

BMS 665: Journal Club in Mammalian Genetics

Learning Objectives: This course will review the current literature in mammalian genetics. Students will be taught how to critically evaluate scientific data for content and significance, and to present their evaluation to an audience of peers.

Requirements: All graduate students must enroll in BMS 665 each semester for the duration of their matriculation. Enrollment may be for 0 or 1 credit, 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 twice per semester. Papers must be available to the class at least one week prior to the presentation. All students are expected to read the papers before coming to class.

Topics: Every week a student or scientist will present an article from the current literature in the general area of mammalian genetics. Journal papers should be recent (published within the past year), and chosen from respected, peer-reviewed journals. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their choice of paper with the course director before their presentation. Papers should be of general interest to the audience and must not be from the student's immediate area of research. Students will be expected to present articles and research results in a concise, analytical manner, and will be expected to participate in discussions during presentations by other students or scientists.

Faculty: Course Director – Denise Kay, 473-4620, dkay@wadsworth.org

Credit: 0/1 credit per semester

Evaluation: Student evaluations will be based on the quality of presentation, participation in discussions, and 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: 1) Enough background information to allow the audience to understand the reasoning and hypothesis from which the work springs. 2) Show 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 why it was done, how it was done, what were the controls, and the interpretation of the results. 3) Include 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.