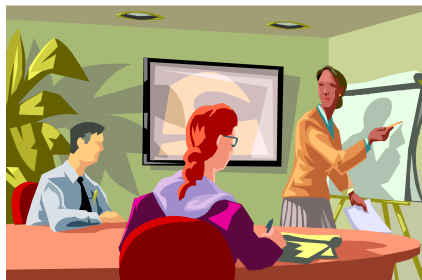


PSS 301 Plant Science Colloquium - *Syllabus*

Spring 2004, 1 credit

Instructor: Buddy Tignor, Ph.D.

Wednesday, 4:00 – 5:15 pm, Hills Room 6



Course Concept/Operation

This course will involve discussion of recent refereed journal articles pertaining to a variety of aspects of plant science. For spring 2004 students will be choosing articles related to their research projects. Additionally, each student will present 2 of 3 of the following: a 12 minute oral presentation, poster, or writing sample all for review by the class. Each week 35 minutes will be donated to article review and 30 minutes to a student-developed academic deliverable. The academic deliverable should be based on the graduate student's own research, but there will be allowances made for people who are at different stages of completion in their academic degrees. Papers for review and deliverables must be approved by the instructor 1 week in advance of the presentation.

Critically Reading Papers

When you try to read papers for this course, I want you to understand what the authors were trying to do and how they went about accomplishing that. I especially want you to see/understand and critique how they interpret their results within the context of the objectives of the research. You should also develop a list of unanswered questions for the class members to discuss.

Here are some guidelines-things you should know or do while you are reading the paper:

1. What is the overall problem that the investigators are studying?
2. What specific objective(s) or questions is the paper addressing?
3. What is the experimental approach to the question(s)? Here, it will be important to understand the methods that they use in order to be able to evaluate their results.
4. What are the results for each procedure/experiment that make a point? For each point, there will be data in the form of a figure or table, etc. Look at each one; understand what is being shown; make a judgment as to whether it is good data or weak data. If the data is a result of an experiment, determine if the controls are present. There should be positive and negative controls for good experiments. And the negative controls should rule out all other possible explanations for the results other than due to the variable that is being tested. Determine whether the experiment that was conducted actually addresses the question that is being asked. Make a judgment as to whether you think the data support the conclusions reached by the authors.
5. What do you think the next unanswered question is?
6. You should always note things you don't understand or think don't make sense.

Grading

Final grades are based solely on the quality of presentations and participation in discussions. Attendance is expected.

Contacting the Instructor

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm or by appointment; Hills Room 201

Voice: (802) 656-0466

Home: (802) 899-1768

E-mail: Milton.Tignor@uvm.edu

One final note

The instructor reserves the right to adjust the final grades based on factors related to course performance and participation. If such an adjustment is made the student will be informed of the exact cause and nature of the grade change.

Evaluating the Instructor

At the end of the semester you will have an opportunity to extensively evaluate the course and the instructor. However, you may also send me an e-mail with constructive criticism at any time.

Course Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>Paper Review</i>	<i>Academic Presentation</i>
1	Jan 21 st	Introduction	
2	Jan 28 th	NO CLASS	NONE
3	Feb 4 th	Benedict	
4	Feb 11 th	DiPietro	
5	Feb 18 th	Luchini	
6	Feb 25 th	Menasha	
7	Mar 3 rd	Munoz	
8	Mar 10 th	Priestley	
9	Mar 17 th	SPRING BREAK	NONE
10	Mar 24 th	Benedict	Priestley
11	Mar 31 st	DiPietro	Munoz
12	Apr 7 th	Luchini	Menasha
13	Apr 14 th	Menasha	Luchini
14	Apr 21 st	Munoz	DiPietro
15	Apr 28 th	Priestley	Benedict

You know that I write slowly. This is chiefly because I am never satisfied until I have said as much as possible in a few words, and writing briefly takes far more time than writing at length.

– Karl Friedrich Gauss

