

# MCB 130 Spring 2006

## INFORMATION and PROCEDURES

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY and KEEP

## Welcome to MCB 130 from the entire team.

This handout has important information concerning procedures, contact information, and grading. There are no evening exams. There is no early or late scheduling of any test including the final. Each test is given only once to everyone at the same time to be fair to all.

The first discussion section meetings are held during the second week of class. Attendance is taken in discussion sections. Also there are tests in discussion sections and these points count. To switch from an assigned discussion section to another you must obtain written permission from the GSI of the section you want to go to. They will notify the original GSI that you will no longer be in their section.

Students who require special accommodations must present them within the first two weeks of class.

### Text: Alberts et al., fourth edition 2002 Molecular Biology of the Cell

This is one of the most complete up-to-date texts in cell biology. Moreover parts of it are available on line. However, it often gives more detail than is needed in an introductory course and sometimes less. The **emphasis** in this course is on the material given in lecture and handouts/readers. The text is primarily used as a reference for you to look things up, both to fill in details that you missed in lecture and fill in an area beyond our notes for your own benefit. The first 5 chapters can also be useful in reminding you of essential background that you may have forgotten. Rely first on the handouts and readers and then on your notes. **This text is useful for several courses and can be used for a reference for many years.** Use the text, discussion sections and office hours to answer questions.

It is possible to use the text on line: go to

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/bv.fcgi?call=bv.View..ShowTOC&rid=mboc4.TOC&depth=2>

then type a keyword like "cytoskeleton" or "membrane" into the search box. We have not been able to get an interactive table of contents for the entire book but if someone does figure out how to do this we will let you know.

## Lecture Notes

Lecture notes will be available on line before lecture at the MCB course website. You will be given the user name and password to access the notes.

## ADVICE FROM INSTRUCTORS

A biochemistry course such as MCB 102 or MCB 100 is **required background**.

The single most important element in doing well with this material is keeping up to date. Reviewing your handouts/reader before the next lecture and looking at the assigned reading the same day as the lecture has proven to make an enormous difference in the final result. Do not hesitate to ask the instructors questions. **Each lecture in turn uses the material in previous lectures.** . Since we assume you have mastered the previous material, it is easy to get left behind if you do not master the handout/reader as we go along. **Also there are regular small tests in discussion sections and these points count.**

PLEASE ASK QUESTIONS IN SECTION AND OFFICE HOURS. We will be happy to answer them. The best time to ask them is after reviewing your notes, hopefully you will be doing so sometime soon after each lecture. **Email should only be used for administrative purposes, not for questions on course content.**

**Letters of recommendation:** Any of the three instructors may be approached for a letter of recommendation and are quite willing to provide a written evaluation for this purpose. So that we may prepare effective evaluations we ask that you follow the procedure outlined here. Be sure to attend at least 2 of the instructor's office hours. In addition, ask your discussion section teaching assistant to write a brief note about your participation in section to the instructor. Sometime after the end of the course, request an interview with the instructor and bring a xerox of your complete transcript and a personal history and statement of purpose along with any recommendation forms that need to be filled in.

## COURSE MECHANICS

- I. **Grading and tests.** 400 points total.
- II. In Discussion Section, tests are given that total 30 points this semester. There are one quiz during each third of the course. The questions asked in these quizzes are written by your discussion section GSI and graded by them. **The timing of these quizzes is entirely at the discretion of your GSI. There are no make-ups or regrading for these quizzes.**
- III. Midterms: 90 points each . The two Midterms (**Feb 22 and April 5**) are on announced firm dates. These are given in the regular class period in VLSB 2050. The two Midterms, three Quizzes and the Final are on announced firm dates. Grades will be posted as soon as possible in announced locations.

- IV. There are no make-ups for any of the quizzes, midterms or finals. Students will not be penalized for missing midterms if **BOTH** of the following conditions are met:
- a. The student makes the request in writing, no later than 2 days after the date of the midterm, and provides acceptable reasons for missing the exam. The request must be supported by appropriate documentation eg a doctor's note. Examples of acceptable excuses for a missed examination are incapacitating illness or accident or a serious illness or death in the immediate family.  
**Professional or Medical school interviews should not be arranged for Midterm dates since such interviews are not regarded as an acceptable excuse.**
  - b. The midterm that was missed is completed satisfactorily as a take-home problem set, which can be completed with the aid of notes and texts. This will be due in the hands of the relevant instructor no later than 5 p.m. of the third day after the midterm was given. To be completed satisfactorily, the student's score on the take-home test must be at or above the class median for the examination. If the exam is completed satisfactorily and the excuse was acceptable, the missed exam will not count against the student's final grade, i.e. the student's final grade in the course will be based on his/her performance on the other midterm and the final examination. If the missed exam is not completed satisfactorily as a problem set, or if the excuse was not acceptable, a score of zero will be assigned, and this zero score will be averaged with the student's scores on the other examinations when the final grade is determined. An incomplete will be granted if the final is missed for an acceptable and documented reason (see below).
- V. **Final: 190 points.** The final includes material from all sections of the course with the correct emphasis on the last third. We only give the final once at the announced official time, there is no early or late scheduling for any reason..
- VI. **Regrading.** The Midterms will be handed back and may be subject to regrading only if substantial errors are found. All regarding requests must be submitted in writing with a detailed explanation of the specific questions and items you are contesting. We reserve the right to regrade the entire exam. Quizzes and the final exam are not regraded. Midterms are routinely xeroxed before they are handed back and if an alteration is found on an exam question for which regrading is requested, the student will automatically be assigned a zero for that entire test and the Office of Student Conduct will be notified. Copying another's answers during an exam and other forms of cheating will result in the same penalties. The Final can not be handed back as it is part of your record, but can be examined on request in the presence of a GSI during the first week of the next semester.

VII. **Incompletes.** See Professor Cande on or before May 5th if you wish to request an incomplete. These requests are rarely granted and only for exceptional cases of prolonged illness or truly exceptional documented family emergencies that extend over long periods of time. If an incomplete has been granted you can obtain an “I” Grade Report Form and instructions on their use in 2083 VLSB.