Professional Skills    BIMS 2200.001     Summer II  2014   v2

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY—CORPUS CHRISTI
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF LIFE SCIENCES

Instructor: Gregory W. Buck, Ph.D.   Office Phone: 361.825.3717
E-mail: Gregory.Buck@tamucc.edu   Office: Center for the Sciences 251
Office Hours: M 10:00-11:15 a.m.; TWR 1:00-2:15 p.m. or by appointment.

Lecture: 10:00-11:40 am, TWR   O’Connor (OCNR) 258
Course Description: This course involves presentation and discussion of selected topics
relating to the professional skills of practicing biological scientists including literature
searches, reviews, paper and poster presentations, professional opportunities and job
requirements. The course also covers application of scientific literature research skills,
including a review of library services pertinent to science, and an introduction to ethical
issues in science.

Student Learning Outcomes:  
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to perform these outcomes at a
proficiency level of 70% or more:

1. Design and write professional scientific documents (resumes, personal
   statements) to be used in employment searches or application to graduate and/or
   professional schools;

2. Distinguish between primary reports and reviews of scientific literature;

3. Describe and construct the components of primary scientific literature in the A-
   IMRAD format;

4. Design a hypothesis of a biological problem, based on extension of a problem
   from primary scientific literature;

5. Produce a poster and a Power Point presentation of the analysis of this
   biological problem;

6. Assess and critique the hypotheses, approach, and presentations of peers in a
   professional manner.

7. Assess and explain ethics in science, and classify examples of scientific
   misconduct.

Textbooks--Required
   Evaluating Research Articles in Biology. San Francisco: Pearson/Benjamin Cummings
   (ISBN 978-08-0534599-5)

4. **Either** of these three texts:
   a. Day, RA and Gastel, B. 2011. How to write and publish a scientific paper. 7th ed. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press. **This text is preferred.** The 5th edition is too dated for class use. You may use either the 6th or 7th editions.

**Additional References:** Information may be taken from these and presented in lecture, but the student will **not be expected** to buy them.

**Supplies/materials required (at student cost):** Textbook, tri-fold poster for poster presentation, copies of papers required for your project (do off library databases).

**Audience Defined:** Rising sophomore and junior Biology and BIMS students.

**REQUIRED UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**Students with Disabilities and Veterans:** All programs in Life Sciences (LSCI) comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, including the ADA Amendments from 2008 (PL 110-325). This anti-discrimination statute provides civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This statute requires that all qualified students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodations of their disabilities. This act also includes **returning veterans** who may be experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus. If you are a returning veteran or you suspect that you may have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact the Office of Disability Services (located in Driftwood 101) at (361) 825-5816. Please contact this office in a timely manner, as they must review requests and prepare accommodations and send the accommodation letters.

If you need disability accommodations in this class, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. If you have mobility problems, are pregnant, or you may have a history of seizures, please notify the instructor **PRIVATELY** so that assistance can be given in case of fire drills or emergencies. Please have your Faculty Notification Letter from the Disabilities Service Office when you talk with Dr. Buck.
Grade Appeals: As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible at the following sites:

University Rules  
http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html

College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage  
(http://sci.tamucc.edu/students/GradeAppeal.html).

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the chair or director of the appropriate department or school, the Office of the College of Science and Engineering Dean, or the Office of the Provost.

Academic Advising: The College of Science and Engineering requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in CI Suite 350, and can be reached at (361) 825-6094.

Dropping the course: Hopefully, you will not find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. However, you as adults have to be the final judge of your action whether to drop or not. For students applying to professional or graduate school, you will have to explain why you dropped this class or any other class. Receiving a “W” is NOT automatic; you must initiate the paperwork in the Student Services Center (the “Round Building”). Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

Deadline to drop course with a “W” grade: F July 25  
Deadline to withdraw from University for the summer session: T Aug 5

Academic Integrity: University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero on the assignment. We also have to report all
instances of cheating to the Dean of Students office on an Academic Misconduct form.

Statement of Academic Continuity: In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

If class is cancelled due to a pending hurricane, that information is sent via your islander.tamucc.edu account. It is strongly suggested that students have a functioning islander.tamucc.edu account!! I will also try to send it within Blackboard 9.1, as stated above. I will not send out personal information regarding grades through other types of e-mail servers, only through islander.tamucc.edu. Please make sure this account is working.

IF CLASS IS CANCELLED, THEN ASSIGNMENTS DUE ON THAT DAY ARE EXPECTED ON THE NEXT DAY THAT CLASS RESUMES!!

Statement of Civility: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

CLASS POLICIES
Attendance: Students are expected to attend every scheduled class, including Bell Library and Career Center presentations. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any material missed during an absence from his/her classmates. Power Point slides are usually not provided on Blackboard 9.1 for students present in class, and will not be provided for late or absent students. Two unexcused absences are allowed for this class. You will get 10 points subtracted for the first unexcused absence (receive 40), 20 for the second (receive 30), and 50 pts for the third (receive zero). For the fourth absence, I subtract additional points, so you get 50 points taken away (-50). Three unexcused tardies equals one unexcused absence.

Missed or tardy assignments: Students will be given a Late Assignment Penalty for tardy work: 10% assignment grade deduction per class day late. However, after the 3rd day, late assignments will not be accepted. In-class late assignments are defined by being turned in after 10:05 am. Please note that assignments may be sent to me by e-mail or slid under my office door; tardiness is determined by the time noted on the instructor’s Inbox,
but allowances can be made for server problems. Files contaminated by viruses, spyware, and worms will not be accepted. DO NOT ASK THE CUSTODIANS to let you into my office to place an assignment on my desk. Missed extra credit assignments cannot be made up for unexcused absences; approved University absences may be given alternative extra credit work which may NOT be identical to the missed assignment.

**Citation format:** Please use Council of Science Editors format. You WILL learn this format in this class!!

**Classroom Behavior:** “Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior (**including excessive text messaging**) may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.”

**Professional Courtesy:** DO NOT USE CAMERA PHONES IN LECTURE OR LAB. DO NOT SEND TEXT MESSAGES DURING CLASS. Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, Bluetooth devices, iPhones, Palm Pilots, Black Berries, etc., before entering the classroom, or at least place them on silent or airplane mode. I would prefer that earpieces not be worn in lecture. Recording of lectures with tape recorders can only be done with permission of instructor. Please refrain from eating in class; if you must eat for medical reasons, please see me privately.

**List-serve:** All students must subscribe to Opportunities List Serve. To subscribe, send a separate e-mail to opportunities-list-request@sci.tamucc.edu. Make sure that your e-mail appears in the “From” heading. In the subject heading, type “subscribe,” then send the e-mail. Next, you will receive a second message with a long set of letters and numbers in the subject line. You must also reply to that message in order to be subscribed to the list-serve.

You may not receive the messages from the list-serve if your Internet service provider (Yahoo, Hotmail, Excite, Roadrunner, Grande, etc.) filters these messages. You may have to adjust the filters on your inbox to keep these messages from being placed in junk-mail. I will be placing more information on Blackboard 9.1, including either the papers assigned, or a link.

At the end of the course, if you want to unsubscribe, send an e-mail that contains your e-mail address in the “From” heading. In the subject heading, type “unsubscribe,” then send the e-mail. I hope that students will continue to subscribe to opportunities-list@sci.tamucc.edu!
**Computer Literacy Requirement:** BIOL/BIMS 2200 includes use of various software programs (Word, Power Point, etc.) and students demonstrate computer competency within their assignments. **All assignments must be typed** on a computer using word processing programs—holographic assignments will not be accepted in most cases. "Successful completion of this class will satisfy the university computer literacy requirement."

**Evaluation:** Final exam is cumulative, and will consist of a mixture of short answer, essay, multiple choice, multiple multiple choice (Type K), descriptive T/F.

Grading scale and activities required—See Fridge Printout! Please note that all assignments are due at the START of class (by 10:05 am) unless otherwise noted. All assignments **must be typed** unless otherwise noted.

- A ≥ 900 pts
- B = 800-899
- C = 700-799
- D = 600-699
- F < 600

Unexcused absences in excess of the grace allowance of two (2) will result in a penalty of one-half (1/2) letter grade per each additional absence (50 points subtracted). This rule will be strictly enforced! Again, note that **three unexcused tardies equals one unexcused absence.**

The professor makes the decision as to what constitutes an unexcused absence, as defined by the Catalogue and the University Handbook. Please schedule routine personal events (e.g., vacations, weddings, reunions, non-emergency medical or dental visits, parent-teacher conferences, household or auto repairs) to avoid conflicts with your classes. Oversleeping is never an acceptable excuse.

Caveat: The syllabus is a general guide; deviations may be necessary. **Such changes will be announced during regularly scheduled lecture periods, through the distribution list or Blackboard 9.1, but no attempt will be made to contact students who were absent when an announcement was made. Responsibility to keep up with the changes in the syllabus lies with the student! Please note that some modifications may be implemented without prior warning.**

**Warning:** Poster and Power Point presentations may occur on the day of the Final Exam (Aug. 7).

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**Professional Skills**  BIOL/BIMS 2200.001 Summer II 2014 version 2
Page/Chapter assignments from Gillen (G); Knisely (K); McMillan (M); Rosenberg and Hizer (R&H); Coleman and Ruxton (C&R); Day and Gastel (D/G)-7th ed.

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<td>Intro to Science; Scientific Writing; Career Counseling--Mr. Jacinto Medina</td>
<td>G (Sec 3-8); K (Ch 1, 3) D/G (Ch. 4)</td>
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Instructor will give class a short paper missing the title and abstract ("decapitated paper"); they will write abstract and title of paper.

4. Bibliography
   Library Research 100 R Jul 17
   Students will turn in a draft of their poster/power point bibliography. A minimum of eight (8) references is required, of which five (5) must be primary literature, and only two can be reviews. One source may be from the Internet; the entire URL must be given with the date accessed. **Student must format the bibliography in one specific journal style (NEJM, Fisheries Management, Journal of Bacteriology), and state this format at the bottom of their first page. N.B: You will use the same topic to do the Bibliography, Poster and the Power Point presentation.**

5. Poster & Presentations 150 Jul 17-29
   Oral Defense
   --Students are required to make a poster of a research topic in their area of interest, and present this area as if they had done the research. You must also do a five (5) minute oral defense of this area, as if you were presenting this information at a meeting. Part of the evaluation in this area also includes peer and professor review (50% each). Some students may have to present a poster before they have received corrections on their bibliography.

6. Power Point Presentation 200 Jul. 29-Aug 7
   (some students may be presenting on the same day as the Final Exam)
   Students must do a 10 to 15-slide Power Point presentation of their topic of interest (excluding the title slide). This presentation must run in length between 8 to 12 minutes for presentation, with 2 to 4 minutes for questions from their peers. The total time for presentation and questions should be 15 min, and MUST NOT exceed 20 minutes! Part of the evaluation also includes peer review (50%), as well as professor review (50%). **Note that the Power Point and the Poster will be on the same topic!!**

7. Final Exam 150 R Aug 8

8. Attendance 50
   You will get 10 points subtracted for the first unexcused absence (receive 40), 20 for the second (receive 30), and 50 pts for the third (receive zero). For the fourth absence, I subtract additional points, so you get 50 points taken away (-50).

**TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE 1000**

Extra credit assignment may be given at the prerogative of the instructor.

A≥900 pts  B=800-899  C=700-799  D=600-699  F<600

Note that poster or Power Point presentations may be on the same day as the final (R 7 Aug)!