

OCEAN 506B/497B – THE CHANGING ARCTIC OCEAN

Notes for In-Class Wednesday Paper Discussions

Each Wednesday (starting week 2, but excluding weeks when written assignments are due), there will be a ~ 30 min student-led discussion of a published paper. Papers will be selected (with class input) a week in advance. Everyone should read the assigned paper before the class. The main points of the paper will be presented by a team of students in a ~ 10 min oral presentation, to be followed by a ~ 20 min class debate. Each student will help to lead one such presentation during the course, and all students will be involved in the weekly class debates.

We will email individual feedback on the presentations to the presenters within several days of each presentation. Grades will only be assigned when all presentations have been done.

Below are some ideas about the sorts of things we are looking for in a presentation. Please chip in with things you'd like to see. The goal here is that we all improve our understanding of the science, our ability to present it to others, and our skill at discussing results and ideas.

1) Science content:

- accurate presentation of the material of the paper
- careful selection of material to present (not everything can be presented in the time allotted)
- a brief understanding of how it fits into the bigger picture

2) Comprehension:

- Do you understand the main results and mechanisms that are discussed (not necessarily all the small details, but certainly the key points of the paper) enough to explain them to others?
- Could you possibly apply the main message beyond the topic of the paper?

3) Informative (inspiring?) presentation:

- Prepare clear, easy-to-comprehend slides and verbal presentation.
- Choose easily visible fonts and colors, and only enough to convey the point.
- Talk to the audience, not the screen.
- Show your interest in the work.
- Ask yourself if this is a presentation you would like to sit through.
- If you cut and paste pdf figures into slides, remember always to add the citation.

4) Guiding the discussion:

- Strive for balance between giving information and getting input from others.
- Keep the discussion under control.
- Help start a debate by asking, for example, what was good/bad about the paper? Do others have a different take on the main point? Are there things you don't understand that others might be able to shed light on?

Timing: The presentation should be prepared so that without interruption it is no longer than 10 min. Interruptions from the class during the presentation to gain clarity on various points are encouraged and will be good, given the discussion form of the assignment, but will obviously slow down the presentation. Part of your job as discussion leaders is not only to allow an appropriate amount of time for discussion but also to keep it under control. An overall target time for the presentation and discussion is 30 min.