Bacteriology Journal Club Format and Schedule

The journal club is a forum for presentation of original research-in-progress and for scholarly discussion of recently published papers in bacteriology. Both types of talks give speakers an opportunity to hone presentation skills and to practice presenting scientific stories to an interested community of scholars. Similarly, there are opportunities for the audience to ask questions and offer alternate interpretations of the data that can inform our understanding of the recent literature and contribute to each other’s projects.

Research-in-Progress. Research talks are an opportunity to present your latest findings to an interested audience that can help as you pursue further findings. To get the most from this audience:

1. Prepare and practice a 15-20 minute talk to allow sufficient time for questions in the 30-minute time slot.
2. Provide only minimal background. This will vary by person and project, but a suggestion would be to have 1-2 slides on the system, 1-2 slides on where you left off last year, and then proceed directly to your new data. **Do not proceed to repeat data that you presented last year.**
3. Do not present your entire committee meeting or a formal seminar. This is the wrong level of detail for this audience and this time slot, and it does not engage the audience.
4. Actively include the audience. Ask questions where appropriate, and point out specific areas in which you want ideas, feedback, or other assistance.

Journal Presentations. For 2015-2016 we are trying something new. For some of the presentations (denoted by an asterisk on the schedule), the paper to be presented will connect with the seminar speaker for the following week. The speaker will select the paper. For other weeks, the presenter will select a paper in consultation with Mark Mandel. Because we will only have ~10 of these papers during the year, let’s be sure to hit some of the top papers. Additionally, you should not select a paper that is on your organism/genus of study, or on your particular protein of interest, etc. Use this as an opportunity to expand your repertoire. Once you have selected a paper (this can be far in advance), read it thoroughly to ensure that it is a quality paper and not just a quality title. Then send it to Mark to review and discuss before it gets sent out.

For all journal articles email it to the listserv at the address below on the Monday preceding the club. Your presentation should cover the papers that preceded the one you are presenting to put the work in context, as well as to illustrate the path that yielded the results in the paper under study. A good description of the approaches used in the paper is important to share, including specific techniques, but also how the authors approached the question.

Audience Responsibilities. Audience members play an important role in having this be a successful forum. It is expected that students and postdocs will regularly ask questions. This is a critical element in the scientific dialogue. The presenter has dedicated time to presenting their work, they are asking for feedback to improve (or understand fully) the work presented, and your role in the audience is to contribute your interpretations and ideas.

Communication and distribution of papers. A listserv has been established for communicating within the group. To send messages to the entire list, send the message to <MICROJC@listserv.it.northwestern.edu>. The message must come from the email address you used to subscribe to the list (i.e., your Northwestern email address). To subscribe to the list, send your contact information to Mark <m-mandel@northwestern.edu>. For listserv maintenance activities, see <http://www.it.northwestern.edu/listserv/>. Please do not send communications to the entire department.

Scheduling conflicts. Care has been taken to schedule students by year for research talks (5th > 2nd > 3rd), to have each day’s research presentations represent different labs, and to have a mix of research and journal presentations. Review any conflicts with Mark so that swaps can be made within these constraints.