Professional Skills  BIOL2200.002/BIMS2200.002  
Department of Life Sciences  
Spring 2017

A. COURSE INFORMATION  
Course number/section:  BIOL2200.002/BIMS2200.002  
Class meeting time:  MW 9:00am-9:50am  
Class location:  BH-201  
Course Website:  bb9.tamucc.edu

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION  
Instructor:  Ms. Avery Scherer  
Office hours:  Available 15 minutes before and after class.  
e-mail:  Avery.Scherer@tamucc.edu  
Appointments:  Appointments scheduled by email.

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION  
Catalog Course Description  
Presentation and discussion of selected topics relating to the professional skills of practicing scientists including literature searches, reviews, paper presentation, professional opportunities and job requirements. Biomedical Sciences and Biology majors only; satisfies computer literacy requirements.

Extended 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, an introduction to ethical issues in science, and guidance on application completion and interviewing.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES  
Prerequisites: None  
Corequisites: None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES  
- Students are responsible to read all handouts provided on Blackboard.

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. Develop scientific social skills through effective communication.
2. Identify how to develop a scientific community.
3. Design and write professional scientific documents (curriculum vitae, personal statement) to be used in employment searches or application to graduate and/or professional schools.
4. Distinguish between primary reports and reviews of scientific literature.
5. Describe and construct the components of primary scientific literature in the A-IMRAD format.
6. Design a hypothesis of a biological problem, based on extension of a problem from primary scientific literature.
7. Produce a poster and a Power Point presentation of the analysis of the biological problem.

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>I. ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis &amp; Story Outline</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Documents (4 minimum)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Vitae</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Statement</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Grading scale: A>90%  B=80-89.9%  C=70-79.9%  D=60-69%  F<60%

Lecture
Hypothesis and Story Outline = 100 pts
Supporting Documents (4 minimum) = 50 pts
Curriculum Vitae = 100 pts
Personal Statement = 100 pts
Poster Presentation = 150 pts
Oral Presentation = 150 pts
Research Paper Draft = 100 pts
Research Paper = 150 pts
Attendance = 100 pts
Total = 1000 pts

J. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

(Tentative schedule—Dates/Assignments will be on the final syllabi distributed on the first day of class)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 18</td>
<td>Introduction (Final Syllabus distributed and Assessment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 23-25</td>
<td>Discussion Topic Selection &amp; Hypothesis Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 30</td>
<td>Library Scavenger Hunt: Meet In LIB 109 (Ed Kownslar)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 1-6</td>
<td>Elements of the Research Paper I: Introduction; Materials and Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 8-13</td>
<td>Elements of the Research Paper II: Results (figures &amp; tables); Discussion; Literature Cited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 15-20</td>
<td>Writing the Research Paper I: Story Time &amp; Supportive Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 22-27</td>
<td>Writing the Research Paper II: Elements of a Good Paper (Story Outline Development: come to class with a draft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1-6</td>
<td>Curriculum Vitae (CV)/Resume; Personal Statement Writing; LinkedIn Workshop</td>
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### Theme IV: Effective Communication in Science (Public Speaking)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 8-20</td>
<td>Networking &amp; Interviewing Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 22-27</td>
<td>Poster Presentation I: Demonstration; Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29-April 3</td>
<td>Poster Presentation II: Student Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5-10</td>
<td>Review CV/Resume &amp; Personal Statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Drop Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 12-17</td>
<td>Oral Presentation I: Demonstration; Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19-24</td>
<td>Oral Presentation II: Student Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26-May 1</td>
<td>Review of Research Paper Drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Reading Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Final: 8:00am-10:30am</td>
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Note: Changes in this course schedule may be necessary and will be announced to the class by the Instructor. The assignments and exams shown are directly related to the Student Learning Outcomes described in Section F.

### K. COURSE POLICIES

#### Attendance/Tardiness
Attendance: Students are expected to attend every scheduled class meeting. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any material missed during an absence from his/her classmates. Power Points are not placed in the library, and only Power Points from certain sections will be placed on Blackboard, or on a website.

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. You must refer to Blackboard to identify when items will be due. It is your responsibility to get it turned in through the appropriate outlet on the designated day. I will not remind you.

No make-up exams will be given; one exam can be dropped and replaced by the grade from the Cumulative 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 may **NOT** utilize their cell phone; therefore keep them on silent and put away.

**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 Cumulative 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.

**L. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

- **Academic Integrity (University)**
  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 failing grade.

- **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.

- **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.

- **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. Please consult with the instructor before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, visit the Office of the University Registrar for the Course Drop Form that must be submitted. No student is eligible to receive a W without completing the official drop process by this deadline. Please consult the Academic Calendar (http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/) for the last day 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/](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.

**M. OTHER INFORMATION**

• **Academic Advising**
  The College of Science & 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. Meetings are by appointment only; advisors do not take walk-ins. Please call or stop by the Advising Center to check availability and schedule an appointment. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Center for Instruction 350 or can be reached at (361) 825-3928.

**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.