

MIT Department of Mathematics  
**18.418/HST.504: Topics in Computational Molecular Biology**  
**Instructor: Professor Bonnie Berger**  
**TA: Ariya Shajii**

### **Reading Assignment - Guidelines**

The primary purpose of the reading assignments is to enable you to gather understanding of the subject matter of the talks of the weekly guest speakers. You will be assigned one/two papers of the guest speaker a week before the actual talk. Your task is to write a one-page (both-sides allowed) review/summary for each paper. The summary will be **due at midnight on the day before the talk** (usually Tuesdays).

In general, your summary should include the main contribution of the paper, its importance, novelty, strengths and weaknesses, and where it stands in comparison to the state of the art. In particular, you should consider the following questions:

- What are the main contributions of the paper and how significant are they?
- How interesting the paper is for the community?
- Are the claims novel? Why or why not?
- How does the paper compare with others in the field?
- Are the claims supported with substantial evidence?
- Is the paper mathematically/computationally sound? Are there sufficient methodological details for reproducibility? Are the statistical tests used in the paper appropriate?
- Are there ways for future improvement?
- Is the manuscript clearly written and easily understandable?

We prefer the summary to be typed. It must contain **your name** and should be e-mailed to: [bonniebergerlab@gmail.com](mailto:bonniebergerlab@gmail.com) with the subject being **"18.418 Reading Assignment <no.>: <Your Name>"**. The attachment name should be: **"RA\_<no.>\_<your name>.pdf"**.

We encourage you to think critically about the paper and come up with questions that you can ask the author during the Q&A session.