SCIENCE COMMUNICATION | BIOL 2300.W02  
Department of Life Sciences  
Fall 2020

A. COURSE INFORMATION

Course number/section: BIOL 2300.W02  
Instructional method: 100% Online  
Class meeting time: Asynchronous Learning  
Class location: Blackboard: bb9.tamucc.edu

B. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Xavier F. Gonzales, PhD, MSPH  
Office location: Tidal Hall 235  
Office hours: Realtime Online: T: 2-4:30pm & R: 2-4:30pm  
Face-to-Face Appointments: Blackboard Message me to set up appointments  
Questions: Blackboard Messages is most reliable  
e-mail: Xavier.Gonzales@tamucc.edu  
Email Responses: Only expect responses M-F from 3:30pm-4:30pm.  
Telephone: 361-825-3824

C. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Course Description  
This course is designed to train students to develop research translation and science communication skills. Students will learn to communicate science with a variety of audiences by engaging in interactive activities and completing assignments aimed at developing critical skills in thinking, writing, speaking, and graphical presentation.

Extended Course Description  
In this course, students will learn critical skills required for effective scientific communication. Students will review scientific information presented in professional (e.g., journal articles) and popular media (e.g., blogs, magazines) sources. Students will also learn to evaluate the quality of scientific presentation and implement these skills through written and verbal dissemination exercises. An emphasis will be placed on reading, understanding, critiquing, presenting, and writing. Topics include critiquing papers and articles, use of library and electronic databases for scientific literature searches, oral presentations, and writing scientific papers and popular science media.

PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

Prerequisites  
None

Corequisites  
None
REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S), READINGS AND SUPPLIES

Required Textbook(s)
None

Optional Textbook(s) or Other References
Reading and research materials will be made available online or students will be provided links to resources. Students are expected to read assigned online readings.

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. Critique and evaluate literature.
2. Search for scientific literature using library and electronic databases.
3. Conduct literature analyses, develop visual aids, and organize oral/visual presentations.
4. Communicate scientific findings to a layman audience.
5. Create and give professional quality presentations.

1. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Learner-Centered Teaching: collaborative work, control of content selection, personal reflection, and learning skill demonstration

2. MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>% of FINAL GRADE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Stakes Team Project</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35</td>
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</table>

Grading scale: A>89.6%  B=79.6-89.5%  C=69.6-79.5%  D=59.6-69.5%  F<59.6%
I am already counting in the rounding up portion. Your request to bump up your grade if it is at the .5% of the scale will be declined.
### COURSE CONTENT/SCHEDULE

The class is 100% online. You will be able to complete readings and activities at your own pace on a week to week basis. Class assignments will always be due on Monday at 5pm. All reading, activities, videos, and weeks instructions will be posted on Tuesday at 11am.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reading/Video</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/19-08/24</td>
<td>Course Design and Purpose</td>
<td>Getting to Know Each Other: Interview a Scientist</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/25-08/31</td>
<td>Story Telling</td>
<td>Relating to Others</td>
<td>Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/01-09/07</td>
<td>Story Telling</td>
<td>Ethics and Responsibility</td>
<td>Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/08-09/14</td>
<td>Story Telling</td>
<td>Pick an online news article from The Atlantic and explain the article by telling a story</td>
<td>Student Selection</td>
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<td>09/15-09/21</td>
<td>Knowledge Sharing &amp; Communication</td>
<td>Inquiry-Based Glossary Development &amp; Concept Mapping</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/22-09/28</td>
<td>Strength in Numbers</td>
<td>Team Building</td>
<td>Review Journal 1</td>
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<td>09/29-10/05</td>
<td>Research Journal Analysis Step 1</td>
<td>1. Title Break Down</td>
<td>Primary Journal 1 Part 1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2. Bibliography Review</td>
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<td>3. Glossary Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/06-10/12</td>
<td>Research Journal Analysis Step 2</td>
<td>1. Types of Experiments</td>
<td>Primary Journal 1 Part 2</td>
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<td>2. Graphics and Statistics</td>
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<td>3. Glossary Expansion</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/13-10/19</td>
<td>Research Journal Analysis Step 3</td>
<td>1. Comparing your ideas with the investigator</td>
<td>Primary Journal 1 Part 3</td>
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<td>2. Glossary Organization</td>
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<td>3. Concept Mapping</td>
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<td>10/20-10/26</td>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
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<td>10/27-11/02</td>
<td>Science in an Online World</td>
<td>1. Twitter</td>
<td>Review Journal 2</td>
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<td>2. Instagram</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3. LinkedIn</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/03-11/09</td>
<td>Research Journal Analysis Step 1</td>
<td>1. Title Break Down</td>
<td>Primary Journal 2 Part 1</td>
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<td>2. Bibliography Review</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.

4. COURSE POLICIES
   THIS IS A FULLY ONLINE COURSE. IF WE MEET IN PERSON YOU NEED TO FOLLOW SAFETY PRECAUTIONS TO LIMIT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19.

   COVID-19
   Face Coverings—Face coverings (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Extra masks will be made available if needed.

   As an online course Blackboard is the main learning management system to be utilized: Blackboard and Other Electronic Resources:
   Students are responsible for visiting the course Blackboard site regularly. All course materials will be made available through Blackboard.
   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).

   Blackboard Messages
   The main way to communicate in this course is through Blackboard Messages. I will be checking Messages at least once a day. It is less likely that your message will be missed if sent through your course messages rather than emails.

   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-F: 10am-4pm) and it did not get answered after 24hrs it was more than likely lost in all my emails. Please resend the email.

**Participation**
This is a team based and project-based course. To do well in this course you must be actively participating through Blackboard and selected social media sites. Students are required to participate in all group activities. Peer evaluations will be given with each activity to determine your final assessment.

**Late Work**
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.**

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

5. **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.C0.03, 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 required 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules website at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). 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/
Civil Rights Complaints
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free from discrimination, relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and ensuring that all affected students have access to services. For information on reporting Civil Rights complaints, options and support resources (including pregnancy support accommodations) or university policies and procedures, please contact the University Title IX Coordinator, Sam Ramirez (Samuel.ramirez@tamucc.edu) or Deputy Title IX Coordinator, Rosie Ruiz (Rosie.Ruiz@tamucc.edu) x5826, or visit website at Title IX/Sexual Assault/Pregnancy.

Limits to Confidentiality. Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University’s student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, are not able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report alleged or suspected civil rights discrimination that is observed by or made known to an employee in the course and scope of their employment. As the instructor, I must report allegations of civil rights discrimination, including sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator if you share it with me. These reports will trigger contact with you from the Civil Rights/Title IX Compliance office who will inform you of your options and resources regarding the incident that you have shared. If you would like to talk about these incidents in a confidential setting, you are encouraged to make an appointment with counselors in the University Counseling Center.

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.

Campus Emergencies
At TAMU-CC, your safety is a top concern. We actively prepare for natural disasters or human-caused incidents with the ultimate goal of maintaining a safe and secure campus.

- For any emergency, dial the University Police Department (UPD) at 361-825-4444 or dial 911. It’s a good idea to have the UPD emergency number (and non-emergency number 361-825-4242) saved in your cell phone.
- There are nearly 200 classroom telephones throughout campus. If you feel
threatened or need help and don’t have a cell phone, dial 4444 (emergency) or 4242 (non-emergency) to be connected to UPD.

• If we hear a fire alarm, we will immediately evacuate the building and proceed to (This course is 100% online) ______________(location).
  o Proceed to the nearest building exit or evacuation stairway. Do not use the elevator. Persons who need help navigating stairs should proceed to a marked Area of Rescue Assistance, if possible.
  o Persons with disabilities should speak with their faculty about how to best assist them in case of an emergency.
  o Review the evacuation route (see specific Building Emergency Plan).

• TAMU-CC employs the Code Blue Emergency Notification System, an alert system which connects the campus community during emergency situations. o The notifications include emails, text and pre-recorded messages, as appropriate.
  o Code Blue emergencies may include severe weather warnings, threats, school closures, delays, evacuations, and other incidents which disrupt regular campus activities.
  o Students can update personal contact information anytime at https://emergency.tamucc.edu/contactform/

• Shelter in Place via Code Blue.
  o "Shelter-in-place" means to take immediate shelter where you are and may be implemented for severe weather, hazardous material spills, active shooters or other dangerous situations.
  o If there is a shelter in place for a tornado warning, our preferred location is the bottom floor of this building, away from windows and doors.

• Active Threat Protocol. There are three things you could do that make a difference if there is an active threat: Run, Hide, and/or Fight. For more information about the Run, Hide, Fight protocol, including what to do when law enforcement arrives, visit http://safety.tamucc.edu/ems/activethreat.html

For the Quick Campus Guide to Campus Emergencies (including a list of Areas of Rescue Assistance and additional protocols on assisting persons with physical disabilities, hurricanes, bomb threats, animal bites, crime reporting, elevator entrapment, etc.), visit https://safety.tamucc.edu/uploads/Site/finalbooklet.pdf

6. 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.