

Biocore 587: Biological Interactions

Course Information

Spring 2015

Welcome to your fourth semester of Biocore!! Biological Interactions is intended to help you integrate the material you have learned in the previous three semesters of Biocore and your other classes and apply it to some current areas of active research. We will consider three topics and will look at some of the physiology, cell biology, genetics, and biochemistry relevant to understanding these issues. The course will be focused around a series of papers from the scientific literature and will provide you with opportunities to gather information, visualize, analyze, explore, and plan strategies for the investigation of complex biological problems. The three topics are: 1. Colon Cancer as Genetic Disease, led by Dr. Amy Moser, Department of Human Oncology; 2) Cervical cancer; A Viral Disease, led by Dr. Anne Griep, Department of Cell and Regenerative Biology; and 3. Microbial Ecology and the Human Gut, led by Dr. Trina McMahon, Departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Bacteriology. The final two weeks of the course will be devoted to a group project. The schedule of the units is given on page 4. Dr. Moser serves as chair of Biocore 587 and any questions about course organization should be addressed to her.

Overall Course Learning Goals

At the end of 587 you should be able to:

- Work as a productive, collaborative member of a group.
- Use terminology and conventions accurately and appropriately.
- Understand there is not always just one right answer to a question.
- Draw on experience, accumulated knowledge, and creativity to solve complex biological problems.
- Build a logical evidence-based argument.
- Describe how a whole system works from the molecular to the organismal level.
- Frame sophisticated biological questions and formulate testable hypotheses.
- Think as a biological scientist and be able to communicate your knowledge to others.

Course Format and Scheduling

In this final semester of Biocore we want to give you more responsibility for your own learning. Therefore, we have structured the class to build in time for you to discuss the material in teams and less time for the faculty to lecture. The whole class meets three times per week at 11:00 MWF in room 168 Noland Hall. In addition, each of you will attend a weekly discussion section on Tuesdays. The week prior to each unit, the materials will be posted on Learn@UW (<http://learnuw.wisc.edu>). These materials will consist of the paper(s) for the week and a study guide. In general, a topic will be introduced in lecture on Friday and the Monday lecture will provide more background material, but we will generally not be discussing the papers in lecture on Monday. On Tuesday in the discussion there will be a quiz, generally focusing on the methods in the papers or details that we consider essential to the topic. The remainder of discussion section will focus on techniques or concepts crucial for understanding the paper(s). On Wednesday in class you will work in teams on worksheets that pose questions based on the papers for that week. The Friday class will consist of discussion of the worksheets, summary of the week's material, and the introduction of the next week's material. **In order for this plan to work, it is essential that every one reads the assigned papers and background references before the lecture on Monday.**

You cannot make up a missed quiz or team worksheet. We will deal with illness and personal emergencies on a case-by-case basis. If you are ill or have a family emergency or if you have a planned absence contact your TA or Dr. Moser as soon as possible. If you are late for a Wednesday session, please note the time of arrival on the worksheet and you will receive credit only for the portion of the hour that you were present. Everyone must sign in on the worksheet on Wednesday.

As a rule, we do not post lecture notes on the website, if you miss a lecture, talk with members of your group to look at their notes. If there is a figure that is not included in the study guide or text book and is crucial for your understanding of the material, it may be posted at the instructor's discretion.

Focus on Cooperative Learning

A course like this requires more planning by the faculty and more effort by you to understand the material. Why are we doing this? There are two reasons. First, our teaching goals are to help you integrate your knowledge of biological principles into a consistent internal framework and to develop skills that will allow you to work through any type of complex biological problem in the future. These skills are more important than the specific content of this course. Research on teaching and learning has shown that giving students the opportunity to work with peers to solve complex problems is the most effective way to meet these goals. Second, we want to help you develop your teamwork skills; these will be essential in your future career.

Team Member Roles

You will be assigned to a group for the semester; your assignment will be given to you in the first week. Please sit with your team during the MWF class meetings. Teams work together on worksheets on Wednesdays. On other days there may be times when you will be asked to discuss an issue with your teammates and report on your discussion. Within each group there are four “roles”. Each week you will rotate to a different role. It will be up to you and your teammates to keep track of who has what role each week. Although some people may be more comfortable in a particular role, the point of trading roles is to help you expand your skill set by trying out different roles, so please do rotate the roles. The roles are:

Facilitator: Makes sure everyone understands each worksheet question before discussing it, encourages everyone to participate, encourages cooperative behavior, helps the group to reach consensus.

Monitor: Keeps everyone on task, monitors time, moves the group along to assure that the tasks get done.

Recorder: Records the group's consensus answers to the worksheet questions, submits the worksheet at the end of class Wednesday.

Challenger: Actively participates in the discussion, questions the reasoning behind the answer (be a devil's advocate), questions the other group members to be sure the reasoning makes sense.

All members of the team are responsible for being sensitive to the feelings and level of understanding of the others, promoting group interaction, and being prepared for group meetings, including knowing what biological question is being addressed by the research paper and the scientific methods used to attempt to answer the question. If one member of the team misses class, designate a team member to contact him/her and find out if there is a problem. We **strongly** suggest that you meet with your team members sometime before the class on Wednesday to discuss the papers and go over the study guides. Pay attention to the questions in the study guides! In our experience, teams that meet together before Wednesday consistently do better in the course than those that do not.

Using Moodle for Worksheets

Rather than doing the worksheets on paper, we will be doing them online using Moodle. This will require that each group have a fully charged laptop with the Web Browser **Firefox** running—we cannot guarantee that Moodle will work properly with any other Web Browser. If you do not have a charged laptop, let Dr. Moser know and we can supply a computer if given advance warning. We will provide one paper copy of the worksheets for you to read the questions, and to be used if we have computer or internet issues. We will post the worksheet on the class website after class on Wednesday so that you can print it out and bring it to class on Friday to take notes as we discuss the answers.

Board of Directors

We solicit student representatives who would like to represent Biocore 587 in the weekly staff meeting (on Friday immediately after lecture). These students will be the voice of the all students to let the faculty know of issues and concerns in regard to the course. One representative each week will write up “minutes” summarizing the meeting that will be included in the weekly announcements. This is a good opportunity to contribute to course improvement and student advocacy. In addition, as a BOD member, you can get to know the course faculty and instructors better.

Texts and Reading Materials

We will make use of your previous Biocore textbooks as reference materials: Hardin, J., Bertoni, G., and Kleinsmith, L.. *The World of the Cell*, 8th ed. (2012) and Snustad, D.P. and Simmons, M. J. *Principles of Genetics*, 6th ed. (2012).

The papers and study guides that will serve as the main texts for the course will be available on line (<http://learnuw.wisc.edu>). You are required to have copies of all of the papers and the study guides. We have prepared the study guides to help you in your reading of the papers. Based on studies that demonstrate that reading on paper leads to better retention than reading on a screen, we recommend that you print out the papers and study guides each week. The study guides will list the learning objectives for each week, draw your attention to which parts of the paper are most important to understand, and provide supporting material not available in your texts. In addition, we will sometimes expand in lecture on material in the study guide and the illustrations will be helpful. The materials for each week will be available on line no later than the Wednesday of the previous week. **Bring your copies of the papers and the study guides to class every day!** If you need assistance with accessing the materials, contact your TA.

Biocore 587 Assignments, Exams, and Grades

Your grade for Biocore 587 will be based on your performance on the 9 Tuesday quizzes, the 9 Wednesday group worksheets, three unit exams, and the final group project (which will count as two worksheet grades). The percentages of the grade are as follows: worksheets and final project 45%, quizzes 10%, exams 45%. Neither the course as a whole nor the various activities are curved. (Intermediate grades [AB and BC] **may** also be used, but this will be decided by the faculty team at the end of the semester.)

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
100-90%	A
89-80%	B
79-70%	C
69-60%	D

Strategies for Success

This is a challenging course and it will take you several hours to get through each of the assigned papers and the associated reference material. The study guide will list the papers for the week, topics to review, vocabulary to learn, and techniques you will be expected to become familiar with. **Plan to have the papers read BEFORE class on Monday.** Before you read the papers, **review** the listed materials in your texts, **look up** the vocabulary words, and **review** the techniques. The best approach is to use your study guide as a guide as you read the papers. The questions in the study guide are intended to alert you to issues we want you to think about; pay attention to those questions!

Some of the experiments described in these papers may be hard to understand, because the techniques may be unfamiliar and because the authors often assume you can follow their logic without explaining it. We point out in the study guide or in discussion section what aspects of the experiments we expect you to understand. We provide support in the study guides, introductory lectures, and discussion sessions, but your greatest source of help is your fellow team members. Plan to get together at least once before Wednesday but after you have read the paper and reference materials. Discuss each other's questions and then go over each of the figures (except those that the study guide tells you to omit) and the questions we ask in the study guide. If you haven't done this before the Wednesday class period, you may not be able to complete the worksheet in the allotted time. We structured this course around teams because a large part of learning is translating what you read and hear into your own language. You do that by talking or writing about it. Explaining a concept to a peer helps both of you deepen your understanding. Find out how well you really understand the material before the quiz and worksheet by talking about it with your teammates.

If you need help with the material, discuss it with your teammates, contact your TA during their office hours, or contact the faculty member in charge of the unit (we prefer email or talk to us before or after class, if more time is needed, we can set up a meeting). Be as specific as you can about what you do not understand. This makes it easier to help you. We anticipate that the process of understanding the papers will get easier as you become more experienced at this. However, it will continue to take time. Our goal for you by the end of this semester is to be able to critically read and understand scientific papers with limited (or no) help from us. This does not mean that you will understand everything the first time you read a paper, but rather that you will be able to identify the relevant background information that you need, recognize gaps in your knowledge, have strategies for acquiring the information you need, and then study the paper and decide whether you are convinced by the authors' conclusions. We strongly believe you will find this experience worth the effort.

Faculty

Amy Moser	amoser@wisc.edu	6107 WIMR	265-6520
Anne Griep	aegriep@wisc.edu	4455 WIMR	262-8988
Trina McMahon	kdmcmahon@wisc.edu	5552 MSB	890-2836

Teaching Assistants

Laura Dattilo	dattilo@wisc.edu	847-212-5970
Gail Rosen	gerosen@wisc.edu	917-740-6797

Laura is the Administrative TA and is the one to see about administrative course issues such as planned absences or exam conflicts.

Biocore Administration

Carol Borcharding	clborche@wisc.edu	345 Noland Hall	265-2870
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**Class Schedule
Spring 2015**

Week	Dates	Instructor	Topic
1	1/20-1/23	Moser	Course Introduction and Introduction to Unit 1
Unit 1: Inheritance of Susceptibility: Colon Cancer as Genetic Disease			
2	1/26-1/30	Moser	The role of <i>APC</i> in colon cancer susceptibility
3	2/2-2/6	Moser	The role of mutation in tumor development
4	2/9-2/13	Moser	Exploring the consequences of loss of <i>APC</i> function
5	2/16-2/20	Moser/Griep	Review, Unit 1 exam, and start of Unit 2
Unit 1 Exam 2/18 7:15-8:15 pm			
Unit 2: Cervical cancer: A Viral Disease			
6	2/23-2/27	Griep	Investigating how the HPV oncoproteins may lead to cancer: Interaction between HPV oncoproteins and tumor suppressor proteins
7	3/2-3/6	Griep	Investigating the role of the Papillomavirus oncogenes in carcinogenesis in animal models
8	3/9-3/13	Griep	Current and future directions in the prevention and treatment of cervical cancer: Vaccine development
9	3/16-3/20	Griep/McMahon	Unit 2 Review, Unit 2 Exam, and start of Unit 3
Unit 2 Exam 3/18 7:15-8:15 pm			
Unit 3: Microbial Ecology and the Human Gut			
10	3/23-3/27	McMahon	Our microbial selves
3/28-4/5 SPRING BREAK			
11	4/6-4/10	McMahon	Human microbiome community diversity and dynamics
12	4/13-4/17	McMahon	Disruption of the microbiome; causes, consequences, and corrections
13	4/20-4/24	McMahon	Unit 3 Review, Unit 3 Exam, and start of project
Unit 3 Exam 4/22 7:15-8:15 pm			
14	4/27-5/1		Project development
15	5/4-5/8		Project completion
Final Project Presentation Thursday May 14, 2015 7:25-9:25pm			