

BISC 544 Advanced Reading in Molecular Biology (2 units or 1 unit depending on the section)

Meetings:

Thursday 4pm-4:50pm (Journal club), RRI 101

Friday 12pm-12:50pm (Seminar), RRI 101

Course director: Xianrui Cheng

Office: RRI 119B

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Course Objectives: The course objectives are to advance the training of molecular biology PhD students in reading primary journal articles. Emphasis will be on honing critical reading skills.

Format:

1. General organization:

- The course director will organize the weekly Molecular and Computational Biology (MCB) seminar series.
- The course director will recruit a faculty member each week to run a journal club.
- For the weeks when a MCB speaker will visit, the host for the speaker will run the journal club, and the paper will be from the speaker. Interested students can then meet with the speaker, ideally at shared lunch.
- If the faculty member hosting the seminar speaker has already run one journal club that semester, then running additional journal clubs is optional, but encouraged.

2. Specific sections:

The course offers two sections for two mutually exclusive sets of students.

Section 1 (available only to first-year PhD students, 2 units)

1. Pre-seminar journal club

- Students meet for weekly journal clubs discussing relevant work by the upcoming MCB seminar speaker.
- Participation in journal club activities is required for receiving credit for this section.

2. MCB seminar

- Students are required to attend the weekly MCB seminar to receive credit for this section.
- Each student should submit a summary of the seminar to the course director.

Section 2 (available only to second-year or more senior PhD students, 1 unit)

1. MCB seminar

- Students are required to attend the weekly MCB seminar to receive credit for this section.
- Each student should submit a summary of the seminar to the course director.

Grading: Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

Letter grade Corresponding numerical point range

A 95-100

A- 90-94

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82

C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Statement on University Academic and Support Systems

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate](#)- and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems:

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[CARE-SC: Confidential Advocacy, Resources, and Education Support Center](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7/365 on call.

Confidential advocates, prevention educators, and professional counseling teams work to promote a universal culture of consent, and prevent and respond to gender- and power-based harm. Services available to all USC students at no cost.

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-2500

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[USC Emergency Information](#)

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](#)

For 24 hour emergency assistance or to report a crime: UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323)-442-1000.
For 24 hour non-emergency assistance or information: UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: 323-442-1200.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.