

## **Discussion Board for Bio 367**

**(accessed through the “Communications” button on Blackboard)**

1. On Saturday before a discussion, leaders should enter the forum for that discussion and start a thread by entering 3-4 questions for discussion.
2. By 9 pm the Sunday before discussion, each person should “reply” to the starting thread with a paragraph (~150-200 words) describing either:
  - What you found the **most interesting** about the article(s) and why.
  - **Question(s)** raised by the article(s) that you would like to discuss and your preliminary thoughts.
3. Before class, the discussion leaders should read everyone’s comments. The easiest way to get all the comments in one document is to go to the thread you started, click on all the boxes and hit “collect” (to gather everyone’s comments); you can then print them out or read them on your computer screen.

**The main role of the discussion leaders is to give background about the paper (what question are they asking, what was already known about the system), to describe major techniques, to get the ball rolling in discussion of the figures/results, and then at the end to sum up the major findings and mention briefly what would be good follow-up experiments and/or what has been discovered about the system since the paper was published. I would recommend that you divide your explanations in chunks (e.g. one person does background, one person explains major techniques etc.) rather than bouncing back and forth in the more "presentation" part of the discussion.**

**The goal is to find a format in which everyone is adding to the discussion in class--asking questions, offering ideas, and making connections between different ideas. To help move toward this goal, I hope that everyone will ask questions when they have them (by raising a hand, not by interrupting someone mid-sentence). Don't worry if you think that you "should" know the answer or that "everyone else understands" the ideas we are discussing. In all likelihood, if you have a question, someone else has the same or a related question but may not be able to phrase it. In addition, if we are moving too fast, you should feel free to request that someone repeat or rephrase an idea.**

**Eventually I hope that we will be able to discuss the papers as a group--with one person's comments leading to ideas from someone else, rather than ideas always being bounced off the presenters--but it may take some time for that group dynamic to develop. As presenters, it would probably be helpful for you to bring in questions to help stimulate discussion, but don't feel you have to ask all your questions if there's already a lively discussion. Also, a little of bit of silence is OK--don't feel you have to fill gaps--it can take time for people to phrase their thoughts.**