**OEB 119: Deep Sea Biology – Discussion Group**

A major part of OEB 119 will be peer led discussions of important primary research (scientific papers) in the field. These papers will reflect and reinforce the material covered in lecture and will illustrate how biology is actually studied in the deep sea environment. These discussions will serve as the class participation portion of your grade for the course.

**TF Contact Information:**

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**Office Hours:**

Mondays 2:30-3:00pm or by e-mail appointment

**Course Website:**find through my.harvard

**Weekly assignment:** Each week you will need to submit the following to the course Discussion Forum by 10pm night before the discussion.

* In one sentence summarize the main finding of the paper. What is the take-away message?
* What is one question you had from the paper? This can be something you did not understand, or something you would like to know more about.
* Optional: any questions that you have from the previous lecture

**Discussion Format:**

* The class will be divided into 2 discussion groups (Mothra and Endeavour) and grouped into teams (#1-8) of 3 or 4 individuals
* Each week one team will present the paper to their discussion group.
* Members of the presenting team will each have a specific role to play (see below) in the discussion. Some roles may be shared by two people.
* Each student will perform each presentation role once throughout the semester.
* A summary of who is playing each roll will be posted on class website weekly by the TFs. **If you know you have to miss one of these discussions please inform the TFs ahead of time so that they can plan accordingly.**

**Presentation Roles:** You will play each role once during the semester.

1. Discussion leader – You are the main facilitator of the discussion. Open the discussion with a brief summary of the paper. Make sure to comment on how the concepts in the paper are relevant to the real world? How the study connects to what we have discussed in lecture. Also, come prepared with a list of questions to guide the discussion, and call on people to answer them. Introduce other presenters at the appropriate time.
* HW: Summarize and evaluate the discussion as a whole. How successful was each part? What did each member of the presenter team contribute? What was done well? What could have been done better?
1. Background Presenter – Presents a 2-5 minute summary of the relevant background information to this paper. What information was available before? What assumptions do the authors make? What are the scientific questions addressed by the authors? What are their hypotheses?
* HW – 1 page response (see options below)
1. Methods Presenter – Presents a 2-5 minute summary of the methods used in the study. What did they do? Should be able to clarify or explain any techniques or terminology that might not be familiar to everyone.
* HW – 1 page response (see options below)
1. Results/Conclusions Presenter – Presents a 2-5 minute summary of the findings of the study. What did they discover? Should be able to explain all graphs or figures.
* HW – 1 page response (see options below)

**Response Topics:** (for the presenting team only)

Choose one of the following options to write on. Responses must be **no more than 1 page**, 12 point font. Papers are due the class following the discussion to the TF’s.

* How is this study relevant to the real world? (Why does it matter?)
* What are the shortcomings of this study?
* How is this study connected to material covered in class?
* Design a follow up experiment.
* You are going to your younger sibling’s middle or high school class to talk about the work carried out in this paper. Explain the major findings and why it matters in a captivating and clear way that they would understand and enjoy.
* Write a short story, poem, or song lyrics that reference, explain, or include the relevant issues, topics, or methods of this study.

**Evaluation**:

Each TF will be responsible for evaluating 2 of the discussion groups throughout the semester. This will be a large portion of your class participation grade for the class. While participation is inherently subjective, you will be evaluated according to the following...

* Attendance
* Active participation in paper discussions
* Timely submission of pre-discussion questions and post-discussion responses
* Quality of written questions and responses
* Team discussion leading