

## **Special Topics in Biological Sciences: Genetically Modified Organisms Guidelines for Panel Discussion**

There is no single, rigid formula for how a panel should lead a panel discussion. One reason for this is that discussions tend to have a free-flowing quality (not to be confused with random). In professional meetings, the format typically involves a period of discussion amongst the panel, followed by a period of discussion between the panel and audience. In this course, it may be better to have a format of involving the audience throughout the discussion, without a lengthy "panel-only" discussion. Consider these two formats carefully, and adopt one that your panel agrees to use.

The minimum criteria and expectations are listed below. Your success in accomplishing these will be the basis for your score for the assignment. Team members will be evaluated separately.

### Guidelines:

- Each panel member has carefully read the assigned reading.
- The panel sustains a discussion for approximately 75 minutes.
- Each panel member is involved in leading discussion. No panel member assumes the role of monopolizing the discussion on behalf of the other panel members.
- The panel members have a coordinated discussion with the class. This will require developing a plan together prior to the class meeting. You may decide, as a group, that some features of a chapter are worth emphasizing, and others not worth discussion.
- Discussion may include a brief review of the reading, but is not merely a review of the reading.
- Instead, the discussion should include conversation between panelists, and between panelists and the audience. To generate discussion, ask questions: about issues, objectives, methods, results, and so on.
- As an orientation for the audience, give a verbal outline (overview) of the plan for the discussion at the beginning of the discussion. Consider writing an outline on the whiteboard (but keep it concise if you do so, covering only the highlights).

### Other Comments:

Generating discussion largely depends on the quality of your questions. Try to develop questions that require justification or explanation by the audience. A question that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" needs to be followed up with another question such as "why ...?" or "how ...?".

Handouts or audiovisual aides are not expected, but may be used at the panel's discretion, provided they are not distracting from the discussion. See the instructor the week prior to your panel discussion to make arrangements.

### Role of the Audience:

The audience is expected to have carefully read the chapter. The panel can --- and should --- assume that the audience is an informed one with at least some understanding of the reading.

The audience is expected to participate in the discussion, and demonstrate through participating that the reading has been done carefully.

## Special Topics in Biological Sciences

### Evaluation of Panel Discussion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Score (of 50 points): \_\_\_\_\_

**Outline (5):** \_\_\_\_\_

Is a verbal outline provided at the beginning of the discussion?  
Does the outline concisely describe the objectives of the discussion?

**Coordination of Discussion with Panel Members (20):** \_\_\_\_\_

Are the highlights of the entire reading represented in discussions?  
Does each team member have a clearly defined role?  
Is the presented material equally divided among panel members?  
Does the discussion fit the time guidelines?

**Individual Contribution to Discussion (25):** \_\_\_\_\_

Did you identify important issues or questions for discussion?  
Did you ask questions that stimulated or facilitated discussion?  
How well did you condense the reading into a discussion?  
Did you at some time assume a role of leadership during the discussions?  
Did you respond to discussion from audience?

**Recommendations:**