Assignments

- **Logistics**: Each student is required to turn in 4 discussion assignments and 2 critique assignments.
- **Papers are due in class at the posted date and can earn 50 points. Late papers will lose 10 points per day. Written excuses may help to stop the clock.**

**Format:**
- **Length**: at least 2 double-spaced pages long.
- **Margins**: 1 inch on all sides.
- **Title**: no title, but put the citation for the paper you are writing about at the top of the first page. Use standard scientific format for citations (see below for examples).
- The assignment must be emailed to beerli@fsu.edu using the subject line: [BSC3052] assignment etc.
The beginning is important because I use it to filter my mail, if you do not add the tag [BSC3052] your assignment may become lost or, worse, end up in my spam filter. I will try to announce missing assignments, most likely through blackboard.

**What to Include:**
- Discussion papers should 1) summarize the goals, methods, and findings and/or main points of the reading for that discussion, 2) discuss positive and negative aspects of the paper (does it make a valuable point and why, is there something wrong with the methodology or conclusions and why), and 3) raise at least one question for discussion. Types of questions for discussion include parts of the paper you didn't understand, the relationship of the paper to other issues discussed in class or to current events, why the author didn't do things differently, etc. Make sure that your discussion paper includes at least one question. The question can be integrated with the rest of the paper or just listed at the end. Following is a more specific outline of what you might want to include in a paper. You do not have to follow this outline exactly -- it is just a suggestion. You may want to start by following this more closely and then do things more differently so you get comfortable writing these papers. You should be able to address each of the following points in between two and four sentences. These are SHORT papers, so be concise.
  1. **What is the goal of the paper? Why was it written? What question(s) were the authors trying to answer?**
  2. **What method(s) did the authors use? If they collected data, how did they do it? If it is a discussion or review article, make that clear.**
  3. **What were the results or conclusions of the paper?**
  4. **What are the strengths of the paper? What makes it valuable? This can include things like the study being conducted well (good experiments, good interpretation of data) and the study making important points that relate to the larger field, etc.**
  5. **What are the weaknesses of the paper? This might include bad experiments or arguments, bad interpretation of data, making a point that is trivial, etc.**
  6. **Overall, is this a good paper? Do strengths outweigh weaknesses? What contribution does this paper make to the field?**
  7. **What questions does this paper raise and/or what future work does it suggest? These could be questions the authors spell out ("we have learned that we need to know more about X") or questions that are raised in your mind by reading the paper.**
  8. **What question might you bring up for discussion? This can be the same as the question above or might be a different kind of question (like "what does the y-axis on figure 8 really mean?").**

**Citation format:**

**Generic citation:**

Authors. Year of publication. Title of paper. Title of journal Volume of journal: first page–last page.

**Examples:**


[Peter Beerli, Fall 2004 (updated from Nora Underwood, Spring 2004), updated Spring 2007, 2009]