

L41 Biology 181: FRESHMAN SEMINAR IN BIOLOGY Fall 2009

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Teaching Assistant: Gregory Booth (booth@wustl.edu)

Biology 181 is designed to present a realistic picture of how science is done. An additional objective is to acquaint prospective Biology majors with some of the various fields of study in biology and with the research of faculty in Biology and related departments. If you have any questions concerning Biology 181, please do not hesitate to talk with either Paul Stein or Greg Booth before or after class or make an appointment.

DESCRIPTION: The course consists of a series of 13 class meetings. 12 meetings will be research lectures given by different faculty members on topics of the professor's interest. 1 meeting will include lectures by Bio 500 students on their undergraduate research. Class meetings will be on Tuesdays from 3:30pm-5:00pm in Room 322 in Rebstock Hall. See the course website <http://www.nslc.wustl.edu/courses/Bio181/bio181.html> for the up-to-date lecture schedule, the PDFs for readings, and the background information on each speaker. Enter user name: bio181 and password announced in class to access PDFs. Credit for the course is 1 unit PASS/FAIL only. No letter grades will be issued. This does not interfere with your ability to take another Cr/NCr course.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. CLASS MEETINGS: Students are required to attend at least 9 of the class meetings (see web page for schedule) in order to pass the course. You are expected to take notes at each faculty research lecture to assist you in the preparation of your short papers and to gain skill in note-taking during science lectures. Please print your name and sign your name on a sheet that we will have in class each week to indicate you attended. It is a serious breach of the honor code for one person to sign in for an absent student. You must be present during the entire duration of the class meeting in order to receive credit for attendance at that meeting. Lectures in Biology 1810 and Chemistry 181 may be substituted for lectures in Bio 181. Arrange for an EMail to stein@wustl.edu from the coursemaster of the course to verify your attendance and receive Bio 181 credit for your attendance. Links to the Bio 1810 home page and the Chem 181 home page are on the Bio 181 home page.

2. READINGS AND TWO SHORT PAPERS: PDFs of articles are posted on the course website for each faculty research lecture to enable you to pursue topics further. You are required to choose 2 of the research topics presented by faculty speakers in Bio 181 lectures and read the PDFs posted for these lectures. You will need to write 2 short papers that each receive a mark of ++ or + in order to pass the course. Short papers that receive a mark of - will need to be re-written; Greg Booth will provide suggestions for improvement. Each short paper will be at least two pages long and will include the following: (1) a short summary of the main points of the speaker's talk; (2) a description of the main points of at least two of the PDF articles associated with the talk; and (3) either suggestions for improvements of the current experiments OR suggestions for future experiments in the field. Hand in your papers to the course teaching assistant, Greg Booth. Direct your comments and concerns with respect to the papers to Greg Booth. The first short paper is due in class by 3:30pm on October 13, 2009; the second short paper is due in class by 3:30pm on November 17, 2009. The deadline for receipt in class of re-written short papers is 3:30pm on December 1, 2009.

A SPECIAL REQUEST: Biology 181 is an optional course. We offer it because we know that, among first-year students, there are some who are very interested in research. In order to allow the student to test that interest, we ask first-rate research scientists to spend time with you to give you the flavor of biological research. Each year, sometime into the course, some students decide the lectures are not very interesting to them. Fair enough. One of the objectives of the course is to allow students to test the water. If you find that the lectures do not hold your interest, please withdraw from the course. No one needs 1 unit of credit and the course is meant to be exciting and a pleasure, not punishment. For reasons beyond our understanding, in the past, students who have lost interest continue to attend class, are inattentive, and even rude. This makes for a very unpleasant situation for all concerned. Feel free to withdraw from the class if you lose interest in the material. If you attend the class, please be attentive, and, of course, polite.