**Final Reflection and Progress Report**

Kathryn Atherton

1. Did you think the poster session symposium was a valuable experience? What feedback did you receive at the poster session? What changes would you make to the poster if you had the opportunity to present at another symposium? Do you think that the poster symposium should be included in the class next year? If so, what suggestions do you have for improvement?
   1. I thought the poster symposium was fun, but I had classes during my group’s presentation times, so I could not present and thus did not get as much out of it as other groups did.
   2. We did not receive much feedback, if any, from the judge or passers-by. However, we did win first prize in Ag.
   3. I would make the poster less wordy and make the methods image on the poster clearer, as it was blurry when printed out in the large scale.
   4. I think so. It made me think about how to tell the public about the work we did in class, which all scientists/researchers need to know how to do.
   5. Suggestions for improvement would be to practice the presentation with the printed-out poster instead of the projector because it makes using it during the presentation easier.
2. What do you think was the most interesting finding from your work this semester? Why?
   1. I think the most interesting finding was our addition of a feature to our section of the genome.
   2. It was interesting because we proved to ourselves that we fully understood the guiding principles, found an area which did not necessarily follow the principles, and executed a fix for it, which had a decent amount of data to back it up.
3. What issues or challenges did you face this semester?
   1. Our biggest challenges were finding functions with valid evidence to back them up. Our section of the genome had very few known functions, which suggests that the section is highly personalized for the phage. Most of our genes need wet lab data to back up our findings.
4. What remaining questions do you have about the results, the activities/experiments, and/or the research project?
   1. Will our class’s annotation be sent for quality control? When?
   2. When/how will we know whether our decisions about genes are valid after quality control?
5. What do you think should be the next steps in characterizing the phage that you worked on this semester? Would you define the next steps as research? Why or why not?
   1. The next steps would be to perform wet lab testing on the phage to determine whether or not the decisions made are correct.
   2. These next steps are research, as they are finding new information about the phage, which either confirms or rejects the hypotheses we made in our decisions for annotating the genome.
   3. The scientific method for research starts with creating a hypothesis, which is what we did in this class to annotate the genome. The wet lab testing is the experimentation step to test the hypotheses we made about the genome.
6. As you reflect back on the project this semester, how do you think you have changed as a scientific researcher?
   1. I’ve become more excited about the research we have done and I have become more willing to do work towards this research project that is not necessarily assigned in class (i.e. annotating the genome of the phage I discovered last semester).
7. How do you think your attitude about scientific research has changed?
   1. Now having done research, I think that I have a better idea of the work that goes into projects, though we definitely did not do all the work a researcher might have to do (i.e. writing grants and buying supplies and defending results, etc.). I think I also appreciate the fact that sometimes you don’t get results or the results you want from a project, which is okay.
8. As you reflect on the semester, what do you think went well?
   1. My team worked really well together. We were able to split work up fairly and everyone had a high standard for the work we turned in.
9. What suggestions do you have for course improvement overall?
   1. I think better organization and communication about assignment changes would make the class easier to manage. Many times reflections were postponed or cancelled, which made assignments confusing.
10. What did you learn that you can apply beyond this class?
    1. I learned how to use databases to back up decisions I make and how to present my research and findings to a member of the public as well as to a fellow researcher in the same field.
11. What was one take away or “aha” moment?
    1. My biggest take away was to enjoy every second of research and try to learn as much as possible. I learned a lot about working in a group for research and getting advice from professors and other researchers about the work being done.
    2. The biggest aha moment was when the group figured out which pieces of evidence should be weighed more heavily than others and the order in which one should consider the various databases of evidence.