Course Overview

**Description from Official Course Catalog:** Recent research advances in selected areas of modern molecular biology presented by faculty of the Molecular Biology Institute and established outside investigators. May be repeated with new content. Open only to students admitted to the molecular biology program or by permission of the graduate adviser for molecular biology. Maximum credit six units, three of which are applicable to a master's degree.

**Course Content:** Recent research advances in selected areas of modern molecular biology presented by faculty of the Molecular Biology Institute, Biology Department and invited speakers.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** By participating in the seminar series the students will:

1. Compare and contrast experimental approaches utilized by researchers studying a wide spectrum of scientific topics in molecular biology.
2. Evaluate primary research data as presented by each investigator.
3. Identify vital concepts and judge the relative importance of topics introduced during the presentations.
4. Appraise the seminar presentations by taking notes, summarizing, and critically evaluating the experimental data and conclusions described by the invited speakers.
5. Practice scientific writing abilities by completing a one-page summary assignment.

**Real Life Relevance:** Students will learn cutting edge research presented by local and national researchers. Students will have opportunities to ask questions, evaluate presentation styles and interact with presenters.

**Relation to Other Courses:** MBio 601 forms a core course in the MS program. It will help students to prepare for their thesis proposals/defense and provide insight into topics discussed in MBio 610.

Enrollment Information

**Prerequisites:** Graduate standing and permission of instructor.

**Adding/Dropping Procedures:** Per University policy, the last day to add this course is the 10th day of the semester. Please note that if you have not been attending lectures through this period of time you risk falling behind in the material and your final grade may be negatively impacted.
If you have registered for the course but do not attend class within the first two lectures, you will be dropped from the course by the instructor. If you fail to have the required pre-requisite courses you may also be dropped from the course by the instructor. Please note that the instructor may not automatically drop you if you lack the pre-requisite courses - this could negatively impact your final grade for the course.

Crashers: Priority for crashing will be based on the number of units in the major. Open University students will be provided add codes once all SDSU students have added the course as per University policy.

**Course Materials**

Required Text: None

**Course Structure and Conduct**

Students must attend at least one Biology Department seminar per week. You may attend either the Monday or Thursday seminar.

Please sign in (NAME and RED ID #) at the end of each seminar. Grading will be based on attendance (80%) and the one-page summary assignment (20%; see below). **Students will be allowed to miss two seminars with prior approval.** Those individuals caught signing in for absent students will fail the course. Please e-mail me in advance if you will not be able to attend any seminar.

**Maximize the Potential Knowledge Gained From Attending Scientific Seminars by Preparing in Advance:**

A few days before the scheduled seminar, perform a search on PubMed or Google Scholar on the invited speaker and the topic to be presented. Read a review on the scientific field covered by the speaker and a representative recent publication from the speaker.

A separate document lists specific lecture dates.

**Course Assessment and Grading**

**Writing Assignment:**

Submit a one-page summary describing a seminar of your choice during the semester. The one page summary is **due on Dec 13th no later than 5:00pm.** The assignment may be submitted electronically by e-mail. The one page summary (double-spaced; Arial Font - 11; 1 inch margins) should describe the scientific topic presented by the invited speaker, a description of relevant data and scientific methodologies, important conclusions, and a critical evaluation of the conclusions (5 points each; 20 points total).

**PLEASE NOTE:** In the event your mentor or a member of your home laboratory gives a talk, you are not permitted to select this topic to write your summary. No exceptions will be made.
Although only a single summary describing a seminar of your choice is required over the course of the semester, students are expected to take notes, and follow and evaluate the data presented by the speakers for each and every seminar. Students are also encouraged to ask questions to the speaker after the conclusion of each seminar.

**Grading:** Pass/No Pass

**Other Policies**

**Course Etiquette:** Turn off your cell phones and pagers before entering the lecture room. The required sign-in sheet will be distributed after the end of the seminar. Please stay until questions and answers with the invited speaker have ended.