

Jacob Cahill

Reflection 1 BIOL 405W

- 1) Regarding your chosen seminar topic, what drew you to that particular topic? In choosing this topic, which of your previously taken courses do you anticipate will be most helpful to you in completing your seminar project.

I believe that invertebrates could be a source of untapped medical insights and therapies that deserve more attention. Since the Limulus Amebocyte Lysate (LAL) test was developed using horseshoe crab blood in the 1970s, it seems little has been done to explore the vast potential invertebrate studies have for medical science. Recently my interest has been piqued with the *Turritopsis dohrnii* also known as the immortal jellyfish. This is an organism that can live forever under the right conditions, and it does this by a process known as transdifferentiation. The process of transdifferentiation in simple terms is when an adult cell, one that is specialized for a particular tissue, can become an entirely different type of specialized cell. This could be revolutionary in the medical field if this process could be replicated with human cells. Further research on invertebrates could fundamentally change the medical field and could possibly cure illnesses that were thought to be incurable. Therefore, I chose this as my topic area to focus on. The course I have previously taken that I think will help me the most in completing my seminar project is Invertebrate Zoology (BIOL 307). The reason I think this class will be the most helpful is because this class was all about invertebrates which is what my paper pertains to.

- 2) What is your assessment of your writing ability at this point? Do you feel well prepared for developing a term paper and oral presentation?

I feel pretty good about my writing ability at this point my presenting ability is what I am more worried about. I feel well prepared for my term paper but not so much for the oral presentation mainly just because I feel it will not be as good as some of the biology seminars I have watched but, hopefully the more seminars I watch and critique that I will get a better idea of how I want to present and get some good ideas to incorporate into my presentation.