

BIOLOGY 495-H02: HONORS SEMINAR IN BIOLOGY

INSTRUCTORS:	Dr. Gareth Russell ▪ 973-596-5388	EMAIL:	russell@njit.edu
OFFICE:	337D Central King Bldg.	OFFICE HOURS:	By Appointment
COURSE SCHEDULE:	T, R: 10:00am – 11:25am ▪ CKB 330	COURSE WEBSITE:	http://moodle.njit.edu/

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This honors seminar allows students the opportunity to work closely with an instructor in a specific area of the instructor's expertise. Students will be required to bring together interests and skills developed in this and previous courses to make in-depth oral and written presentations on a topic of their choosing. This capstone course will capture the spirit and breadth of the field of Biology through a guided investigation and literature review associated with the chosen subject. This course satisfies NJIT's Honors Capstone requirement.

PREREQUISITES: Senior level standing or Junior level standing with the permission of the Instructor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: 1) Improve your ability to access scientific literature in your field of interest, 2) Improve your writing and presentation skills, and 3) Increase your knowledge of a particular subject in biology.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS: The textbook will be "Writing Papers in the Biological Sciences" by McMillan 5th Edition (ISBN: 978-0-312-64971-5) and you will be expected to build a "research notebook" so you should have a 2+ inch binder with binder dividers devoted solely to this course. For the printing of the final papers there is a course fee of \$20, which can be paid to Karen Roach in Biology by February 1st.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS: Any additional materials required for class (primary literature, etc) will be provided through Moodle site (<http://moodle.njit.edu/> UCID required), handed out in class, or distributed via web link.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT: Be aware of the rules set forth in the [University Code on Academic Integrity](#). In brief, the instructors will not allow cheating or plagiarism. This is doubly important in this class, as your grade will be determined primarily by your performance on a single writing project. All writing assignments will be submitted to Turnitin.com.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: If you have a special need that may require accommodation or assistance, please inform the instructors of that fact as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second class meeting. Students with disabilities who require accommodations must contact Dr. Phyllis Bolling, Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (C-CAPS), Campbell Hall, (entry level), Room 205, (973) 596-3420.

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GRADING: The final grade in this course is determined as follows:

4 Status Reports	105pts
In Class Presentations	50pts
Assignments	45pts
Final Presentation	100pts
Final Written Project	150pts
TOTAL	450pts

GRADING SCALE			
A	90-100	B+	85-89
B	80-84	C+	75-79
C	65-74	D	50-64
F	0-49		

CLASS ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED: Attendance will be taken and attendance and participation is expected. Two unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction in the final grade, and a third unexcused absence will result in an additional loss of 5%.

MAKE-UP POLICY: Assignments: There are no make-ups for in class assignments **EXCEPT** for a written excused absence. Information on homework assignments will be posted on Moodle following class, and it will be the student's responsibility to check for this. Make-up work must be completed within one week following a missed class.

Examples of excused absences: Serious illness, school trips, major religious holidays, and death of a family member. Unexcused absences include minor illness, transportation problems, non-emergency appointments, traveling home for the weekend, etc. **Written verification, e.g., doctor's note, traffic report, or court records, will be required.** If the absence is excused, the student will be offered the chance to make-up work at a time convenient for student and instructor. For anticipated absences due to observance of religious holidays, the student must notify the instructor in writing in advance.

LATE WORK: Assignments will be due at the beginning of the class as outlined in their descriptions in the syllabus. If a student must be absent on the day work is due, it will be that student's responsibility to turn the assignment in **early** or make arrangements for someone else to turn it in on the due date. Other possibilities include submitting an electronic version via email. Late work will receive a penalty of 10% off per day late.

OTHER POLICIES: No cell phone usage in class, please turn off or to silent mode.

HINTS/TIPS:

- ⊛ Read any assigned articles/readings ahead of time. We will often have discussions in class (during which your participation will be noted) –so it may be helpful if you have actually read what we are discussing.
- ⊛ If you don't understand a concept or assignment, ask (more than a couple of hours ahead of the due date, please).
- ⊛ DO NOT Procrastinate!
- ⊛ DO NOT Plagiarize (collaboration is fine)!
- ⊛ Choose topics in which you have a genuine interest. This will make your hard work more enjoyable and worthwhile.

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SCHEDULE AND TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE:

WEEK/DATE	EXERCISE	SUMMARIES
1: 1/20 & 22	Introduction to Topics	Students should come to class with 2 potential topics and be prepared to give 5min Intro to each. Turn in 1pg Handout on each. Research binder organization, presentation basics and review/discussion of papers. Begin looking for “Key” papers on your two best topics, to present 2/3&5
2: 1/27 & 29		HW: Prepare paper presentations for class next week, including proposal outlines
3: 2/3 & 5	Paper Presentations	“Key” paper presentations and proposals. Schedule (out of class) meeting w/instructors for Status Report #1
4: 2/10 & 12	Status Report #1 Meeting	Review Articles, Abstract & Outline assignments HW: Complete an outline and abstract for your project (due 2/24)
5: 2/17 & 19		Proper Scientific Writing HW: Schedule (out of class) meeting w/instructors for Status Report #2, for next week.
6: 2/24 & 26	Status Report #2 Meeting	HW: Prepare presentation outlining proposed topic
7: 3/3 & 5	Project Presentations	Student presentations on their Capstone Project topic (15” + 5” Q’s) Rough Draft Due (8-10pgs of total)
8: 3/10 & 12	Project Presentations Status Report #3 Meeting	Student presentations on their Capstone Project topic (15” + 5” Q’s) Rough Draft Due (8-10pgs of total)
9: 3/17 & 19	MARCH 16-20: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES – but work on your projects!!! HW: Peer Review	
10: 3/24 & 26		HW: Peer Review Thursday Workshop Time
11: 3/31 & 2		Draft #2 Due (75% complete) HW: Schedule meeting for Status Report #4, for week of 4/7
12: 4/7 & 9	Status Report #4 Meeting	
13: 4/14 & 16		
14: 4/21 & 23	Final Presentation	Culminating Student presentations of project
15: 4/28 & 4/30	Final Presentation	Culminating Student presentations of project
16: 5/5	No Class – Friday Schedule	▶ Final written manuscript due by 5/5
FINAL EXAM WEEK: MAY 8-14, 2015		