Instructor:
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Office Hours: by appointment only

Teaching Assistants:
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Time of lectures, meetings and student presentations:
The time and place of lectures as scheduled by the registrar are Tue, Wed and Friday starting at
12:30 pm until 1:20 pm in ABB118. The course starts on Jan 8 and ends on April 9, 2019. The
Winter Break occurs between Feb 18th and Feb 24th. No lectures or meetings with the students
will occur during the Winter Break. The schedule for the lecture periods serves primarily to
preserve a time and place for students to meet with the instructor. A draft schedule of events and
due dates for assignments is shown below (Schedule).

Communication between the instructor and teaching assistants with the students will occur via
Mosaic or Avenue to Learn. Students should check their email daily to ensure that they do not
miss any events scheduled at dates/times and locations other than those noted in the schedule
below.

Course Objective:
One objective of the course is to enhance the ability of students to understand scientific findings
and methods reported in primary journal articles, and to communicate their content in oral
presentations. Another key objective is to teach students how to write a grant proposal by
building on current knowledge in the scientific literature.

Course Information and Requirements:
Students will be assigned a TA, who will provide a research topic for each student. The teaching
assistant will subsequently meet with the students to ensure that the student selected appropriate
research articles on their assigned topic. The scientific literature associated with the research
topic will serve as the foundation for two oral student presentations based on one or more
primary journal articles (reviews do not constitute primary research articles but should be
consulted to familiarize the student with the area of the topic). Students should identify a recent
high-profile full-length publication(s) on their topic. For example, a publication featured in the News and Views section of a high-impact journal such as Science, Nature or Cell is likely to be suitable. Students must obtain approval from their TA for their choice of publication(s) well in advance of their first presentation (please see Schedule below).

The initial student presentation will be of an introductory nature, structured along the lines of a scientific abstract, and will set the stage for the second presentation, which will require the students to recount the original findings (results and relevant methods) of the article. Students should rely on the content of their article’s Abstract, Introduction and Results sections for their presentations. The background provided in the Introduction and any reviews or original articles cited therein should serve as the foundation for the first presentation. The original figures and tables from the chosen article(s) may be used directly as the content for the second presentation.

The first presentation should not exceed 10 minutes in duration with 5 minutes for questions and comments from the audience. Audience participation is required. The second presentation should not exceed 20 minutes with 10 minutes for questions and comments from the audience. Generally, a single Powerpoint “slide” will take at least 1 minute to present. Due to time constraints on room bookings, each student presentation will be strictly limited to the periods cited above.

The written grant proposal should be centered on the assigned research topic and must build on the findings (results) of the selected article. The grant proposal should comprise a scientific abstract, an introduction to the field, rationale for the proposed study, a hypothesis, 2-3 specific aims and references. A brief description of the methods to be used for the proposed study should be included in the specific aims section. The course instructor will present lectures to introduce students to the various components of a scientific proposal.

Schedule:

January 7: First lecture (BSB104). The instructor will describe the course objectives and organization.

January 14: Students will be assigned to a TA and are encouraged to communicate with their TA.

January 18: Each TA will identify a topic for each student in their group.

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January 21: Students will provide their TA with the titles of the article(s) representative of their assigned topic. The TA will provide feedback to the students in their group regarding the appropriateness of the selected articles.

January 26: Students will upload their first presentation on Avenue to Learn by 11:59 pm.

January 29: Student presentations (first assignment) take place on this date.
January 31: The TAs will provide feedback to the students on their initial presentation.

February 12: The instructor will review the features of a grant proposal. The course will meet at 11:30 am in BSB 104.

February 19 - 23: Midterm Recess - No lectures or tutorials can take place during this period.

February 26: The TA will meet with students to review drafts of the second presentation.

March 4: Second presentations uploaded to Avenue to Learn by 11:59 pm.

March 5 - 9: Individual student presentations (second presentation) take place this week.

March 14: TA will provide feedback to students regarding their second presentation.

April 9: Last day of classes.

April 13: Final grant proposal is due by 5 pm. Grant proposals must be delivered to the appropriate teaching assistant. The final mark for late proposals will be reduced by 2.5% for each hour following the due date/time. The reduction in the mark for late proposals will be strictly enforced unless a valid excuse is provided in writing and the excuse verified.

Evaluation:

First presentation – 15% of final mark

Second presentation – 35% of final mark

Grant proposal – 50% of final mark

Academic Integrity
You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy.
<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

This section is dedicated to students:
http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.html
The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

Plagiarism is the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.

Improper collaboration in group work.

Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

**Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulations in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief of Missed Academic Term Work”. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015.

If you have any questions about the MSAF, then please contact your Associate Dean’s office.

**Note:**

"The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes."