Cell 439, Honors Colloquium: 
Seminars in Cell and Molecular Biology

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Course Format and Description:
This course is designed to introduce honors students to a number of current research fields in Cell and 
Molecular Biology through studying published research papers, and via conversations with invited 
speakers. Classes will consist of one two-hour discussion period and one seminar per week. 
Participation will be limited to 10 students. There are two components to this course:

1. Participants will read and discuss scientific papers as preparation for approximately 8 CMB 
research seminars. The CMB department hosts approximately 8 nationally- and internationally-renowned 
researchers per semester; these researchers visit the department, discuss their research with individual 
departmental members, and present their findings in a scientific seminar. In preparation for attendance at 
these seminars, participants will be provided with papers pertaining to the background to the field of 
study, and the speaker's research. Participants will discuss research materials in a journal club format. 
Participants will then attend seminar, and provide a summary of the major scientific advances presented.

2. During weeks when there are no scheduled seminars, participants will prepare to host an invited 
speaker at Tulane toward the end of the semester. In preparation, background reading and literature 
relating to the invited speaker's research interests will be discussed in a journal club format. In 
collaboration with the instructor, participants will host the speaker in an informal setting prior to the 
seminar. Duties will include: meeting with the speaker to interview him or her regarding research 
interests; discussing particular research avenues and future interests; discussing methodologies employed. 
Students will be encouraged to assist in coordinating transport and meals with the invited speaker.

These two activities will run concurrently.

Course objectives:
Through participation in this course, participants will be able to:
   1. Read and understand scientific papers within the fields of cell and molecular biology
   2. Gain understanding of methodologies applied in these fields.
   3. Recognize strengths and weaknesses in research reports.
   4. Create effective written summaries of orally presented research.
   5. Confidently discuss scientific data with established research scientists.

Presentations:
Each week, teams of students will lead discussion of scientific literature in a journal club format. 
Students who are not presenting are required to participate in discussing the relative merits and 
weaknesses of data, methodologies and scientific approaches within each paper.
Grades:
Grades will be based on the following:
1. Presentation of scientific material (40%)
2. Participation in group discussions (30%)
3. Written summaries of research seminars (30%)

Attendance:
Attendance at each class meeting is required.

Syllabus:
To be determined (based on individual seminar speakers).