

VME6907: Graduate Journal Club
Mechanisms of Microbial Virulence
Class Period: Period 6: Wednesdays 12:50 to 1:40pm
Location: Zoom and VAB V3-114
Academic Term: Spring 2023

Instructor:

Dr. Aria Eshraghi Ph.D.

AriaEshraghi@ufl.edu

352-294-4194

Office Hours: Available upon request

Enrollment

A maximum of 13 students will be enrolled. Faculty and postdoctoral scientists are encouraged to participate, and some will be invited to demonstrate the qualities of an excellent presentation.

Credits

1 unit – Students can enroll in this course up to 4 times for credit, with the permission of the instructor and their departmental graduate coordinator.

Description

This journal club course covers contemporary topics in host-microbe interactions by focusing on critical analysis of recently published manuscripts. The selected articles will cover the molecular mechanisms that bacteria, viruses and parasites utilize for pathogenesis of various hosts, such as animals, insects, and nematodes.

Course Objectives

- Identify strengths and weaknesses in the approaches utilized to test hypotheses in microbial pathogenesis
- Develop the skills to clearly convey the literature in a manner that is comprehensible to an audience with diverse expertise
- Formulate an understanding of common themes in microbial virulence

Learning outcomes

- Critically review recently published research in the field of microbial pathogenesis
- Present research in a format that is easily followed by an audience with diverse expertise

Required literature, software, and hardware

- Links to the papers will be provided via email
- Zoom software
- Reliable internet connection
- Properly functioning camera and microphone for presenter

Course Schedule

(Detailed schedule to be provided at the beginning of week 2)

Week 1: Organizational meeting and discussion of the elements of a good presentation.

Weeks 2-13: Journal club presentations and discussions

Week 14: Thanksgiving holiday – no class

Week 15: Final journal club presentation, discussion, and course evaluation

Course format

In the first week, each student will select a published paper or preprint manuscript to present during the semester. Students will collaborate with the instructor during manuscript selection to ensure that they are high quality and relevant to the fields of study (listed in the course description). The instructor will send a list of the selected publications to the course participants as early in the semester as possible. Ahead of each of the subsequent meetings, the students are required to read the research paper and submit to the instructor two comments/questions about the paper via email. These submissions are expected to reflect a careful and comprehensive review of the paper and should focus on higher level concepts such as data interpretation, selection of controls, appropriateness of techniques to the experimental questions, adequacy of statistical analysis, etc. The discussion leader for each week will prepare and deliver a 30-to-40-minute PowerPoint presentation covering the background, relevant details, interpretation, and conclusions of the assigned paper. The discussion leader should encourage the audience to participate by providing commentary and questions throughout the presentation. Enrolled students are required to participate in each discussion (through offering verbal comments or written chat comments), and other journal club attendees, such as faculty and postdoctoral trainees, are encouraged to participate as well.

Evaluation and grades

Attendance	14 sessions	x	5 points = 70 points	(25%)
Weekly submission of comments	14 sessions	x	5 points = 70 points	(25%)
Participation in group discussions	14 sessions	x	5 points = 70 points	(25%)
Discussion leader presentation			70 points	(25%)
Total			280 points	(100%)

Grading Policy

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
90.0 - 100.0	A	4.00
87.0 - 89.9	A-	3.67
84.0 - 86.9	B+	3.33
81.0 - 83.9	B	3.00
78.0 - 80.9	B-	2.67
75.0 - 79.9	C+	2.33
72.0 - 74.9	C	2.00
69.0 - 71.9	C-	1.67
66.0 - 68.9	D+	1.33
63.0 - 65.9	D	1.00
60.0 - 62.9	D-	0.67
0 - 59.9	F	0.00

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Attendance Policy, Class Expectations, and Make-Up Policy

Attendance and participation are required and will be monitored during the weekly meetings.

In cases of unforeseen absences due to serious illness or emergencies, contact Dr. Aria Eshraghi via email with written verification as soon as possible. Other absences must be cleared with Dr. Eshraghi ahead of the missed meeting.

Excused absences must be consistent with university policies and require appropriate documentation.

Additional information can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with Dr. Eshraghi and discuss their access needs prior to the first meeting.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Academic resources:

E-learning technical support: 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or email Learning-support@ufl.edu.

Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

Health and wellness resources:

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc> and 352-392-1575

Sexual Assault Recovery Services: 352-392-1161

University Police Department at 352-392-1111 or 9-1-1 (for emergencies)