UTRGV BIOL 6102.01 SYLLABUS

BIOL 6102.01  Zen Faulkes
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Text 956-342-4426  Voice 956-665-2614
Tuesday, 1:40–2:30 pm, EDUC 2.222  Office ESCNE 2.364

Textbook and/or Resource Material

• None. All reading materials will be provided electronically on Blackboard.

Course Description and Prerequisites

Students will learn professional skills for a career in the biological sciences such as grant agency selection, grant writing, preparation of curriculum vitae, the peer review process, development and formatting of manuscripts, scientific proposals, review papers, and cover letters. Students will learn to make proper use of bibliographic citations, write technical papers, and prepare documents. Prerequisites Graduate standing.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes for the Course

• Can create research manuscripts.
• Understand the review process for scientific journals.
• Perform critical review of manuscripts.

Learning Objectives for Core Curriculum Requirements

This course satisfies no core curriculum requirements. It is a required course for the Biology master’s program (thesis and non-thesis options).

Grading Policies

Final mark = 75% lecture + 25% lab. Fractions are not rounded up. If you get 79.9%, you have my sympathy, but not a B. Marks are never “curved.” There is no extra credit for anyone ever.

• A = 90% and up
• B = 80% to anything less than 90%
• C = 70% to anything less than 80%
• D = 60% to anything less than 70%
• F = Less than 60%

Assignments

Biweekly writing projects – September 5, 19, October 3, 17, 31, November 14, 28 – 35 points

Every other week, you will submit a writing project due Tuesday at 1:00 pm (i.e., before class time). The topics will be announced the previous class. If you are a thesis student, some of these will drafts of some portion of your thesis. Some may ask that you revise or extend a previous assignment, in
which case weekly submission must show substantial progress from the previous entry (i.e., hundreds of new words or major changes from previous submission). 5 points each.

**Biweekly peer review – September 12, 26, October 10, 24, November 7, 21, December 5 – 35 points**

Assignments submitted by two students from the previous week will be selected for peer review, and posted to Blackboard. You will review these two submissions and submit comments back to the authors so that they might improve. As with the writing projects, these will be due every other Tuesday at 1:00 pm. 2.5 points each review, for a total of 5 points each week.

**Other assignments – September 5, 17 October, 7 November – 30 points**

- CV – 5 September – 4 points.
- Topic to be announced – 7 November – 6 points.

Late assignments are subject to a -20% per day penalty (i.e., if your assignment is a day late, your best score would be 8, not 10; if your assignment is two days late, your best score would be 6).

If you miss assignments due to circumstances beyond your control, provide me with written documentation from an institution, business, physician, etc., of your claim (notes from your family won’t cut it!) so that your scores can be adjusted accordingly.

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**Calendar of Activities**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Biweekly project</th>
<th>Peer review</th>
<th>Other assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>Submit</td>
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<td>Assignment 1: CV</td>
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<td>September 12</td>
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<td>Critique</td>
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<td>September 19</td>
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<td>September 26</td>
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<td>Critique</td>
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<td>October 3</td>
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<td>October 10</td>
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<td>Critique</td>
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<td>October 17</td>
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<td>Assignment 2: NSF GRFP</td>
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<td>October 24</td>
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<td>Critique</td>
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<td>October 31</td>
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<td>November 7</td>
<td>Critique</td>
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<td>Assignment 3: Topic TBA</td>
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<td>November 14</td>
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<td>November 21</td>
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<td>November 28</td>
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<td>December 5</td>
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The UTRGV academic calendar can be found at https://my.utrgv.edu/home at the bottom of the screen, prior to login. Some important dates for Fall 2017 include:

- August 31  Last day to add a course or register for fall 2017
- September 4  Labor Day – no classes
- September 11  Clicker questions and Mastering Biology assignments begin
- November 15  Last day to drop a course; will count toward the 6-drop rule
- November 23-26  American Thanksgiving Holiday – no classes
- December 6  Last day of classes

Other Course Information

UTRGV Policy Statements

Students with disabilities

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services. **Brownsville Campus**: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. **Edinburg Campus**: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

Mandatory course evaluation period

Students are required to complete an online evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available:

- Fall 2017  Nov. 15 – Dec. 6

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

Scholastic integrity

As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes
but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Sexual harassment, discrimination, and violence

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Course drops

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.