Principles of Oncology: BIMS 5311  
Department of Life Sciences  
Fall 2016

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: BIMS 5311.001  
Class meeting time: Meeting times: T, R 12:30 pm - 1:45pm  
Class location: Lecture: OCNR 117  
Course Website: bb9.tamucc.edu

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Xavier F. Gonzales, PhD, MSPH  
Office location: Engineering 310C  
Office hours: T,R: 11:00 am-12:30pm & W: 5:00pm-7:00pm  
Telephone: 361-825-3824  
e-mail: Xavier.Gonzales@tamucc.edu  
Appointments: email me to set up appointments  
Email Responses: Only expect responses M-R from 9am-6pm.

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Course Description
This course is a study of the profile of cancer cells, and the various causes of human cancers. Contribution of heredity, environmental factors, and infectious agents to oncogenesis will be studied. Cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment will be discussed. Various types of cancer will be presented. Research papers on the origin and treatment of these cancer types will be discussed.

Extended Course Description
This course will provide you with a solid foundation in cancer biology. We will strictly follow the required text by Weinberg (The Biology of Cancer). In addition to the text, we will be reviewing recent scientific journals that help supplement the text. Students will learn to evaluate primary journals in cancer biology and present their findings in a group context. Additionally, students will be required to meet with the professor on a regular basis to further discuss research papers in which they will be responsible for directing the discussion in class.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES

Required  
Required Reading
Much of the lecture will be derived from assigned published manuscripts and the recommended text. Each of the papers that you will need for this class will be available for you to print from Blackboard. Be sure that you print the needed paper(s) and read them prior to the lecture for which it was assigned. Papers will be over recent primary journals. You must bring a copy of these papers to class. Assignments will be derived from these papers and the lecture material.

F. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT
 Assessment is a process used by instructors to help improve learning. Assessment is essential for effective learning because it provides feedback to both students and instructors. A critical step in this process is making clear the course’s student learning outcomes that describe what students are expected to learn to be successful in the course. The student learning outcomes for this course are listed below. By collecting data and sharing it with students on how well they are accomplishing these learning outcomes students can more efficiently and effectively focus their learning efforts. This information can also help instructors identify challenging areas for students and adjust their teaching approach to facilitate learning.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Differentiate a cancer cell from a normal cell
2. Summarize the ways in which cancers differ
3. Describe the invasion and metastasis process
4. Identify the causes of various cancers
5. Explain how infectious agents cause cancer
6. Summarize the role of oncogenes in cancer
7. Identify certain hereditary risk factors
8. Evaluate cancer diagnosis and treatment procedures
9. Explain methods of preventing cancer
10. Critically analyze current literature relating to Cancer Biology.
11. Communicate his/her knowledge and critical thinking on current cancer research
12. Write and present a research proposal on any of the topics covered in class

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES
Learner-Centered Teaching: Collaborative work, control of content selection, personal reflection, learning skill demonstration
H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Reading Reports &amp; Assessments</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Review and Discussion</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation w/Reading Report</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grading scale: A>90%  B=80-89.9%  C=70-79.9%  D=60-69%  F<60%

Lecture/Recitation
Exams Individual @ 100 pts. Each = 200 pts
Exam Group @ 50 pts. Each = 100 pts
Cumulative Final exam = 300 pts
Journal Reading Reports/Assessments = 150 pts
Journal Review & Discussion = 150 pts
Group Project Summary w/Presentation: = 100 pts
Total = 1000 pts

Nature of Assignments:

Team Learning: We will use a team learning approach in this class. **Permanent groups will be established at the start of the course.** Research examining team learning assignments show that the group score is HIGHER than individual scores and that students understand concepts much better as a result of discussing questions in groups. Sometimes each group member will submit answers individually and sometimes groups will submit group consensus answers to questions. We will use the team learning approach on assignments and lecture exams as described below.

**Exams** will be comprised mainly of multiple choice questions. Some may be setup as matching or fill-in the blank. Problems and/or essay questions may appear on the exams. Most questions, including multiple choice questions typically require analysis and interpretation of data or experimental design to assess critical thinking skills. The **Final Exam** (December 13th) will be a comprehensive review of entire course content. Cell phones must be turned off and put away during exams.

For the first two exams, students will INDIVIDUALLY take the exam on day 1. **This score will constitute 67% of your 150 point exam score (100 points).** The other 50 points of your exam score will be from a **GROUP exam given on day 2.** Without using any outside resources during the group portion of the exam or between the individual and group portions of the exam, your group will answer the same exam questions. Each group must reach a consensus on each question and submit a single set of answers for the whole group. There is no group component on
the final exam.

I may allow students to use one sheet of handwritten notes on the cumulative final exam. This is not a right, but a privilege which must be earned and may be taken away by the instructor at any time. Only the front and back of a single 8.5” x 11” page with no typing, photocopying or computer generated information of any kind will be allowed. If at any time during the semester you engage in academic dishonesty on any assignment, you will forfeit this privilege for the rest of the term. This includes cheating, helping others to cheat, and even failure to report the dishonest actions of others.

JOURNAL REVIEW & DISCUSSION

Students will be required to meet with the instructor to review the assigned journals. The students will be leading the in-class discussion over the journals. (150 pts total)

GROUP PROJECT SUMMARY W/PRESENTATION

Students will select a cancer topic with instructor approval in order to prepare a Project Summary addressing a missing component in cancer research. The Project Summary (1.5 page maximum) describing the project in the language of the discipline. Include a statement of the research objective(s) and/or hypotheses and discuss the significance of the project to the advancement of knowledge in the field of cancer. Project Summary should be derived from published journals only. (100 pts)
JOURNAL READING REPORTS/ASSESSMENTS
Students will be required to provide an individual reading report over each journal reviewed in class as well as meet with the instructor to peer review undergraduate student reports.

Part 1
1. Provide the title, author(s), date and source of each reading.
2. Indicate the senior author's affiliation (e.g. Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, Michigan State University).
3. Observation that led to research (look in abstract and introduction)
   a. Describe 2–3 observations.
4. Question (try rewording the title)
   a. Identify the model organism/system.
   b. State why the model is an appropriate choice.
   c. State why the question is important (what did the authors hope to learn about the field?).
5. Hypotheses (usually not stated but implied in abstract or introduction; look for phrases like “this research shows…”)
   a. Explain why these hypotheses make sense based on current knowledge (introduction).
6. Experiment (look at the figures to determine what they did)
   a. Choose 2–3 key figures that directly address the hypotheses.
   b. Restate the model organism/system (figure legend).
   c. Describe general experimental design; what was measured/compared and how?
   d. Describe the methods and controls (draw a flow diagram on the board when presenting).
   e. Explain why the choice of controls was appropriate.

Part 2.
7. Results (look at the figures first)
   a. Explain figures clearly; restate what is being compared to what for each one.
   b. Look for trends; e.g., What is increased over what?
   c. Identify the controls and how they validate the trends.
   d. Look for statistical analyses (figure legend or results) that validate the data.
8. Conclusion (based on the data, not on the discussion)
   a. Does the data support the hypotheses?
   b. Are there other possible explanations for the data?
   c. Is the data convincing (stats)?
   d. How could the experiment be improved?
   e. Why is the data interesting; how does it contribute to our understanding of the field?


Rubric--Power Point Presentations

Peer Reviewer Name: ___________________

Reviewers: Please total the points and place at the listed spot at the end of the rubric.

Group Topic: ______________________________

Directions: Score as follows: 0= Missing  1= Poor  1.5= Suboptimal  2=Fair  3= Good
4=Very Good  4.5= Excellent  5=Flawless

Format
1. Students have slides with consistent format, background, and color scheme ______
2. Narrative slides are legible and do not have too many words/facts on a single slide ______
3. Narrative slides contain tables, figures, and graphs that help to tell the story____
4. Graphs/tables are clear, concise and accurate with correctly-labeled axes, labels_____
5. Order of presentation tells a clear, logical story of the information presented. ______

Content
1. Students had sufficient knowledge about area of presentation. ______
2. Students understood area well enough to explain content. ______
3. Students presented scientific content in a coherent fashion. ______
4. Students cited/acknowledged work done by others. ______
5. Students integrated references into topic. ______

Oral Presentation of Power Point Presentation
1. Presenters spoke in an adequate amount of time to allow a clear understanding. _____
2. Presenters gave presentation in logical format ______
3. Presenters clearly articulated major points of the work.____
4. Presenters gave a talk that was concise in describing work presented. _____
5. Presenters gave a talk that was relatively free of grammatical errors. _____
6. Presenters adequately handled questions at the end of the presentation. ________
7. Presenters spoke without many pauses, giggles, “uhhs,” “you knows,” and “likes.” ______
8. Presenters exhibited professionalism in making presentation. (Not Strict on Attire) ______
9. Presenters gestured to words/graphics._____
10. Presenters talked to audience, not to wall, slides, or inanimate objects. ______

Peer Reviewer Total Points: ______
## I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Journal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/25</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>How to Read a Journal</td>
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<td>08/30</td>
<td>Cancer Genetics I</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/06</td>
<td>Cancer Genetics III</td>
<td>Reading Report I</td>
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<td>09/08</td>
<td>Nature of Cancer I</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Nature of Cancer II</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Nature of Cancer III</td>
<td>Reading Report II</td>
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<td>09/20</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>09/22</td>
<td>Tumor Virus II</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Reading Report III</td>
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<td>09/29</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Exam (Group)</td>
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<td>Growth Factors &amp; Receptors I</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>10/27</td>
<td>Growth Factors &amp; Receptors III</td>
<td>Reading Report V</td>
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<td>Group Presentations/Review</td>
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<td>Reading Day</td>
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<td>12/13</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>12/17</td>
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<td>Commencement</td>
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Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary and will be announced to the class by the Instructor in Blackboard announcements. The assignments and exams shown are directly related to the Student Learning Outcomes described in Section F.

**J. COURSE POLICIES**

**Emails**
I am happy to communicate with you through emails but I do expect you to do so in a professional manner. Emails are not text messages, therefore, do not right them in that style. I expect an appropriate salutation followed by a brief explanation of the purpose of
your email. I would prefer that you ask everything at once and it would be best to put all your questions in bullets to allow me to answer behind the question. Further, I do not answer emails on the weekend. If you sent your email during professional working hours (M-R: 9am-6pm) and it did not get answered after 24hrs it was more than likely lost in all my emails. Please resend the email.

**Attendance/Tardiness**
Attendance: Students are expected to attend every scheduled class. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any material missed during an absence from his/her classmates. Tardiness: Students may enter when late but be respectful of your peers and do not disrupt the class as you enter.

**Late Work and Make-up Exams**
No late work will be accepted. It is your responsibility to review the syllabus for when items are due. It is also your responsibility to get it turned in through the appropriate outlet on the designated day.

No make-up exams will be given; one exam can be dropped and replaced by the grade from the Final Exam.

**Extra Credit**
Missed extra credit opportunities--Instructor is not obligated to give make-up assignments for extra credit opportunities, whether excused or unexcused.

**Cell Phone Use**
Lecture: Students are not allowed to use cell phones in class. Students will be asked to leave the room if found using cell phones in class. If it is urgent for you to use your phone feel free to exit the room to utilize your phone.

**Laptop Use**
Lecture: Students may utilize their laptops as long as it does not disrupt others in class.

**Food in Class**
Lecture: Students may eat food as long as it does not disrupt others in class. It is the student’s responsibility to clean up after themselves. If you fail to do so, you will no longer be allowed to have food in class.

**Missed Exam**
No make-up exams will be given; one exam can be dropped and replaced by the grade from the Final Exam.

**Participation**
Lecture: Students are required to participate in all group activities. Peer evaluations will be given with each activity to determine your final assessment.

**BlackBoard and Other Electronic Resources:**
Students are responsible for visiting the course BlackBoard site regularly. Updates to lecture outlines or study guides and other information, such as homework assignments, will be available on this site. If you have never used BlackBoard before, click on Island Online on the homepage, choose BlackBoard under “Island Online Login” and then on “I am a new user” and follow the instructions. If you have any problems logging into BlackBoard, please call the Online Help Desk at x2825 (or 825-2825 from off-campus or 1-866-353-2491 for long distance).

K. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- **Academic Integrity (University)**
  It is expected that university students will demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction, and ability to manage their own affairs. Students are viewed as individuals who possess the qualities of worth, dignity, and the capacity for self-direction in personal behavior.
  See Full University Policy at [http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=313#Academic_Integrity](http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=313#Academic_Integrity)

- **Classroom/Professional 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 may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

- **Deadline for Dropping a Course with a Grade of W (University)**
  The grade of W will be assigned to any student officially dropping a course by November 11, 2016. No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. Visit the Office of the University Registrar for the Course Drop Form that must be submitted. After November 11, 2016 a student will not be allowed to drop a course.

- **Grade Appeals (College of Science and Engineering)**
  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 through the University Rules website at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html, and the College of Science and Engineering Grade Appeals webpage at 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.

- Disability Services
  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. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call (361) 825-5816 or visit Disability Services in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

  If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

  http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/

- 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.

L. OTHER INFORMATION

Have a great semester and enjoy your journey to discover new knowledge

GENERAL DISCLAIMER

I reserve the right to modify the information, schedule, assignments, deadlines, and course policies in this syllabus if and when necessary. I will announce such changes in a timely manner during regularly scheduled lecture periods and within Blackboard.