BMS 665: Journal Club in Infectious Disease

Learning Objectives – This course will review the current literature on infectious disease. Students will learn to:

- critically evaluate scientific data for content and significance
- present their evaluation to an audience of peers

Requirements – All graduate students must enroll in a journal club each semester for the duration of their matriculation. Enrollment may be for 0 or 1 credits, with a maximum of 5 journal club credits to be applied toward graduation for doctoral students; 3 for masters students.
Students are expected to:

- attend weekly sessions and present at least once per semester.
- make their articles available to the class one week prior to the presentation.
- present articles in a concise, analytical manner.
- read the papers before coming to class.
- participate in discussions during presentations by other students or scientists.

Topics – The following criteria must be met by a chosen journal article:

- published within the last year.
- related to the module topic or is from the assigned laboratory.
- published in a respected, peer-reviewed journal.
- of general interest to the audience.
- **not** from the student's immediate area of research.

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their choice of paper with a course director before their presentation.

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Credit – 0/1 credit per semester

Evaluation – Student evaluations will be based on (i) the quality of presentation, (ii) participation in discussions, and (iii) attendance. Grading is Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. More than two absences will result in an Unsatisfactory grade, unless specifically authorized by the course director BEFORE the anticipated absence.

Format – Each presentation should include the following:

- Enough *background information* to allow the audience to understand the reasoning and hypothesis from which the work springs.
- *Important data*. Since one function of the journal club is the critical evaluation of results, it is important to focus on the data. For each experiment, the student should understand and explain (i) why it was done, (ii) how it was done, (iii) what were the controls, and (iv) the interpretation of the results.
- A brief *summary discussion* relating the results presented to other work in the field, and explaining how the work succeeded and why it is important. Any significant inadequacies such as missing controls or unsupported conclusions should be noted.