

MGY280H1 S

Second Year Specialist Research

Winter 2026 Syllabus

Course Meetings

MGY280H1 S

Section	Day & Time	Delivery Mode & Location
LEC0101	Friday, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	In Person: AB 107

Refer to ACORN for the most up-to-date information about the location of the course meetings.

Course Contacts

Course Website: <https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/424209>

Instructor: William Navarre

Email: william.navarre@utoronto.ca

Phone: 416-946-5356

Course Overview

This course gives students enrolled in the Molecular Genetics and Microbiology Specialist or Biochemistry Specialist program an opportunity to conduct an original research project in the second semester of their second year in a research laboratory in either of those Departments. Laboratory assignments are chosen during the first semester of second year by agreement with a Departmental faculty member and the Course Coordinator. Attendance at a weekly meeting is mandatory and students will present a report at the end of term. Details can be found on the departmental website. Not eligible for CR/NCR option.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will have an intermediate level understanding of academic research including the roles of different members on a research team, how research projects are chosen, how research is funded, how to search and read research literature, and how experiments are conducted in the context of a research laboratory.

Prerequisites: Students cannot have completed more than 8.5 credits

Corequisites: None
Exclusions: None
Recommended Preparation: None
Credit Value: 0.5

This course is for students enrolled in the Molecular Genetics or Biochemistry Specialist programs.

Course Materials

No extra course materials are required to participate in MGY280.

Marking Scheme

Assessment	Percent	Details	Due Date
Friday meeting attendance	10%	Students may miss one Friday meeting and will lose 1% mark for each meeting they miss thereafter.	2026-01-09 - 2026-04-04
Tell us about yourself survey	5%		2026-01-16
Meaningful engagement trio	5%		2026-01-16
summarize a recent finding	10%		2026-01-30
world work views and success	10%		2026-02-20
Takeaways from student panels	5%		2026-03-13
Interview professor or scientist	10%		2026-03-20
Conflict management exercise	5%		2026-03-20
EDI lens as a scientist	10%		2026-03-27
research project	30%		2026-04-03

Course Schedule

Week	Description
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Week 1 Jan9	Introduction, ice breakers, team activity (wayfinding)
Week 2 Jan16	Structure of U of T research. What is the academic path in research?
Week 3 Jan23	Searching and using scientific literature
Week 4 Jan30	What are some other paths in research?
Week 5 Feb6	The importance of ethics in research
Week 6 Feb13	Purpose of university - what do you think? How has it changed? What are your work and world views? What is success?
Week 7 Feb27	Meet with 3rd and 4th year Specialists
Week 8 Mar6	Meet with a panel of graduate students
Week 9 Mar13	Discernment - how do you know what you know?
Week 10 Mar20	Conflict Management 101
Week 11 Mar27	EDI as an everyday scientist, class reunion exercise
Week 12 Apr4	Good Friday - no class

Policies & Statements

Religious Accommodations

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Students with Disabilities or Accommodation Requirements

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

Academic Integrity

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019) (<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>). If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other institutional resources. For example, to learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see [A&S Student Academic Integrity](https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity) (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>) and the [University of Toronto Website on Academic Integrity](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca) (<https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca>).

Specific Medical Circumstances

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a

VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

Accommodation for Personal Reasons

There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical reasons. If you have concerns, speak to me or to an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can help you to decide if you want to request an extension or other forms of academic consideration. They may be able to email your instructors directly to provide a College Registrar's letter of support and connect you with other helpful resources on campus.

Quercus Info (if using)

This Course uses the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course. This includes posting readings and other materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, as well as sharing important announcements and updates. New information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term. To access the course website, go to the U of T Quercus log-in page at <https://q.utoronto.ca>. SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT GRADES POSTED ONLINE: Please also note that any grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, including any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course. Please contact me as soon as possible if you think there is an error in any grade posted on Quercus.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Your mental health is important. Throughout university life, there are many experiences that can impact your mental health and well-being. As a University of Toronto student, you can access free mental health and wellbeing services at Health & Wellness (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>) such as same day counselling, brief counselling, medical care, skill-building workshops, and drop-in peer support. You can also meet with a Wellness Navigation Advisor who can connect you with other campus and community services and support. Call the mental health clinic at 416-978-8030 ext. 5 to book an appointment or visit <https://uoft.me/mentalhealthcare> to learn about the services available to you.

You can also visit your College Registrar to learn about the resources and supports available: <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/college-registrars-offices>

If you're in distress, you can access immediate support: <https://uoft.me/feelingdistressed>

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.