Teaching Assistant Seminar – SMTE 5104

Science and Engineering Building (EN) 201
Friday 9-10 A.M.

INSTRUCTOR: Cherie A. McCollough, Ph.D.

Office Location: Science and Technology (ST) 310A
Office Phone: (361) 825-3166
Office Hours: MW 9-10; F 10-11
E-mail: Cherie.Mccollough@tamucc.edu

Students may make appointments to see me at times other than those listed above. If I am unavailable or need to relocate during office hours, I will post a note on my office door.

COURSE MATERIALS: The instructor will make learning resources (e.g., books, handouts, reserve articles, software, websites) available during the semester. You will be given information about these resources. In addition, invited speakers may address various topics during this class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Presentations of contemporary issues in laboratory education. Topics include state and national standards for laboratory education, cognitive development, the importance of culture, language and gender in the laboratory, authentic assessment, and interdisciplinary curriculum.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: This course involves the students in a wide range of methods and materials designed to portray the teaching of laboratories as a student-centered experience. The teaching assistant is urged to design courses for students in order to serve their personal needs and responsibilities for society and career decisions.

The course is centered upon the recent publication of National Academy of Sciences “How People Learn” and will consider theories of learning in light of understanding and advancing students’ learning through classroom/laboratory interactions.

The student will learn teaching techniques that provide experiences respecting cultural diversity, and provide activities that will draw upon the cultural diversity implicit in the content being presented as well as providing for differences in such factors as gender, ethnic membership, academic ability and background.

The student is required to demonstrate knowledge of assigned readings, subjects discussed in class, and current trends in laboratory education.
The student is expected to develop an attitude that is more than knowledge of facts about our world and universe, but it is also a way of thinking.

**ATTENDANCE POLICIES**: Students are expected to attend every scheduled class and laboratory meeting. Family vacations and celebrations of your 21st birthday are worthwhile, but are not classified as excused absences. If you book an airplane flight which conflicts with class, I do NOT consider that to be an excused absence. Routine events should be scheduled to avoid class conflicts. In general, only unavoidable absences are excused (major family illness or accidents, deaths, funerals). I will check attendance every class period and a portion of your grade is based on attendance. Points miss because of an unexcused absence (including tardiness and leaving early) cannot be recovered. An excused absence allows us to make alternative arrangements for completing assignments. The documentation required for an absence to be excused must be…

- from an appropriate source (e.g., doctor, dentist, funeral director) who states the nature of the event that caused (or will cause) your absence.
- in writing, on official stationary, and signed. (I do not return excuses to you.) Telephone calls, FAXes, and e-mails are not acceptable.
- presented prior to the absence for a scheduled event (e.g., university-sponsored activity, recognized religious holiday, military service).
- presented no more than one week after the date of an unexpected absence.

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any material missed during an absence from his/her classmates. It is always your responsibility to determine what happened in class or laboratory during your absence. If you are absent, you must obtain any handouts or assignments from me in my office on your own time: I rarely bring assignments to class more than once. You must obtain class notes from other students.

**Misellaneous Policies Regarding Attendance:**

**Unacceptable Excuses**: Only unavoidable absences are excused, so you should schedule routine personal events (e.g., vacations, wedding, 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. Employment conflicts are not acceptable excuses for absences, tardiness, or leaving class early. Texas waves jury duty for students, so jury duty is not an acceptable excuse. If you arrange to make up an assignment at an alternate time and do not show for that appointment, then you forfeit the opportunity.

Special circumstances may warrant deviating from these guidelines will be refereed to the Vice President of Student Affairs. This also applies to any situations for which you cannot provide an acceptable excuse as outlined above.
Evaluation: Not including first class day (Weds Sept 2), the day before Thanksgiving (Nov 25th), and the last class day being December 3rd, there are 11 class sessions. Grades for this course will be assessed according the following evaluation criteria:

1. Written Assignment: Student Reflections will be collected in the following methods:
   1. May be completed in reference to journal or other scholarly article distributed during class for the following week. Reflection due prior to beginning of next class.
   2. May be completed during the week prior to class and relate to students’ laboratory/teaching experience. Prompts will be provided for reflection. Reflection due prior to beginning of class.
   3. Reflections may be completed during class as team learning assignment (reviewing case studies, teaching videos, etc).

**Assignments are due at the beginning of the next class. LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED – NO EXCEPTIONS.**

2. Laboratory peer evaluations – you will be asked to attend and evaluate a peer’s laboratory session on an announced, invited basis four times.

3. Submission of scholarly article regarding teaching/learning in math/science. Students will submit an article from a peer reviewed journal that they find appropriate for laboratory teaching assistants. Instructor reserves the right to accept or deny the paper based on scholarliness, relevance, and applicability.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflections</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 reflections @ 30 points each</td>
<td>240 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer laboratory evaluation – 100 points each x 2</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper submission</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>460 points</strong></td>
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A = 90-100%
B = 80-89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%

Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All students are expected to conform to college level standards of academic integrity and quality of work (this includes spelling and grammar where applicable). Additional general guidelines that may be of interest to the student can be found in the “General Academic Policies and Regulations” section of the 2005 – 2006 TAMUCC undergraduate catalogue as well as the “The Student Code of Conduct”. In cases involving a academic dishonesty as defined by the Student Handbook, proceedings that have been outlined in the Catalog 2005-2006: Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi will be followed. **Except in cases were prior arrangements have been made with the instructor for university approved absences, there is no provision for making up late work and/or missed exams and quizzes.**
Anyone arriving after someone has completed an examination and left the room will not be allowed to take that examination. If you leave an examination room, for any reason, you must hand in your answer sheet and you will not be allowed to resume the examination.

***Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, Palm Pilots, etc., before entering the classroom or laboratory, or at least place them on silent mode.

Students with Disabilities: The Students with Disabilities Center is located in the Student Services Center (361.825.5816). If you have special needs, please contact this center. I cannot make modifications without the center’s involvement, even if you show me your IEP. If you have mobility problems, please notify me so that assistance can be given in case of fire drills or emergencies.

This syllabus is a draft in progress: the instructor reserves the right to modify its contents. While the instructor will attempt to notify all students of any changes, it is ultimately the students’ responsibility to keep appraised of those modifications/changes/additions/deletions/etc.

Disability and Veterans’ Services: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to providing persons with disabilities an equal opportunity to access campus facilities, resources and programs. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Support and accommodations are also available for returning veterans who experience cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus. Our Office of Disability Services arranges such support and academic accommodations. To make a request, or for more information, call (361) 825-5816 or visit Driftwood 101. It is important to contact the Office of Disability Services in a timely fashion as it will take time for them to review requests and prepare accommodations and accommodation letters.

Grade Appeals: As stated in the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi University Rules and Procedures (Section B [Academic Program], Part 13 [Students]: 13.02.99.C2 [Student Grade Appeals] and 13.02.99C2.01 [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 on 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, consult the University Rules and Procedures specified above (accessible through the University Rules and Procedures website at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.