The Department of Physics hosts a weekly meeting of the Biophysics Journal Club to discuss current and classic literature in a wide variety of biophysics related research areas. Participation of graduate students and postdocs working in the department is strongly encouraged. Other members of the Emory research community with an interest in this journal club are also welcome to participate. The overall aim of this journal club is to help keep up with current biophysics research (broadly defined), and to provide regular practice and feedback in learning how to read and critique the research literature. Each week a journal article is selected by the designated presenter, who will also provide some background material and an overview of the work before opening up the paper for general discussion. Each presenter is free to select an article of his or her choice, although the following list of guidelines may be helpful in making a selection.

1) Try to identify articles of broad interest, either because they give insight into new phenomena, a new understanding of old phenomena, or introduce techniques that open up new research areas. Try to avoid highly technical literature that would be more appropriate for discussion with your specific research group.

2) One of the nice things about a journal club is that a large number of people can more easily explore diverse topics than any one of us can alone. You are strongly encouraged to look outside the core research areas of your group or the department to uncover interesting science.

3) Part of the function of this group is to build the habit of reading the literature on a regular basis and keeping track of those articles you find interesting or important. Ideally, you will find papers over the course of your normal reading of research journals that can be presented to the journal club when it is your turn to present.

4) It takes time to read the literature and select appropriate papers. You should not wait until the last minute and then attempt to identify an appropriate paper in an hour or two. If your turn to present is approaching and you have not yet identified a research paper, you should recognize that you may need to read several papers before identifying an appropriate selection and schedule your time accordingly.
5) If you are unsure of where to start, it may be helpful to consult review articles in sources such as the “Current Opinion” series or other review style publications to identify and learn about a new research topic area before selecting a specific article. This approach has the added benefit that you will then be more prepared to present the background information needed to discuss your chosen topic.

6) If you are really stuck you can ask a faculty member for suggestions, but you should plan to spend enough time reading on your own to identify appropriate selections for your presentation rather than simply asking a faculty member what to do at the last minute. It may be a good idea to consult with one or more faculty members about your choice to help ensure it is not too technical in nature.
Presentation Guidelines:
You are free to structure your presentation however you desire. You may wish to consider including the following elements to support your presentation:

1) An introduction to the biological significance of the molecules or system being investigated. For example, if the paper discusses a specific protein – it would be nice to briefly explain the function of that protein if it is known.
2) A brief introduction to the research techniques used, perhaps highlighting some of the types of information available from those techniques (as necessary).
3) You may not have broad knowledge of the field your paper discusses, which is not a problem. To the extent that you are able to do so, it will also be valuable to present a broad overview and/or a summary of some of the major unanswered questions in the research area discussed by your selected paper.