a scientific meeting or job talk.

Textbook: none required; suggested Jan Pechenik, A Short Guide to Writing about Biology, 6th ed. Pearson-Longman

<u>Grade Scheme:</u>	A	93 % - 100%
	A-	90 % - 92.9 %
	B+	88 % - 89.9 %
	B	83 % - 87.9 %
	B-	80 % - 82.9 %
	C+	78 % - 79.9 %
	C	70 % - 77.9 %
	D	60 % - 69.9 %
	F	<60%

Distribution:

- I. Attendance - 10%
- II. Class Activity - 10%
- III. Presentation - 30%
- IV. Research Paper - 45%
- V. ETS Major Field Test in Biology - 5%

I. Attendance (10%): Attendance is mandatory since this is a seminar course and both your presence and in-class contributions are important. One excused absence is permitted, for each additional absence 1% from the attendance grade will be subtracted.

II. Class Activity (10%): The best learning is through the active participation; you will have to contribute actively to class discussions, evaluate other student presentations, and evaluate and

correct first draft of the paper of your colleague students. Late submissions of the first draft corrections lose 1% per day it is late.

III. Presentation (30%): This will be a 12-15 minutes oral presentation of your research paper. Your peers will complete anonymous evaluations of your presentation and will assess areas such as content, effectiveness of delivery, visual aids, etc. These evaluations, in addition to my own will comprise your grade.

IV. Research Paper (45%):

- **Title and paper outline (5%).....due February 8**
Write the tentative title and a one-page outline of your paper in hierarchical format with double-spaced lines, 1-inch margins, 12-point font, left-justified
The topic must be approved before the outline is written.
- **First draft of paper (5%) and list of at least 5 referencesdue February 22**
Write 2 page-first draft in hierarchical format with double-spaced lines, 1-inch margins, 12-point font, left-justified. Include at least 10 full references from peer-reviewed scientific literature (the reference pages are excluded from page count)
Submit first draft as an e-document via Bb messaging.
- **Final paper (35%).....for due date see table below**
Write a 10-12 pages research paper using scientific literature (using primary literature and possibly 1-2 review papers for deeper understanding), minimum 15 peer-reviewed citations. Your final submission will include an abstract, the paper (properly referenced) and a list of references.

Format references as follows:

Salmena L, Poliseno L, Tay Y, Kats L, Pandolfi PP. 2011. A *ceRNA* Hypothesis: The Rosetta Stone of a Hidden RNA Language? *Cell*. 146: 353-358.

(NB: References are single spaced within the reference, double spaced between references.)

Within the text, cite as: (Salmena et al. 2010).

If it is two authors only, both last names are used: Balcazar and Douge 2011.

12pt font, double spaced, stapled, hard copy handed in at the beginning of class on the due date and **on-line submission to Turnitin**. Late submissions lose 1% per day it is late.

V. ETS Major Field Test in Biology (5%): State mandated Biology majors exit exam. 2-hr, multiple choice, on-line test graded by the Educational Testing Service.

Laws of the Land:

Cell phone use - there is none. No calls, no texting, nothing. If you have some kind of emergency situation talk with me before class. Otherwise, no excuses. Turn it off.

Plagiarism - don't do it. Your paper will be submitted via Turnitin, so I will see your matches and I am not forgiving. The University is also unforgiving. University policy states that the proper consequence for plagiarism is failure of the course. A complaint will be placed in your file and has the power to follow you. No graduate school, medical school, etc will accept an applicant who waives on their integrity. Why should they? And by the way, if someone cheats using your

paper you are implicated as well. If you need the specifics, please read the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions as outlined in the *Student Handbook*.

Be respectful – Everyone in the classroom deserves (and is encouraged) to participate in our discussions. Please do not have side conversations - if you have something important to say, I would like everyone to benefit from your wisdom or question. If it is not important, save it for when you are out of class. When tempted, imagine how you would feel if I sat there having a conversation with your neighbor during your presentation.

Schedule:

Syllabus and /or schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor

DATE	LECTURES	DUE DATES
Week 1 January 11	Introduction, discussion of research topics	
Week 2 January 18	Electronic/database resources for researching topics	
Week 3 January 25	Choosing your research topic How to research your topic	
Week 4 February 1	Reading and writing a science paper	Topic due
Week 5 February 8	Writing a science paper	General outline due
Week 6 February 15	Giving a science talk Science talk and how to critique it	Select presentation date
Week 7 February 22	How to response to critique; info on ETS exam	First draft due
Week 8 March 1	Writing your Resume Preparing for interview	First draft corrections due
Week 9 March 8	Presentations	
Week 10	Spring Break	
Week 11 March 22	Presentations	Research Paper due for those presenting March 8
Week 12 March 29	Presentations	Research Paper due for those presenting March 22
Week 13 April 5	Presentations	Research Paper due for those presenting March 29
Week 14 April 12	Presentations	Research Paper due for those presenting April 5
Week 15 April 19	Presentations	Research Paper due for those presenting April 12