PROFESSIONAL SKILLS BIOL/BIMS 2200.001/2200.002  
DEPARTMENT OF LIFE SCIENCE  
FALL 2019 SYLLABUS

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: BIOL/BIMS 2200.001/ BIOL/BIMS 2200.002
Class meeting time: BIOL/BIMS 2200.001 - Monday: 7:00-8:40 pm  
BIOL/BIMS 2200.002 - Tuesday: 7:00-8:40 pm
Class location: BIOL/BIMS 2200.001 – OCNR 222  
BIOL/BIMS 2200.002 – CS 114

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Paul Silva
Office location: Natural Resource Center 2501
Office hours: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 4:00-6 pm
Telephone: 361-825-3204
E-mail: paul.silva@tamucc.edu
Appointments: As scheduled.

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

Required Textbook(s)

Optional Textbook(s) or Other References
Information may be taken from these and presented in lecture, but the student will not be expected to buy them.

Supplies
Textbooks, tri-fold poster for poster presentation, copies of papers required for your project (do off library databases).

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.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to perform these outcomes:

1. Design and write professional scientific documents (resumes, personal statements, cover letters) 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/or 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.
8. Complete a job application that stimulates interest and understand the interview process.
9. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation to market yourself for a job position.

G. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

This course will be a combination of lecture section which will include traditional lecture, discussion, guest presenters and in-class participation (including student presentations).

H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

**ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA BLACKBOARD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Topic area</th>
<th>Possible points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cover Letter and Resume</td>
<td>Career</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Personal Statement</td>
<td>Career Development</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Title &amp; Abstract</td>
<td>Scientific Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Instructor will give class a short paper missing the title and abstract (“decapitated paper”); student will write abstract and title of paper.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Bibliography</td>
<td>Library Research</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 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. <strong>Student must format the bibliography in one specific journal style. Make sure you identify the Journal.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Poster &amp; Presentations</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>125</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Oral Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students are required to make a poster of a primary literature research experiment in their area of interest, and present this area as if they had done the research. You must also do an 6-8-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 (25%) and professor review (75%).</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Job Announcement &amp; Application</td>
<td>Career Development</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>175</td>
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</table>
| • Students must do a 10 to 15-slide Power Point presentation to market themselves for a job of their interest (excluding the title slide). This presentation must run in length between 10-13 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 (25%), as well as professor review (75%).

8. Final Exam 150

9. Attendance 50
You will get 10 points subtracted for the second unexcused absence (receive 40), 20 for the third (receive 30), and 50 pts for the fourth (receive zero).

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

I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Week of Aug 26</td>
<td>Intro; Course overview, Cover letters &amp; Resumes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Week of Sept 2</td>
<td>Personal statements, Intro to Scientific Writing</td>
<td>R (Ch 1-10, 12)</td>
<td>NO CLASS on Monday Class on Tuesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Week of Sept 9</td>
<td>Career Counseling- Mr. Jacinto Medina</td>
<td>G (Sec 3-8); D (Ch 1, 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Week of Sept 16</td>
<td>Using Library resources— Mr. Ed Warga Bell Library 109</td>
<td>Decapitated Paper given D (Ch 4, 10)</td>
<td>Cover Letter &amp; Resume</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Week of Sept 23</td>
<td>Bibliographies Applications &amp; Interviewing</td>
<td>D (Ch 13)</td>
<td>Personal Statement Presentation Article w/ Search bibliographies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Week of Sept 30</td>
<td>Oral Presentations &amp; Posters How to evaluate presentations</td>
<td>G (Ch 1-2); D (Ch 15, 16, 17) Appendix 13</td>
<td>Title/Abstract Due for Decap paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Week of Oct 7</td>
<td>Poster Presentations I</td>
<td>Poster and Bibliographies for presentation support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Week of Oct 14</td>
<td>Poster Presentations II</td>
<td>Job Announcement &amp; Application</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Week of Oct 21</td>
<td>Poster Presentations III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Week of Oct 28</td>
<td>PowerPoint Training/Practice</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Week of Nov 4</td>
<td>PowerPoint Presentations I</td>
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### J. COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance/Tardiness**
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.**

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.

**Late Work and Make-up Exams**
Students will be given a Late Assignment Penalty for tardy work: 15% assignment grade deduction per class day late. However, after the 3rd day, late assignments will not be accepted. Late assignments are defined by being turned in after THE START OF YOUR CLASS PERIOD.

**Extra Credit**
Extra credit can be earned by volunteering at an instructor approved outreach/education event.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>PowerPoint Presentations II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 18</td>
<td>PowerPoint Presentations III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Nov 25</td>
<td>PowerPoint Presentations IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Alternative Careers in Science &amp; Academic Careers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Dec 9</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

***ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA BLACKBOARD***
Cell Phone Use
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. I would prefer that earpieces not be worn in lecture. **Recording of lectures with tape recorders can only be done with permission of instructor.**

Food in Class
**Please refrain from eating in class;** if you must eat for medical reasons, please see me privately.

Missed Presentation
Missing your assigned presentation time will result in a zero for that assignment. Please consult with the instructor for extenuating circumstances.

Participation
**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!

K. 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)**
  I hope that you never 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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. 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/

- **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.

I. **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.