

BISC 193 (Introduction to Research I), Fall 2023

*For the past 5 semesters, this seminar class has been conducted online via synchronous Zoom sessions rather than in-person. Based on Learning Evaluation polling and informal discussions with students and faculty speakers, the online format was thought to be quite effective. In addition, the class increased substantially in size when it was added to the requirements for Biological Sciences majors. **For these reasons, and to protect our collective, the class will again be conducted online this semester (Fall 2023).** I hope that you will agree with previous students that this format provides an interesting and valuable experience. –Dr. Herrera*

Catalog Description

A series of lectures and discussions in which faculty of the department introduce their research activities to students in biology-related majors. Instruction Mode: Lecture. Grading Option: Credit/No Credit. 1 Unit.

Overview / Learning Objectives

One of the greatest advantages of studying at a research university is the opportunity to be taught, advised, and mentored by faculty members whose activities include creating new knowledge in their fields. This course will give students a chance to meet some of these faculty members, hear about their research, ask questions, and perhaps establish mentoring or advising relationships that will benefit students' career development. It is also designed to facilitate students' involvement in faculty-mentored research, i.e., finding positions in research laboratories. The course is intended for students at any level who are majoring in Biological Sciences, Human Biology, Quantitative Biology, Neuroscience, Health and Human Sciences, Health and Humanity, Environmental Science and Health, Human Development and Aging, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Studies, and other programs with a life science emphasis. It will be valuable for students interested in careers in the health professions.

Instructor

Professor Albert Herrera, Neurobiology Section, Department of Biological Sciences

Contact Information: aherrera@usc.edu, telephone (213) 740-9177

Office hours: By appointment, via Zoom. Please email Dr. Herrera with times you would be available to meet.

Course Format

The course consists of twelve 50-minute seminars, on Tuesdays, 11:00-11:50 am (U.S. Pacific Time). All seminars will be presented via live Zoom video conferencing. Links to the Zoom meetings will be posted on Blackboard (blackboard.usc.edu). Seminars will be recorded and archived on Blackboard. **Because grading will be based primarily on students' participation (see below), attending and engaging in the live seminar is essential.** We will not meet on August 24 to give students time to acclimate to the new semester, nor on November 30 to give students extra time to prepare for final exams and assignments in other classes. Each meeting will consist of a seminar given by a faculty member, with time reserved for students' questions and comments.

Schedule (the schedule will be updated as necessary)

Wk	Date	Speaker	Title (<i>italicized titles are approximate</i>)
1	Aug 22	----- no class -----	-----
2	Aug 29	Albert Herrera	Introduction to undergraduate research, part 1
3	Sep 05	Albert Herrera	Introduction to undergraduate research, part 2
4	Sep 12	Albert Herrera	Introduction to undergraduate research, part 3
5	Sep 19	TBD	-----
6	Sep 26	TBD	-----
7	Oct 03	TBD	-----
8	Oct 10	TBD	-----
9	Oct 17	TBD	-----
10	Oct 24	TBD	-----
11	Oct 31	TBD	-----
12	Nov 07	TBD	-----
13	Nov 14	TBD	-----
14	Nov 21	TBD	-----
15	Nov 28	----- no class -----	-----

**These titles are tentative.*

Textbooks

- There is no assigned textbook. Supplemental reading material will be posted on Blackboard.

Blackboard <https://blackboard.usc.edu/>

- All course materials, information, and announcements will be posted on Blackboard until the end of the semester. Blackboard is to be used only for appropriate, course-related activities.

Grading

- Assigned grades will be Credit or No Credit. No letter grades will be assigned.
- ***Grading will be based on each student's engagement with the lecture presentations, judged primarily by asking of pertinent questions, discussion, and attentiveness. While credit is not given for solely for attendance, attendance is obviously necessary for participation. There will be no exams.***
- At about the midpoint of the semester, each student will receive a brief report on their class standing.
- Credit will only be given for the items listed above. No extra credit will be given.

Impairments Affecting Your Performance

- Students occasionally encounter difficulties that affect their academic performance, such as illness, accidents, bereavement, depression, anxiety, learning disabilities, and other problems. If you encounter such difficulties, please contact one of the support services listed below, or bring them to the attention of one of the instructors. We may be able to offer accommodations. All such discussions will be confidential. Please seek help as soon as you feel your performance or well-being is affected.

Support Services

- Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents as soon as possible. Reporting such incidents is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. A list of offices to which one can report such incidents, as well as sources of support for other issues, follows.

- Student Health Counseling Services (213) 740-7711 – on call 24/7 engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255 – on call 24/7 suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
- Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (213) 740-9355 – on call 24/7
sites.google.com/usc.edu/rsvpclientservices/home. Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.
- Office of Equity and Diversity - Title IX (213) 740-5086 equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.
- Bias Assessment Response and Support (213) 740-7619 lgbtqplus.usc.edu/resources/bias-incident-reporting/. Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.
- Office of Student Accessibility Services (213) 740-0776 osas.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs. Please see section below entitled “Students with Disabilities” for important course-specific information.
- Campus Support and Intervention (213) 821-4710 campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students, faculty, and staff in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success and wellbeing.
- Diversity at USC (213) 740-2101 diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.
- USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – on call 24/7 dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.
- USC Department of Public Safety (Non-Emergency) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu. Non-emergency assistance or information.

Resources on academic integrity standards, policies, and expectations:

1. Academic Integrity: sjacs.usc.edu/students/academic-integrity/
2. Guide for Avoiding Plagiarism: <https://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=234929&p=1559180>
3. Overview of Academic Integrity: chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnibpcjpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fsjacs.usc.edu%2Ffiles%2F2015%2F11%2F%2FAcademic-Integrity-sheet-2013.pdf&clen=499145
4. Tutorial on Academic Integrity: https://uslibraries.usc.edu/tutorials/avoiding-plagiarism/story_html5.html
5. SCampus (see Part B, paragraph 11): <http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>
6. Scientific Misconduct: ooc.usc.edu/research-compliance/scientific-integrity/

Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with the *Office of Disability Services and Programs* (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP and should be delivered to Prof. Herrera early in the semester. For more information, you can visit the DSP office in GFS 120 (8:30-5:00, M-F), call at 213-740-0776, email at ability@usc.edu, or go to their website: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html.

Policies Concerning Student-Athletes

Student-athletes may not be penalized when University-sanctioned competitions conflict with course activities. When a class will be missed for a sanctioned competition, it is the student-athlete's responsibility to approach the instructor in advance. The student-athlete must provide the instructor with an official letter from Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS, <https://saas.usc.edu/academic-support-services/travel/>). The letter must certify that the competition is a University-sponsored event that deserves accommodation. Accommodations will not be made for other types of conflicting events. Details on the University's policy can be found at <http://www.usc.edu/admin/provostoffice/ocaaa/guidelines.html>. Arrangements for the accommodation must be agreed upon in advance of the event. If multiple team members will be absent, each must make an individual arrangement with the instructor.

Email Communication

To ensure privacy, only students' USC accounts (*usc.edu* domain name) can be used for email communications regarding confidential matters. Students are responsible for understanding the content of official messages sent to their USC accounts.

Emergency Preparedness / Course Continuity

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* (<http://emergency.usc.edu/> or 213-740-9233) will provide information related to safety and course continuity. We expect that instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. Alternative assignments may be given if classes are canceled for prolonged periods. If you have not already done so, please register with TrojansAlert (<https://trojansalert.usc.edu/>) to facilitate communication during emergencies.