

# Journal Club Seminar

## PHYS 5041: Spring 2009

**Time:** 9:30 -10:20 am, Fridays in January and Wednesdays rest of the Semester.

**Place:** PHYS-133

**Final Exam:** May 2, 9:00 am –10:00 am, Discussion/Summary, Room 133.

**Web:** <http://physics.uark.edu/journal/>

**Instructors:** Raj Gupta

Office: PHYS-240

Tel: 575-5933; e-mail: [rgupta@uark.edu](mailto:rgupta@uark.edu)

Office Hours: Open door. If I am not in my office, look in Room 135.

Reeta Vyas

Office: PHYS-210

Tel: 575-6569; e-mail: [rvas@uark.edu](mailto:rvas@uark.edu)

Office Hours: Tu Th 9:30 – 10:30 am, and walk-in.

**Course Objective:** The goal of the course is to develop oral communication skills in the students. Students will also learn effective literature search techniques.

**Course Format:** Each week one of the students will present a seminar based on a published article. The article may be in a magazine such as, *Physics Today*, *American Scientist*, or *Scientific American*. Each student will also write a short report on the topic. Other students will be asked to critique the talk for the benefit of the speaker. Students will also learn effective literature search techniques.

**Report:** Each student will write a short (3-4 pages ideal, not to exceed 6 pages) on the topic of the presentation. The report should not be just a printout of your PowerPoint presentation. The report should include the following: What was the objective of the research, what was done, how it was done, what were the results, and what were the conclusions. The report should be submitted two days before the presentation electronically to both the instructors, which will be distributed to all students.

**Presentation:** Each week one student will make a presentation. You will pick your own topic after looking at published articles in journals/ magazines. This article should not be based on your own current or previous research. Get approval from RG to avoid duplication and to determine the suitability of the topic by **Wednesday, January 28, 2009**. You will use PowerPoint for your presentation. Each presentation should be 30-min long so that there is enough time for discussion. Please make sure to practice your talk, and time it, before your formal presentation. Keep in mind that it always takes longer to make a formal presentation than a practice presentation. *We strongly encourage*

you to practice your talk in front of a few of your peers to take the rough edges out before your formal presentation. Whereas the talk should not be much longer than 30-min to allow enough time for discussion, you should strive to make use of all the time allotted to you and not make the talk too short. While the talk should be presented at a level of first-year graduate students, it should not be superficial and should have enough technical content. A video recorder will be available if you wish to analyze your talk after receiving the critiques from your peers and us.

**Critiques:** Each student will write short (about a paragraph) critique of the talk and e-mail it to RG and RV by **Monday** of the following week. A checklist will be developed in the first class meeting for your convenience.

**Schedule:** Literature search techniques on **January 23 and 30, 9:30 – 10:20 am**. Instructor: Usha Gupta, **Room MULN-102**; weekly presentations by students thereafter. Homework on the library presentation will be assigned, collected and graded.

**Attendance:** Attendance in all talks is required. If you cannot attend the class on a particular day due to unavoidable reasons, send e-mails to us.

**Grades:** Letter grades will be assigned. Grade will be based on the short written report, and on the organization, clarity, preparation, effective use of and creativity in graphics, timing, technical content, and ability to answer questions on your presentation, attendance, and the degree of participation in critiquing the talks of other students. Whereas we cannot give you a quantitative formula on how each of these items will be factored into your grade, we can tell you that the following will cost you a letter grade: Missing more than two lectures without a valid excuse or being habitually late, failure to submit the report, failure to submit the library homework, failure to submit more than two critiques or being habitually late in submitting critiques, and lack of serious effort in preparing your presentation.

**Inclement Weather Policy:** If the University is officially open, the class will meet.