

# BGGN 270 | MS Fundamentals

SPRING 2023

## Course details

**Course meeting:** Fridays from 9-10:20 am in Pacific Hall 3500

**Instructor:** Ashley Juavinett

**Office hours:** By appointment

## Course Description

This course is designed *specifically* for Biology BS/MS students. The goals of this course are to provide a hands-on introduction to fundamental issues in academia, including campus resources, research design, ethical issues in research, scientific publishing, and how to write and defend your MS thesis. We'll also discuss issues related to diversity and inclusion, science communication, mentorship, and possible career paths. Along the way, you will have opportunities for community building and networking among the current BS/MS students, faculty, and alumni.

## Course Philosophy

### A note on our course's environment

We'll be working together to create an equitable and inclusive environment of mutual respect, in which we all feel comfortable to share our moments of confusion, ask questions, and challenge our understanding. Everyone should be able to succeed in this course. If you do not feel that is the case please let me know.

### Accommodations

If you need accommodations for this course due to a disability, please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities ([osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu)) for an Authorization for Accommodation letter. Please speak with me in the first week of class if you intend to apply for accommodations. For more information, visit <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>.

### This course, and the work it entails, is for *you*

So, you won't benefit if others do your work. Cases of academic dishonesty or cheating will be first handled by me, and then by the Academic Integrity Office. If you become aware of cheating in this class, you can anonymously report it: <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>

## Course Assessment

Because it is an active, hands-on course that aims to deliver practicable, useful information and skills, **your active participation is crucial**. Our course will be delivered in-person unless otherwise noted.



In a typical week, there will be:

- A **pre-class assignment** (paired with something to read or watch) to prepare for class. *These are always worth 40 points and due on Fridays at 9 am.*
- An **in-person discussion**, during which we will discuss case studies and other materials and hear from representatives from various campus resources for graduate students. *You are expected to attend each week, with one free absence.*
- A **post-class reflection** on what you've learned or another task that allows you to practice your new skills and knowledge. *These are always due on Wednesdays at 5 pm.*

| Assignment   | Points | Weight |
|--|--------|--------|
| Participation: attendance & participation in class discussions | 200    | 20%    |
| Pre-class assignments (40 points each)                         | 400    | 40%    |
| Post-class assignments (10-75 points each)                     | 400    | 40%    |

- Assignments will lose -10% for each day they are late.
- Please note that the only grading option for BGGN 270 is [pass/no pass](#). Your course work needs to be at a C- (70-72.99%) or higher for a passing grade.

## Course Schedule (tentative & subject to change!)

| Week | Date    | Topic   | Pre-Class Reading/Watching   | Post-Class Assignment    |
|------|---------|---|--|--------------------------|
| 1    | 4/7/23  | Introduction to the course and your classmates; your path in the BS/MS program & beyond | Randy Olsen ABT Video<br>Introductions Discussion Board  | Elevator pitch           |
| 2    | 4/14/23 | Designing your MS project, <i>feat. Ella Tour + a faculty panel</i>                     |  Experimental Research Design...<br> Research Design: Don't Be We... | Project plan             |
| 3    | 4/21/23 | Handling criticism & providing constructive feedback                                    | <a href="#">Science relies on constructive criticism. Here's how to keep it useful and respectful</a>  | Feedback on project plan |
| 4    | 4/28/23 | Equity, diversity, and inclusion in STEM  | <a href="#">Twelve Principles Trainees, Pls. Departments, and Faculties Can Use to Reduce Bias and Discrimination in STEM</a>  | EDI Reflection           |
| 5    | 5/5/23  | Finding, maintaining, and being a good mentor   | <a href="#">The Science of Effective Mentoring in STEMM   National Academies</a>   |                          |

|    |         |   |  |                            |
|----|---------|---|--|----------------------------|
|    |         |   | <a href="#">NeuroView - How to Pick a Graduate Advisor</a>   |                            |
| 6  | 5/12/23 | Imposter Syndrome & Your Mental Health, <i>feat.</i> GAPSwell (Ro, Neha, & Lulu)                                    | <a href="#">The Emotional Toll of Graduate School - Scientific American Blog Network</a><br><br><a href="#">Stop Telling Women They Have Imposter Syndrome</a> | Mental health reflection   |
| 7  | 5/19/23 | Writing your thesis <i>feat. Ella Tour</i>  | Project plan feedback  | Response to writing video  |
| 8  | 5/26/23 | Conducting your research ethically  | Write a reflection of ethics in your research  | Research ethics reflection |
| 9  | 6/2/23  | Exploring career paths, featuring an alumni panel   |  | Career paths reflection    |
| 10 | 6/9/23  | Exploring career paths part II, featuring Jessica Wilson, M.S. <i>Associate Director UC San Diego Career Center</i> | <a href="#">Communicating science: From the laboratory bench to the breakfast table</a>  | Talk review                |