

**ALS 5905 – Journal Club**  
**Syllabus for Fall 2021 Semester**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Ozgur Batuman, UF/IFAS Southwest Florida Research and Education Center (SWFREC), Immokalee, FL. Email: [obatuman@ufl.edu](mailto:obatuman@ufl.edu)

**Teaching Assistant:**

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**Meeting Time and Location:**

Friday, 3 to 4 PM, Conference Room A, Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, Immokalee, FL. Note that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and to comply with UF and CDC regulations, meetings will be via Zoom and/or Teams virtual meeting until further notice. (Subject to change based on availability of students, determined prior to the semester).

**Credit Hour(s):** 1

**Max # students:** 10 (in person, and no limit in virtually)

**Prerequisites:** No prerequisites are required

**Course Summary:**

This course is intended to improve graduate student's data interpretation and critical review. In this course, the students will critically evaluate most recent scientific papers, discussing the merit, writing style, data presentation, and results, making constructive criticism to improve the manuscript quality and increase scientific writing performance. In order to obtain graduate credit for this course, the students must complete a presentation and a critical review of journal articles in their research area. This will be done at a weekly meeting time and attendance of all SWFREC graduate students is required. To begin, we will meet to discuss how to critically review a recently published article. Then, the instructor will present a critical review to students as an example. The instructor will then help each of the students select articles to present and critically analyze in a journal club format. Active participation of each student will be encouraged.

**Objectives:**

- Develop critical thinking skills
- Improve academic presentation skills
- Exposure to newly developing scientific knowledge and methodologies

**Course Structure:**

Weekly classes:

Scientific article analysis

A Journal Club is a group of individuals who meet regularly to critically evaluate recent scientific articles chosen by the instructors and students. The paper will be sent by email one week in advance. The students are responsible for reading the paper and performing merit evaluation, checking the writing quality (grammar and style), data presentation, and interpretation of results. Students should evaluate the publication critically and prepare questions/comments for the discussion. Each week, one student will be presenting the paper of his/her choice, presenting the study goals and/or objectives, commenting about relevant background information, and summarizing the methodology, results, and conclusions. All class participants will ask questions and engage in the discussion.

**Grading:**

Grading will be based on class attendance and participation. For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Class attendance:**

Class attendance is mandatory. If you plan to miss a class, please inform the instructor or the teaching assistant in advance. Three or more unexcused absences will constitute a failing grade for the course.

### **Recommended Readings and Textbooks:**

- <https://www.aacc.org/publications/clinical-chemistry/the-journal-club>
- <https://www.leafscience.org/tag/journal-club>
- <http://hgsa.uga.edu/jc.html>
- Sharma, R. 2011. Journal Club: A Step towards Evidence Based Practice. Journal of the Indian Association of Public Health Dentistry, 17: 84-88 ([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271844475\\_Journal\\_Club\\_A\\_Step\\_towards\\_Evidence\\_Based\\_Practice](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271844475_Journal_Club_A_Step_towards_Evidence_Based_Practice)).
- Valentini, R.P. and Daniels, S.R. 1997. The journal club. Postgraduate Medical Journal, 73(856): 81-5 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2431212/pdf/postmedj00146-0019.pdf>)
- Heard, S.B. 2016. The scientist's guide to writing. Princeton University Press. Princeton, NJ, USA.

### **Tentative Schedule of Classes** (Subject to change)

Date	Topic
Aug. 27	Course overview
Sep. 3	Example presentation by the instructor or TA
Sep. 10	Scientific article analysis
Sep. 17	Scientific article analysis
Sep. 24	Scientific article analysis
Oct. 1	Scientific article analysis
Oct. 8	Scientific article analysis
Oct. 15	Scientific article analysis
Oct. 22	Scientific article analysis
Oct. 29	Scientific article analysis
Nov. 5	Scientific article analysis
Nov. 12	Scientific article analysis
Nov. 19	Scientific article analysis
Nov. 26	Scientific article analysis
Dec. 3	Scientific article analysis

### **Academic Honesty**

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself 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." 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 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>.

### **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. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides 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.

- *University Counseling & Wellness Center*, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575,

- [www.counseling.ufl.edu/cw](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cw)

- Counseling Services

- Groups and Workshops

- Outreach and Consultation

- Self-Help Library

- Training Programs

- Community Provider Database

- *Career Resource Center*, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)