



***BIOL 6024 Current Issues in Cell Biology; CRN 96072
Fall 2001 Poisons as Tools in Cell Biology; Wednesdays 2:30-5:15
Jill C. Sible and Richard Walker, Faculty Facilitators***

Learning will be student-directed, and the course will operate in a journal club format. Students and faculty facilitators will investigate a focused concept in basic cell biology through an in-depth review and critique of seminal papers. This semester, we will investigate the use of naturally occurring toxins that inhibit specific cellular processes. We will identify classic papers in which these poisons were first used to make fundamental discoveries of cellular mechanisms as well as contemporary papers that illustrate how these toxins continue to contribute to scientific discovery in emerging areas of cell biology. Students will lead class discussions. As the final exam, students will be given a set of figures (data) and will write a research paper with this information.

Student learning objectives:

***How to critique a scientific paper:* Through this activity, students will improve their own skills in designing experiments with appropriate controls and interpretations.**

***How to lead a group discussion:* Students will improve their speaking and leadership skills through this exercise.**

***How to participate in a scientific discussion:* Students will learn how to make their opinions heard in a professional manner.**

***How to write a scientific paper:* Students will learn how to organize a set of data into a logical, interesting, and accurate story.**

Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated based on their presentation and review, participation in weekly discussion and final paper.

For more information, contact Jill Sible (siblej@vt.edu) or Richard Walker (rawalker@vt.edu)