Course Objectives:

Our Department is diverse and focused on interdisciplinary research and our trainees come from many different academic/scientific backgrounds. These issues and the fact that strong oral presentation skills are necessary for success in academia, industry and the public sector have driven the development of BIOPHYS 9700. The main purpose of this course is to provide trainees with the opportunity to enhance their oral presentation and chairing skills via an international research conference-style venue and to provide a forum for discussion of departmental research. A secondary purpose is to provide an annual overview of the breadth and depth of our department’s research to accelerate the development of 1st year trainees and their exposure to research in preparation for the low level examination.

Pre- or Co-requisite:

BIOPHYS 9513: Scientific Communications

Course Time and Location:

Seminars typically are scheduled on Thursdays during the Fall and Winter academic terms starting in September and ending in April. The exact time and location may vary and will be posted at the beginning of the Fall and Winter terms.

Course Resources:

There are no textbooks for this course. Each student will be required to consult with his/her advisor(s) for guidance in preparing their presentation. Excellent text suggestions have been provided in pre- or co-requisite BIOPHYS 9513.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, trainees will:

- Be exposed and familiar with the broad diversity of projects, programs and trainees in modern medical biophysics research
- Be familiar with the full range of research in the department in order to successfully elevator pitch any of the faculty/trainee projects
- Confidently provide an 8-10 minute scientific presentation on their research to a diverse interdisciplinary audience
- Be able to positively discuss and debate with other researchers, critically and non-confrontationally.
**Evaluation:**

The course is graded as “Pass” or “fail” on the transcript. To pass this course, trainees must:

1. Attend over 3/4 of the weekly seminars.
2. Present once during the academic year with completion of the seminar evaluation forms and if applicable, nomination to the AC Groom award.
3. Chair a seminar session during the academic year if requested by the course coordinator.
4. Hold an advisory committee meeting to receive feedback on thesis research at least once a year, and in conjunction with the seminar date. After completion, a formal report must be submitted to the seminar course coordinator and to the Graduate Program Assistant.

Seminar Evaluation Form: To be filled in by attendees including 1 trainee and 3 faculty/advisors

Major positive feature(s):

Suggested areas for improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Common Elements</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience Interaction</td>
<td>eye contact, body language, humour, use of laser pointer/mouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oration</td>
<td>volume, tempo, transitions, general flow, intonation, enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>explicitly stated motivation, research context, hypothesis/goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>explanation/figure clarity, all content explained, content supports motivation/hypothesis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>related to motivation, take-home messages, limitations, future directions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slide Design</td>
<td>organization, consistency, amount of content/text, use of colour, legibility</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation Structure</td>
<td>appropriate length, logical flow, organization, tells a “story”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Answering Questions</td>
<td>clarity, conciseness, style, effective verification of question asked</td>
<td></td>
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**Academic Offences:**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a *scholastic offence*, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

**Illness and Mental wellness:**

Students should speak to the course coordinator if they have any problems that may influence their ability to complete this course. Students in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western, http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/, for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

**Postponement of seminar:** Students can postpone their seminar ONLY under extenuating circumstances, and they must receive permission from the course. A *minimum of 4-weeks’ notice* is required for any change in the schedule that is non-urgent.

**Notices:**

Email will be used as the primary mode of communication between the coordinators and trainees. Trainees are responsible for checking their email regularly for course notices and encouraged to communicate with the coordinators and teaching assistant using e-mail.

**Contact Information:**

*Course coordinator:*
Dr. Grace Parraga  
gparraga@robarts.ca

*Teaching Assistant:*
Androu Abdalmalak  
aabdalma@uwo.ca

*Graduate Program Assistant:*
Wendy Hough  
Wendy.Hough@schulich.uwo.ca