Gut Feelings: Learning to foster better microbiome relationships

Course Description:
Microbes...are they good or are they bad? Do they control your thoughts and actions? We are realizing the collection of microbes in and on our body, the human microbiome, acts like an organ affecting our health and behavior. This seminar will help you understand the science that is discovering who is in a microbiome and how they are influencing the world around us. We highlight recent advances in microbiome research methods and take you on a tour of microbiome research labs. You will have the opportunity to determine genetic sequences from a microbiome. By learning methods for generating and analyzing microbial data you will be able make sense of the scientific literature and develop your own hypotheses. We will then investigate microbiome interactions. Is the American diet fostering poor microbiome health? How does the gut microbiome differ among people around the world? Can better soil microbiomes improve agriculture? Does rolling in the dirt prevent Asthma? Should you take microbiome killing antibiotics? What is the role of the microbiome in Parkinson's and Autism? Should we include microbes in our design of built environments? The final project, a research proposal, will consist of background research, hypotheses and an experimental plan.

Season Course Is Offered: Fall
Meeting Day: Tuesday
Instructor First Name and Middle Initial: Jeffrey
Instructor Last Name: Blanchard
Instructor Email: jeffb@bio.umass.edu
Course Time: 2:30pm - 3:20pm

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