

**BCHM 49800 Syllabus  
Fall/Spring/Summer 20XX**

**Research in Biochemistry**

**INSTRUCTOR**

Any faculty member in the Department of Biochemistry may assume responsibility for guiding a BCHM 49800 research project. In addition, Purdue faculty in science-related departments outside of the Department of Biochemistry may assume responsibility for supervising a BCHM 49800 project with the approval of the project by the student's academic advisor.

**PREREQUISITES**

BCHM 36100 or equivalent, or consent of instructor.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

BCHM 49800 is intended to provide the opportunity for in-depth, independent, undergraduate research. The students enrolled in this course will learn how to devise hypotheses, design experiments that test their hypotheses, record their data in laboratory notebooks, critically analyze the results of their analyses, and present their findings to others in written form.

- Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in BCHM 49800 and start independent research by your 5<sup>th</sup> semester (beginning of junior year).
  - Laboratory research provides experiential learning that cannot be acquired through formal coursework.
  - Laboratory research provides intensive exposure to modern research techniques, the scientific method, and troubleshooting protocols.
  - Laboratory research provides intensive exposure to specialized fields in biochemistry and current events in the field that cannot be covered in formal coursework.
  - Students who participate in research over the course of multiple semesters gain in-depth exposure to scientific vocabulary, learn to appreciate the variety of approaches that lead to scientific discovery, and can fully appreciate what it means to pursue a career in science.
  
- Students are strongly encouraged to engage in an appropriate and *independent* research project.
  - Students and faculty mentors should work together to identify a project that is commensurate with the student's ability.
  - Students are expected to participate in experimental design, including formulating a hypothesis, generating an experiment to test the hypothesis, formulating appropriate controls, troubleshooting unexpected results and interpreting the final conclusions.
  - Through this experience, students will gain appreciation for discovering knowledge firsthand rather than reading from a textbook.

## BCHM 49800 Syllabus

- Students will gain experience in critical thinking through their undergraduate research project.
  - Students will critically analyze their data for accuracy.
  - Students will critically analyze their research to determine if it appropriately tested their hypothesis.
  - Students will gain analytical and communication skills that are important for most professions that directly and peripherally involve life sciences.

### **DEPARTMENTAL LEARNING OUTCOMES ADDRESSED BY THIS COURSE**

BCHM 49800 students will understand the scientific method. They will be able to develop hypotheses, design experiments, and critically analyze results to create new knowledge.

BCHM 49800 students will communicate scientific knowledge, experiments and conclusions effectively as speakers and writers.

BCHM 49800 students will use scientific instrumentation to evaluate the activity or function of biological macromolecules.

BCHM 49800 students will demonstrate knowledge of analytical and preparative methods that can be applied to biochemistry.

BCHM 49800 students will demonstrate knowledge of accepted safe laboratory practices.

BCHM 49800 students will demonstrate laboratory experience working with a diverse group of individuals as part of a research team.

BCHM 49800 students will demonstrate the ability to organize and document laboratory procedures and results.

BCHM 49800 students will describe research projects in an oral presentation that can be readily understood by a general scientific audience.

BCHM 49800 students will appreciate the ethical issues facing professionals in the life sciences.

### **TEXTBOOK**

There is no assigned textbook for this course. Background information will be largely derived from reviews and the primary scientific literature.

### **LABORATORY TIME AND PLACE**

To be arranged with the course instructor.

### **CREDIT HOURS AND ATTENDANCE**

Students should enroll for a minimum of 2 credits up to a maximum of 4 credits per semester. Students may enroll for a single credit hour with special permission of the course instructor. A minimum of five hours per week in the lab corresponds to 1 unit of credit during a regular 15-week semester. During the 8-week regular summer session, students will earn 1 credit for 10 hours of research per week. During the 4-week Maymester session, students will earn 1 credit for each 20 hours of research per week.

## BCHM 49800 Syllabus

In general, one credit requires approximately 75 hours of research. Any activity relevant to the student's research experience (e.g. attending lab meetings, reading necessary literature, etc.) will count toward the approximately 75 hours of work per credit hour.

Specific hours in the lab should be worked out between the course instructor and the student. In general, students should strive to commit to large blocks of time in the lab (>3 hours) to increase productivity. It is understood that students may sometimes need to change their schedule and make up hours at another time. Advance notice of change of schedule should be given to the course instructor and where applicable, the graduate student, post-doctoral research associate, technician, or research associate who directly supervises the student as a matter of common courtesy. Failure to meet these attendance policies will affect the grade associated with BCHM 49800. BCHM 49800 may not be added after the first week of the semester except with explicit permission of the course instructor. Students who enter the laboratory after the first week are still expected to participate in ~ 75 hours of research per credit hour.

The course instructor will meet with BCHM 49800 students at least once per week to discuss research progress and provide guidance for the next week.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

If you will require special accommodations in BCHM 49800 because of diagnosed disabilities, you are expected to notify the course instructor prior to initiating project so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

### **GRADING**

The assigned grade for BCHM 49800 will necessarily reflect the priorities and expectations of the supervising faculty member. Some suggested guidelines for assigning grades are provided below.

A: Student assumes responsibility for directing project. Demonstrates clear understanding of hypothesis tested and of experimental approaches used to test hypothesis. Student keeps an accurate record of experiments neatly written in a laboratory notebook. Student has no issues with attendance or written assignments.

B: Student has modest understanding of hypothesis tested and of experimental approaches used to test hypothesis. Student keeps an accurate record of experiments neatly written in a laboratory notebook. Student has no issues with attendance or written assignments.

C: Student has modest understanding of hypothesis tested and of experimental approaches used to test hypothesis. Student is not reliable regarding hours in lab or is not reliable in maintaining an accurate lab notebook or has failed to perform acceptably on the written assignments.

D: Student has poor understanding of research project. Student is not reliable regarding hours in lab or is not reliable in maintaining an accurate lab notebook or has failed to perform acceptably on the written assignments.

F: Student fails to grasp basic concepts driving research project. Student has substantial issues regarding hours in lab or in maintaining an accurate lab notebook or has failed to perform acceptably on the written assignments.

## BCHM 49800 Syllabus

Students are strongly advised to ask the course instructor what their expectations are of a BCHM 49800 student. Please keep in mind that expectations are likely to reflect curricular and lab experience of the student.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students will submit a brief 1 page description of the proposed research project to the course instructor by the fifth week of the semester. This description should include a brief background that illuminates the problem of interest, the hypothesis to be tested and a brief summary of the experiments to be used to test the hypothesis. The supervising faculty member and/or a laboratory mentor is encouraged to assist the student in this project.

At the end of the semester, students will submit a 2-5 page paper in Journal of Biological Chemistry format describing their research project, the hypothesis being tested, how the experiments performed addressed their hypothesis, the results of the experiments, whether the results supported or disproved the hypothesis, and future experiments that would further their research project.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Academic misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated in BCHM 49800. Information on Purdue's policies can be found at <http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/integrity.htm>.

To provide you with an unambiguous definition of academic misconduct, the following text has been excerpted from "Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students", written by Stephen Akers, Ph.D., Executive Associate Dean of Students (1995, Revised 1999, 2003), and published by the Office of the Dean of Students in cooperation with Purdue Student Government, Schleman Hall of Student Services, Room 207, 475 Stadium Mall Drive West Lafayette, IN 47907-2050.

"Purdue prohibits "dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty." [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, [University Regulations](#)] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that "the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest." [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972]

More specifically, the following are a few examples of academic dishonesty which have been discovered at Purdue University.

- substituting on an exam for another student
- substituting in a course for another student
- paying someone else to write a paper and submitting it as one's own work
- giving or receiving answers by use of signals during an exam
- copying with or without the other person's knowledge during an exam
- doing class assignments for someone else
- plagiarizing published material, class assignments, or lab reports
- turning in a paper that has been purchased from a commercial research firm or obtained from the internet
- padding items of a bibliography
- obtaining an unauthorized copy of a test in advance of its scheduled administration

## BCHM 49800 Syllabus

- using unauthorized notes during an exam
- collaborating with other students on assignments when it is not allowed
- obtaining a test from the exam site, completing and submitting it later
- altering answers on a scored test and submitting it for a regrade
- accessing and altering grade records
- stealing class assignments from other students and submitting them as one's own
- fabricating data
- destroying or stealing the work of other students

Plagiarism is a special kind of academic dishonesty in which one person steals another person's ideas or words and falsely presents them as the plagiarist's own product. This is most likely to occur in the following ways:

- using the exact language of someone else without the use of quotation marks and without giving proper credit to the author
- presenting the sequence of ideas or arranging the material of someone else even though such is expressed in one's own words, without giving appropriate acknowledgment
- submitting a document written by someone else but representing it as one's own"

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. To get information about changes in this course consult the class Blackboard site or e-mail or phone the instructor.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT**

Purdue University's non-discrimination policy will be upheld in this course. Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life.

Purdue University views, evaluates, and treats all persons in any University related activity or circumstance in which they may be involved, solely as individuals on the basis of their own personal abilities, qualifications, and other relevant characteristics.

For more information, see

[http://www.purdue.edu/policies/pages/human\\_resources/nondisc\\_pol.html](http://www.purdue.edu/policies/pages/human_resources/nondisc_pol.html)

### **IDENTIFICATION OF SUPERVISING FACULTY MEMBERS**

Please see <http://www.ag.purdue.edu/biochem/undergrad/Pages/ResearchOps.aspx> for suggestions on how to identify a supervising faculty research mentor.

### **SAFETY TRAINING**

## BCHM 49800 Syllabus

If students have not already done so, they must complete safety training before they can enroll in BCHM 49800. Review the University's Chemical Hygiene Plan manual and complete the Online Personal Protective Equipment Training:

<https://www.purdue.edu/rem/home/booklets/chp2014.pdf> -- web version of Chemical Hygiene Plan manual

- Print out the form under Appendix A and sign after reading the manual.

<http://www.chem.purdue.edu/chemsafety/Training/PPETrain/ppetonline.htm> -- Online Personal Protective Equipment Training

Students are required to go to this website and read items 2, 3, 5, 8, 10 & 13. The student must click the terms (e.g. "chem/bio gloves") and read the training (and repeat for each item listed above). Once the student has read the item, s/he should check the box. After they have read each one, they must fill out the bottom section of the form, identifying the course instructor as supervisor with first and last name. They should then press "submit", and print the certification that shows up and sign it. This form must be provided to the course instructor who must sign it. The student must deliver the two completed certificates to the BCHM Main Office (120).