SENIOR PRESENTATION (BIOL 4292.001)  
Department of Life Sciences  
Spring 2020

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: BIOL 4292.001  
Class meeting time: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00-8:50 AM  
Class location: Michael and Karen O’Connor Building (OCNR) 222  
Course Website: https://bb9.tamucc.edu/

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Michael G. Reuscher  
Office location: Tidal Hall 121  
Office hours: MTWR 11:30 – 1:00 PM  
e-mail: Michael.reuscher@tamucc.edu  
Appointments: please email

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Course Description: Application of scientific literature research skills including a review of library services pertinent to science. Student oral seminar presentation in a science-oriented format and with visual aid support on an approved biological topic. Prerequisites: BIOL 2200 - Professional Skills or BIMS 2200 - Professional Skills; Senior standing or consent of instructor.

Extended Course Description: Senior biologists must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with both the scientific and lay communities through oral, written and /or audiovisual media. Communication with scientific colleagues at conferences, university seminars or colloquia is also critical for professional growth and development. This course will provide students the opportunity to research, prepare and give an oral presentation based on a scientific theme.

D. PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites:  
Prerequisites: BIOL 2200 or BIMS 2200 (Professional Skills)

Corequisites:  
None

E. REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES

Required Textbook(s)  
None
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:

- **SLO 1:** Develop knowledge and critical thinking skills in a specific area of Biology;
- **SLO 2:** Organize a coherent and concise presentation to your peers;
- **SLO 3:** Establish professional competency in literature research, organization and visual aids;
- **SLO 4:** Increase student confidence in making oral presentations;
- **SLO 5:** Grade presentations of peers in an objective and fair manner.

G. **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES**

1) Each student will submit a typed proposal containing a title and subject based on themes that are presented in class. This page will be submitted within one week following the first class meeting at the start of the semester.

2) Each student will conduct a 30 minute presentation on the proposed subject. Important guidelines will be discussed in class. Additionally, the grading rubric is attached at the end of this syllabus. This grading rubric will be used by both the instructor and the peers to evaluate the presentations. The overall presentation grade will consist of the instructor’s grade (50%) and the average grade given by the presenter’s peers (50%).

3) On the day of your presentation, provide your audience with a typed page that includes the title, an abstract of 250-350 words, and a bibliography of peer reviewed references. The bibliography should be in the format of a scientific journal (you may pick the journal). This page needs to be submitted to the instructor one week before the presentation.

4) After the presentation, we will have a class discussion about the topic. Every student is encouraged to contribute to the discussion. Remember that there are no stupid questions and you may have different insights or see things from a different angle. By participating the class discussion will be more vibrant and intellectually stimulating. Furthermore, participation is part of the final grade.

5) For each presentation, two students will be assigned discussion leaders. This means that every student will co-lead the discussion of two presentations. Discussion leaders will have to read in the literature about the specific topic of the presentation they are assigned to, in order to become subject matter experts. Discussion leaders take charge asking the presenter questions. They can also come up with creative ways to engage the rest of the class in the discussion.
6) Attendance is mandatory. Every student plays an important role as peer evaluator (see above) and as an audience member. Additionally, by listening to the presentations you will learn about different subject matters.

H. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Final grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title, Abstract, Bibliography</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Lead</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Class Discussion</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grade assignments:
A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=< 60 %. All grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number, therefore, a grade of 89.50% would be rounded to 90% (A) and a grade of 89.49% would be an 89% (B).

I. COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 20-24</td>
<td>Introduction/orientation (Program Overview, Expectations); determination of themes; determination of presentation order</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>January 27-31</td>
<td>Determination of discussion leads; introduction to oral presentations (Do’s &amp; Don’ts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>February 3-7</td>
<td>One oral presentation per class starting this week.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>February 10-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>February 17-21</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>February 24-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>March 2-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>March 9-13</td>
<td>Spring Break—no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March 16-20</td>
<td></td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>March 23-27</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>March 28-April 3</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>April 6-10</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>April 13-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>April 20-24</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>April 27-May 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>May 4-May 8</td>
<td>End of oral presentations; last class is May 5.</td>
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Syllabus may change at the discretion of the instructor.

J. COURSE POLICIES

Absences: Attendance is mandatory. Exceptions will be granted in the event of illness, death in the family, university sponsored event and military deployment. Other conflicts such as attendance of professional symposia or the need to conduct field research will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In any case, documentation must be provided for absences to be considered excused. Students with a university approved scheduled absence (athletics, military duty, etc.) or other conflict must contact the instructor well in advance of the anticipated absence.

Attendance/Tardiness: Each unexcused absence result in the deduction of 10% of the attendance score, which equals 1% of the final grade. Frequent late arrivals in class may also result in point deductions at the discretion of the instructor.

Late Work and Make-up Presentations: If you have an emergency and cannot make your scheduled presentation date, please e-mail Dr. Reuscher as soon as possible. It is very important that every student is ready to present their presentation one class period before their scheduled presentation date, in case the scheduled presenter has an emergency and is unable to present that day. The same applies to the discussion leaders. We cannot afford losing an entire
class period because we have no presenter!
Please note that class assignments may be sent to the instructor by e-mail; tardiness is determined by the time noted on the instructor’s Inbox, but allowances can be made for server problems. Late assignments will get a point deduction of 10% for every 24-hour period following the deadline. A presenter that misses his/her assigned presentation date unexcused will also receive a 10% deduction.

Cell Phone Use
Not allowed.

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 (http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu/)**

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

- **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.

M. 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.
Rubric for Grading Power Point Presentations
Biol 4292 – Senior Presentation – Spring 2020
M. Reuscher

Name of presenter _______________________________
Start time____________    Finish time _______________

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

1. Slides have appropriate format and color scheme (background, color) _____
2. Font is legible and appropriate color for all slides of power point presentation (PPP) _____
3. Title slide has authors with correct affiliations _____
4. PPP slides do not have too many words/facts on a single slide ______
5. PPP has clear and accurate tables and/or figures that help to tell the story____
6. Power point slides were fairly accurate for scientific content____
7. Presenter spoke in 30 minutes (deduct 1 pt for every two minutes under/over). _____
8. Presenter gave presentation in IMRAD form____
9. Presenter used proper speed, tone and diction in presentation. _____
10. Presenter told an interesting story with smooth transitions between sections. _____
11. Presenter clearly articulated major points of the work._____  
12. Presenter adequately handled questions at the end of the presentation. _____
13. Presenter spoke without reading from slides or cheat sheet_____  
14. Presenter exhibited professionalism in making presentation _____
15. Presenter talked to audience, not to wall or slides. _____

Final score given by instructor ______

Average number of points from peers______

Final score__________________

Comments: