MCB 141 Developmental Biology Discussion Syllabus
Spring 2015

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Course websites: https://bcourses.berkeley.edu/courses/1297621 and http://mcb.berkeley.edu/courses/mcb141/index.html

MCB and IB seminar calendars:
MCB: http://events.berkeley.edu/index.php/calendar/sn/mcb.html
IB: http://events.berkeley.edu/index.php/calendar/sn/ib.html

Discussion sections:
101: Monday, 2-3 PM, 250 Dwinelle (Jo)
102: Wednesday, 1-2 PM, 2011 VLSB (Rachel)
103: Wednesday, 8-9 AM, 209 Dwinelle (Rachel)
104: Friday, 12-1 PM, 2066 VLSB (Jo)

Office hours:
Jo: Monday, 3-4 PM, 105 GPB
Rachel: Thursday, 1-2 PM, 105 GPB

Deadline to drop: Friday, January 30th
Deadline to change grading option: Friday, April 3rd

Welcome to Developmental Biology! This syllabus outlines policies and goals intended to make our semester productive and efficient.

Section goals
Sections are meant to supplement lectures. This is a place for you to ask questions, work with your classmates to understand concepts, demonstrate your knowledge, and practice applying it. Our job in section is to answer questions, clarify concepts that may be unclear, guide you in problem solving, review course material, and be the liaison between you and the professors. We will provide handouts that contain general review information as well as practice problems that will help you with exams. These handouts will be posted on bCourses; however they are not a substitute for attending lectures or sections.

Attendance and participation
Attendance is mandatory. If you miss a section please ask a friend or email us to make sure you didn't miss any important announcements, and try to go to one of the other sections. Please only attend your assigned section. If you cannot make your assigned section, switch it on TeleBears.
Participation is critical to getting the most out of this course! Participation will count towards 20 points of your final course grade, so make sure you find a way to participate that works for you. This can take the form of asking questions, answering questions posed to the class, helping classmates, presenting ideas, coming to office hours, etc.
Exams and grading

Exam 1: Tuesday February 17, 11:10 AM-12:30 PM
Exam 2: Thursday April 2, 11:10 AM-12:30 PM
Final: Thursday May 14, 8 AM-11 AM, 2040 VLSB

Exams are based on lecture material, so it’s important to go to the lecture.

Course points total 500. Midterms are 100 points each and the final is 200 points. 100 points come from the discussion section. You will be graded on participation (20/100 total points), written assignments (30/100) and quizzes (50/100 total points).

Quizzes (50 points) There will be six short quizzes worth 10 points each over the course of the semester, with the lowest grade being dropped at the end. There will be no quiz makeups. Quizzes will be handed back in section. Answer keys will be posted on bCourses after quizzes have been taken, and answers can be discussed in section if time permits.

Written assignments (30 points). There will be two written assignments. One will be a journal article summary/discussion worth 10 points (1 page, double spaced). This will be due in section the week after it is assigned. More information on this assignment will be posted on bCourses. For the other assignment, you must attend an MCB or IB departmental seminar on developmental biology and write a summary (2 pages, double spaced). Seminars are listed at the URLs at the top of this syllabus, and we’ll try to let you know about upcoming seminars of interest. The seminar summary can be completed at any time during the semester, but it must be turned in during section or office hours by April 24th.

Contact and help

We will do our best to answer questions within 24 hours. If you think your question or questions will take more than 10 minutes to answer, please bring it to us in office hours. We won’t answer emails after 3 PM the day before an exam.

If you need to miss office hours and would still like to meet, we are happy to do so. Email us to set up an appointment. Please do not come find us outside of office hours without scheduling an appointment.

We encourage you to ask lots of questions and see us when you need extra help! This lets us gauge how you are doing in the class and how we can best help you.

If you need accommodations relating to a disability, please see us privately after class or email us about it.

General tips

Form study groups! Use the resources on bCourses to study (like old exams). Take good notes. Draw good diagrams in lecture, and do all practice problems. Review the past week’s lecture notes before coming to section. Don’t hesitate to come to us with questions or if you need extra help. It’s important in this course to learn not only the terminology, but also the experimental logic used to address questions in development. An understanding of how developmental biologists test their hypotheses (and why) is critical to doing well in this course.