

Microbiology 8899

Seminar in Microbiology (graduate student presentations)

Fall 2025

Monday, 3:00 pm – 4 pm; practice talks until 4:55 pm

Jennings Hall 355

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Course objectives

All research scientists must be able to present their findings clearly and concisely. This can take many forms: a manuscript, an informal oral presentation in a lab meeting, a presentation at a scientific conference, or a job interview. In each case, you need to identify the key topic you will present, decide which results and techniques are necessary for you to provide a rigorous argument, and present a directed discussion that supports your conclusions.

The seminar format (a 20-minute talk followed by a 10-minute discussion) simulates the “real-life” scenarios at a research conference.

As a speaker, you will learn how to

- distill complex research problems into a format accessible to a diverse audience.
- develop strong arguments and defend your findings, yet be open to criticism.
- answer questions clearly and concisely.
- refine your presentation skills and learn to keep on time.

As an attendee, you will

- Learn about different research areas, techniques, and approaches.
- Broaden your scientific horizons and perhaps identify ways to advance your projects, including through collaboration with your peers.
- Formulate insightful questions.

Course format

All Microbiology graduate students are required to attend this course and participate in the discussion. First-year students will not present. Students from the second year onward will present, up to once per academic year.

During each class, a student presenter will give a 20-minute talk followed by questions from the audience. After the oral presentation, the student scheduled to give the next seminar presentation (typically on the following Monday) will give a practice talk. The instructors and the student scheduled to

present after that will attend the practice talk and give the presenter feedback. The practice talks will also take place in Jennings Hall 355 until 4:55 pm.

Credit: 1 credit hour. The final grade is satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

Course expectations

As a presenter, inform your PhD/MS advisor, well ahead of time, when you will present an 8899 seminar; your advisor will help you decide what data to present.

Let other members of your advisory committee know when you will present, so that they can add this event to their calendars.

Provide a seminar title no later than the Wednesday before your presentation to Emily Webb (<mailto:micro.grad@osu.edu>) and the instructors.

If you plan to use the podium computer in Jennings 355, please bring your presentation on a USB stick. If you want to use your own computer, bring the required adapters. This applies to both days when you are presenting.

Attendance

Every student enrolled in the course is expected to be an active participant. Please refrain from using your electronic devices during the talk.

Attendance will be monitored by a sign-up sheet in front of the classroom. Please arrive at least **5 minutes** before the class starts – late arrivals are rude and disruptive, especially during a short talk. The sign-up sheet will be taken away when the talk starts – thus, a late arrival will count as an absence.

One unexcused absence is allowed, except on the day you are scheduled to present or listen to a practice talk. If a conflict arises, please immediately contact the instructors.

Attendance of an OSU-sponsored research conference constitutes an excused absence. Let the instructors know when you will be absent and what conference you are attending.

For a second unexcused absence, you must provide a one-page summary of another seminar you attended. This summary will need to be approved by either instructor. Contact the instructors if you miss more than two classes without a valid excuse.

Accommodations to join the class remotely will not be made.

At any time, please feel free to contact either of us with any questions you may have.