

Seminar Guidelines General Biology

Definition: A seminar is an oral presentation designed to introduce and enlighten the class on a specific topic. Since their purpose is to teach, they go beyond the more traditional “oral reports”. When selecting your topic take into consideration your interest level and the availability of resources. It will be hard to inspire the interest of your classmates, if you have no personal interest in the topic you have selected.

Purpose: There are three major benefits derived from the introduction of seminars into the classroom. First, it is important that every student have the experience of presenting in front of his or her peers. It is my hope that this experience will build confidence, making future public presentations less stressful. Second, a topic is never truly understood until you are forced to explain it to others; therefore, it is important that you select a topic of personal interest. Last, the class benefits from being exposed to scientific topics that lies outside the boundaries of the regimented NC Biology Curriculum.

Requirements:

1. Each student should select a different topic. Assignments are to be made on a first come first serve basis. **I must clear all topics.** Please, no seminars on illegal drugs. Dates will be assigned by lottery, you are expected to be prepared on your assigned date. A schedule with presenter and selected topic will be posted.
2. The minimal time requirement is 20 minutes. This may seem like an eternity at the moment; however, most seminars tend to extend well beyond that time frame.
3. **You cannot read your presentation to the class!** The use of note cards is acceptable; however, limit their content or the temptation to read will be too great.
4. The use of visual aids(video clips, posters, PowerPoint presentations etc.), guest speakers, or a discussion format will reduce the time pressures and add interest to your presentation. Questions from classmates will also be included in the 20-minute session.
6. If you need special equipment such as a TV or a computer for PowerPoint presentations make certain that you sign up for the equipment well in advance of the date your presentation is due. Practice with the equipment, especially computer aids before you do the presentation.
7. Guest speakers must be approved by the Administration **before** you invite them. It would be difficult to tell them they are not welcome, if you have already invited them!
8. This is a very important assignment, which is reflected in its point value. The seminar will be equivalent a test grade. It is my hope that it impacts your grade in a positive way and will be a reflection on your motivation to succeed in this class.