

## BISC 194 (Introduction to Research II), Spring 2025

### Catalog Description

A series of lectures and discussions in which distinguished USC faculty members introduce their research to students. 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 research, i.e., 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](mailto: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 thirteen 50-minute seminars, on Tuesdays, 11:00-11:50 am (U.S. Pacific Time). All seminars will be presented in-person in SLH 200. **Because grading will be based primarily on students' participation (see below), attending and engaging the seminars are essential.** We will not meet on August 27 to give students time to acclimate to the new semester, nor on December 3 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. Most speakers will welcome questions and comments at any time during their presentations.

### Schedule (the schedule will be updated as necessary)

Date	Speaker	Title ( <i>italicized titles are approximate</i> )
Jan 14	----- no class -----	-----
Jan 21	Albert Herrera	Introduction to undergraduate research, part 1
Jan 28	Albert Herrera	Introduction to undergraduate research, part 2
Feb 04	Albert Herrera	Introduction to undergraduate research, part 3
Feb 11	TBN	
Feb 18	TBN	
Feb 25	TBN	
Mar 04	TBN	
Mar 11	TBN	
Mar 25	TBN	
Apr 01	TBN	

	Apr 08	TBN	
	Apr 15	TBN	
	Apr 22	TBN	
	Apr 29	----- no class -----	-----

*\*These titles are tentative.*

### Textbooks

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

### Brightspace <https://brightspace.usc.edu/>

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

### Grading

- There will be no exams. Grading will be based on each student's engagement and participation with the speakers' presentations. Engagement will be assessed in two ways:
  1. During the presentation, you may ask or answer questions or make comments. Most of our guest speakers will welcome your participation. If you choose this option, submit a summary of your questions/comments via Brightspace.
  2. After the presentation, submit your questions or comments via Brightspace. Professor Herrera will review these submissions to judge their relevance. The most interesting submissions will be forwarded to the speakers.
- Of course, students can participate via both options if they wish. ***In either case, the submissions via Brightspace will be due by 11:59 pm on the Thursday after the presentation.***
- While credit will not be given solely for attendance, attendance is obviously necessary for participation. Assigned grades will be Credit or No Credit. No letter grades will be assigned.

### 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.
- Counseling Services & Crisis Intervention: (213) 740-9355 [safety.usc.edu/resources/counseling/](https://safety.usc.edu/resources/counseling/)
- 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: call 988, text to 988, or go to [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org) Live, judgment-free help is available 24/7/365.

- Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (213) 740-9355, call anytime. <https://sites.usc.edu/clientservices/>. Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm.
- Office of Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (213) 740-5086 [eeotix.usc.edu](http://eeotix.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.
- LGBTQ+ Student Center (213) 740-7619 [lgbtqplus.usc.edu](http://lgbtqplus.usc.edu). Provide support, education, advocacy, and community for all undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Southern California with an emphasis on students across the spectra of gender and sexuality.
- Office of Student Accessibility Services (213) 740-0776 [osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu). OSAS supports and accommodates 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) 740-0411 [campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu). Assists students, faculty, and staff in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success and wellbeing.
- USC Emergency UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu). Non-emergency assistance or information.
- If you have not already done so, please register with TrojansAlert ([dps.usc.edu/services/trojans-alerts/](http://dps.usc.edu/services/trojans-alerts/)) to facilitate communication during emergencies.

#### **Resources on academic integrity standards, policies, and expectations:**

1. The USC Student Handbook: <https://policy.usc.edu/studenthandbook/>
2. Guide for Avoiding Plagiarism: <https://libguides.usc.edu/c.php?g=234929&p=1559180>
3. Tutorial on Avoiding Plagiarism: [https://usclibraries.usc.edu/tutorials/avoiding-plagiarism/story\\_html5.html](https://usclibraries.usc.edu/tutorials/avoiding-plagiarism/story_html5.html)
4. Scientific Misconduct: [ooc.usc.edu/research-compliance/scientific-integrity/](http://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 Student Accessibility Services* (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved

accommodations can be obtained from OSAS and should be delivered to Prof. Herrera early in the semester. For more information, you can visit the OSAS office in GFS 120 (8:30-5:00, M-F), call at 213-740-0776, email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu), or go to their website: [osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu).

### **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. 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.