

MCB 7922 Journal Colloquy – Virome and Host Interactions

Course Description

This graduate-level, asynchronous, online colloquy explores the cutting-edge research investigating interactions between the virome and the host. Students will engage directly with primary scientific literature to understand the diverse roles the virome has on host biology, health, and disease. Through student-led presentations and critical discussions using the Canvas online forum, we will learn about the methodologies used to study the microbiome and analyze the findings and implications of recent studies in the field.

Course Goals

The goals of this course are to (1) enhance the students' understanding of current knowledge regarding the virome and its interaction with the host, (2) provide students with the opportunity to analyze and critique primary research articles in the virome field, (3) communicate and explain complex scientific concepts and findings clearly and concisely in a formal presentation format, and (4) engage in and lead scholarly discussions by formulating insightful questions and providing constructive feedback to peers.

Instructor

Dr. Melissa Jones
Associate Professor
Department of Microbiology and Cell Science

Contact Information

Phone: 352-392-5923
Email: Through Canvas

Office Hours

Dr. Jones will have office hours by appointment. Please email to request an appointment, provide **three** potential days/times for the meeting, and Dr. Jones will select one and confirm the selected time. You **must reply to the confirmation email** to finalize the appointment. One-on-one meetings can be via phone or Zoom.

Communication

Dr. Jones communicates primarily through Canvas email and typically responds to emails within 48 hours.

Prerequisites

None

Required Textbook

None.

Course Structure

As an online course, students will then present their chosen paper to an assigned group of fellow students using PowerPoint with voice over. The presenter will post three questions for discussion in that week's discussion board. Each question should be posted **separately!** The rest of the students in the

group will comment and ask questions about the paper content and topics brought up in the presentation.

The questions written by the lead student should reinforce the principles of various research approaches and analytical skills. They should target the major finding(s) of the presented paper and the potential contributions of the paper to the advancement of the scientific field. Every student will lead one discussion over the course of the semester.

The rest of the class is required to read the paper and respond to the lead students questions and discussion threads. The rest of the class will also have the opportunity to respond with their own questions regarding the assigned paper. The presenter is required to participate in the discussion and answer questions.

A new research paper will be presented on Monday of each week. The discussion window for that paper will continue through the end of the week (Saturday). Students have the entire week to contribute to the discussion. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST DAY TO PARTICIPATE.** Doing so does not give the moderator or presenter time to respond. **DO SO WILL NEGATIVELY IMPACT YOUR GRADE.**

Grading

Grading Scale

The cutoffs for letter grades will be as follows:

Grading Scale			
	Percentage		Percentage
A	93.0 - 100%	C	72.0 - 75.99%
A-	89.0 - 92.99%	C-	69.0 - 71.99%
B+	86.0 - 88.99%	D+	66.0 - 68.99%
B	82.0 - 85.99%	D	62.0 - 65.99%
B-	79.0 - 81.99%	D-	59.0 - 61.99%
C+	76.0 - 78.99%	E	58.99% and below

**Grade rounding will be done as outlined above.

**UFs current grading policies can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Below is the breakdown of how the different course components are weighted. Beneath the tables are explanations about each component.

Research Paper Presentation (45% of grade)

You will summarize your selected paper in a PowerPoint presentation. In this presentation you will cover the important background information, state the hypothesis and objectives of the research, outline the methods used, summarize the major findings of the paper, critically analyze the authors' conclusions based on the data, and the contribution of the finding to the field. Your presentation will be posted in the discussion board no later than Monday of your presentation week. The discussion board will open on Sunday if you would like to post early. This is not required and is made available for the convenience of students who have limited time during the week.

Discussion Leadership Questions (15% of grade)

Also on Monday of your presentation week, you will post three discussion questions about the paper you presented. You will monitor responses from your fellow students, respond to questions from the group and work to keep the conversation going. If related, but tangential topics are brought up, those discussions are fine as long as they remain scientific and somewhat related to the paper topic.

Discussion Participation (40% of your final grade)

It is required that each student read the papers presented by the other students in their group, post answers to the questions provided by the student leading discussion that week and participate in the discussion of the paper. The key to success in this aspect of your grade is POST, POST, POST!!! Your grade for this section will be based on whether you are posting to the discussion board with relevant threads or questions about that week's material. You may also post your own questions, but will only receive full credit if you are involved in discussion.

I will be moderating the discussions and keeping track of who does and does not participate. Posts will be assessed at the end of each week, and points will be assigned. Posts will be graded on quality, not quantity. One post is not enough...this is a discussion. A single post will only earn you half credit for that week, at best. To earn full credit, you must post multiple times, discuss the material, and respond to other students' comments. Please avoid posting a few hours before the window closes, as your team leader and other members of your group will likely not be able to reply. The objective of these posts are to engage with other students, which cannot happen if you wait until the last minute. **Therefore, last-minute posts may negatively affect your grade.**

Library access

The university library has access to the majority of medical and scientific journals as well as a variety of virology and microbiology textbooks in electronic format. UF students can access these resources through the UF libraries website (<http://library.health.ufl.edu>). However, students must be on the UF network (on-campus or remotely through the UF VPN). Instructions for accessing the UF VPN are provided on the course Canvas page.

Attendance and Make-up Policy

Given the asynchronous, online nature of this course, formal attendance will not be taken. However, it is expected that students watch each posted lecture and complete all readings, assignments, quizzes and exams. Exam and assignment make-ups and extensions will only be provided for reasons that constitute

an excused absence include: Family emergencies (e.g. death or serious injury in the immediate family), special curricular requirements, military obligations, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities. For all absences, documentation **MUST** be provided (doctor's note, notification of military service, etc.). Further information regarding make-up exams, assignments, and other work can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Students With Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Evaluations can be completed through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself and are bound to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit 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."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g., assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to the appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

In-Class Recordings

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are: (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of that presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include student presentations, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), private conversations between students in the class, or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

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.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center and Student Mental Health Services provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.
- University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF

Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
- Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.
- On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

Course Overview