

**Computational Modeling & Simulation I (Interdisciplinary Science)**  
**CS 346**

**Spring 2020**

Small Assignment: Reading *Can robots make good models of biological behaviour?*

Due **BY 11:59PM** Friday, February 28

- In preparation for guest lecturer John Long (Vassar College, Biology and Cognitive Science), please read Barbara Webb's paper *Can robots make good models of biological behaviour?*, available from Colby's library (linked from our CS346 *Useful Links and Additional Notes* page).

Then, informed by the reading, please write responses of a few sentences (they needn't be lengthy!) to the below prompts from Prof. Long.

- Please email a PDF document containing your responses to me ([eaaron@colby.edu](mailto:eaaron@colby.edu)) by 11:59PM, Friday, February 28. They will be sent along to Prof. Long so he can consider them as part of preparation for his lecture. Please use a good naming convention: The filename should indicate your name and the fact that this assignment relates to a paper by Webb (such as, e.g., `eaaron_Webb_reading.pdf`).
- For purposes of grading, this assignment falls under the category of "Small Assignment" for CS346.

From Prof. Long: "This is a very big paper, and the effort to read it is worth it. Barbara Webb reviews a wide range of literature to think about what we mean by modeling. As you read it, please consider two questions:"

1. For your purposes, what is the best definition of a model? Make sure to explain your purposes, too.
2. What is the relationship between testing a biorobotic model and testing a hypothesis about the biological system that model represents?