

ZOO4926/ZOO6927 – Special Topics: Molecular & Cellular Physiology & Development Seminar

Spring 2026 – All Sections

Contact Information

Instructor:

Zepeng Yao

Office: Bartram Hall 521

zepengyao@ufl.edu

For questions about course content, your grade, or other personal issues, please use the Canvas mail tool. If you email directly, please include the course code in the subject and your full name in the body of the email. Expect a response within 48 hours on weekdays.

Course Description

This 1-credit seminar course will feature research presentations by faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduate students studying Physiology or Development using Molecular, Cellular, and/or Genomic approaches.

Presentations will be solicited from the Department of Biology as well as the broader UF research community and will provide an *informal* forum for sharing research ideas and proposals, data at any stage of development, and practice talks in preparation for conferences. Projects using any system (e.g., microbial, fungal, plant, or animal) are welcome.

Course Objectives

The central objectives of this seminar are to:

- Foster identity, community, and collaboration among molecular and cellular physiologists and development biologists.
- Provide a friendly and informal environment for students to share ideas and results.
- Expose students to a diverse range of research projects.
- Provide opportunities for students and trainees to develop scientific presentation skills.

Course Requirements

Textbook

No textbook is required. Some publicly available reading background materials may be provided.

Minimum Technology Requirements

To complete this course, you will need Internet access and an electronic device (laptop, iPad, etc.) to access Canvas.

Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. The most detailed and up-to-date schedule will be provided by the instructor.

Friday: period 8 (3:00–3:50 pm) @ [Carr Hall](#) 222

Dates	Topic
1/16	Research seminar
1/23	Research seminar
1/30	Research seminar
2/6	Research seminar
2/13	Research seminar
2/20	Research seminar
2/27	Research seminar
3/6	Research seminar
3/13	Research seminar
3/20	Spring Break
3/27	Research seminar
4/3	Research seminar
4/10	Research seminar
4/17	Research seminar
4/24	Reading Day

Course Policies

Attendance

Students are required to attend the weekly research seminars in person during class time and to participate in live and/or Canvas-based discussions related to the presentations.

Absences

If you must miss a presentation due to an allowable scheduled absence (for example, participation in a sanctioned university function), you must notify the instructor as soon as the event is scheduled or during the first week of classes. If you miss class due to an allowable but unscheduled absence (e.g., illness), you must contact the instructor as soon as possible. In cases of illness, you must provide a signed note from your primary care provider indicating that you were unable to attend class on the day(s) in question; notes that merely state you were seen in a clinic on a given day are not sufficient.

If you have an excused absence, the instructor will provide an alternative assignment as a make-up.

If you are feeling ill, you are encouraged to seek medical attention at the Student Health Care Center (SHCC): <https://shcc.ufl.edu/>.

Communication Policy

All discussions, emails, and online communication should be respectful and kind. Emails will receive a response within 48 hours on weekdays.

Grading Policy

Course Grading Policy

Assignment Type	Grade Percentage
Seminar attendance	60%
Contribution to discussions	40%

Grading Scale

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
≥ 90.00	A	4.00
86.66 – 89.99	A-	3.67
83.33 – 86.65	B+	3.33
80.00 – 83.32	B	3.00
76.66 – 79.99	B-	2.67
73.33 – 76.65	C+	2.33
70.00 – 73.32	C	2.00
66.66 – 69.99	C-	1.67
63.33 – 66.65	D+	1.33
60.00 – 63.32	D	1.00
56.66 – 59.99	D-	0.67
≤ 56.65	E	0.00

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at [Providing Constructive Feedback](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [GatorEvals](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [GatorEvals Public Results](#). More information about UF's course evaluation system can be found at [GatorEvals – UF's Course Evaluation System](#).

UF Policies

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the [Disability Resource Center](#) (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Etiquette and Communication Courtesy

All class members are expected to follow common courtesy rules in all email messages, discussions, and chats.

Getting Help

Technical Difficulties

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>

- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Health and Wellness

- **U Matter, We Care:** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter We Care](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Visit [UF Counseling & Wellness Center](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- **Student Health Care Center:** Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit [UF Student Health Care Center](#).
- **University Police Department:** Visit [UF Police Department](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- **UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center:** For immediate medical care in Gainesville, call 352-733-0111, or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center](#).
- **GatorWell Health Promotion Services:** For prevention services focused on optimal well-being, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic and Student Support

- **Career Connections Center:** 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services [UF Career Connections Center](#).
- **Library Support:** Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. [UF George A. Smathers Libraries Ask-A-Librarian](#).
- **Teaching Center:** 352-392-2010. General study skills and tutoring: [UF Academic Resources](#).
- **Writing Studio:** 352-846-1138. Help with brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers: [University Writing Program](#).

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

For information about the privacy and accessibility policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Zoom
 - [Zoom Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Zoom Accessibility](#)
- Microsoft
 - [Microsoft Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Microsoft Accessibility](#)
- Adobe
 - [Adobe Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Adobe Accessibility](#)