

**BIOL 400/501 – DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR SERIES**  
**FALL 2021 - FRIDAYS, 3:30 – 4:30 PM**  
**LOCATION: LSS 277 OR ZOOM (SELECT SPEAKERS)**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

*BIOL 400/501 Seminar is an upper division/graduate level course designed to expose students to advanced scientific subjects and cutting edge technology.* While attending live seminars, we ask for your undivided attention. Repeated late arrivals are not acceptable. It is not only impolite to the speaker, but tardiness causes you to miss essential background at the beginning of the seminar that is designed to help you understand the topic. For live presentations, speakers will usually finish their presentation by ~4:20 PM followed by ~10 min of open questions; be aware that may run a bit later than 4:30, especially if the speaker and audience members are engaged in spirited discussions.

**GRADING:** Seminar is a **pass/fail** course for which you may receive 1 credit per semester. **To receive a passing grade, you must attend all scheduled seminars and write and submit notes (details below).** Exceptions to this rule will require attendance at substitute seminar with subsequent seminar note submission.

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance will be monitored by visual inspection and, importantly, by submission of your seminar note following each class meeting. Seminar notes will be graded weekly with feedback being handed back to the student directly or posted on the course BbLearn site.

**ABSENCES:** If you miss a seminar, you must make it up by attending another, approved seminar (on a topic germane to the biological sciences). As with all University courses, an absence is permitted in case of illness (with a note from your MD), military service, death in the immediate family, or away on University business. In this case, you can make up a missed seminar after the fact. If you miss a seminar for any other reason, please get permission from the instructor in charge of grading BIOL 400/501 (D. Cole for fall 2021). Even after permission is granted, you will still be required to “make up” the missed seminar by attending an alternate seminar approved by the instructor in charge.

**Seminar notes will be graded P (pass), P<sup>-</sup> (pass minus) or F (fail)**

1. Before each seminar, you should download the seminar note template (.doc or .pdf). You can take notes using a computer or you can hand write notes on a printed hardcopy.
2. Fill in **all** blanks at the top of the page.
3. You are expected to generate at least **one page** of notes for each seminar. You must **submit your notes on BbLearn following each seminar**. There is no maximum number of pages.
4. You need to **pose two or more questions** that could be asked of the speaker. This will be your own question and not one asked by others at the end of seminar. **Label each question using Q1:, Q2:, etc.** Example: “Q1: Why would you use H<sub>2</sub>O as your positive control? Did you mean ‘negative’ control?”
5. The notes should be in the **English** language. *Seminar notes are not expected to contain perfect prose or complete sentences.*
6. Questions or concerns? Contact Doug Cole, [dcole@uidaho.edu](mailto:dcole@uidaho.edu); Gibb 131

## *Examples of Insufficient Specificity in Questions*

- I. *Avoid writing any questions that could be asked of any speaker without hearing of their work. These types of questions can be good for stimulating conversation at social gatherings or in one-on-one discussion but are not appropriate at a research presentation. Examples:*
  - a. *“What made you choose this area of research?”*
  - b. *“Do you like working with {insert almost any noun}?”*
  - c. *“What is it like to work at {insert almost any location}?”*
  - d. *“What is next?” This question is sometimes asked in person, especially if the questioner can’t think of a good specific question but still wants to engage the speaker.*
- II. *Avoid asking questions that request the definition of a word or acronym, even though it might have been appropriate for the speaker to define it in their talk.*
  - a. *“What is PCR?”*
  - b. *“What is FTIR?”*
  - c. *“What is silencing?”*