

Biology 2320 Spring 2026



Introduction to Microbiology

Last day to withdraw:
March 30, 2026

Materials: no purchased textbook
All will be provided by professor

Professor: Dr. Tanya Brown

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Office Hours: TTh 9:50-10:50, W 2:50-4 & appointments.

This course will be hybrid; all activities are required in person; some lectures will be optional online. [See printed calendar for plan.](#)

This course will introduce non-Biology-major, health-professions focused students to the principles of microbiology.

Co-registration in BIOL 2120 is required.

(Intro to Micro Lab) is required!

Note: this semester this class is designated as hybrid. Classes will be in person lectures, some will be online lectures, with required in person activities during both lecture and occasionally lab time. Only 4 lectures can be completed exclusively online. Please prioritize lectures or online videos, quizzes, and attendance for activities.

An online textbook is provided, with recommendations for a printed book.

Grades are earned by students based on student mastery of learning objectives, via assignments, activities, participation, and assessments.

Objectives:

1. Students will learn how genes control protein expression, and be able to explain how information flows from genes to mRNA to proteins.
2. Students will learn how enzymes control metabolism and traits in a cell, and be able to explain how different traits indicate the presence of different genes.
3. Students will learn characteristics of prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells, and explain how differences can be targeted for treatments in bacterial infections, fungal infections, and parasitic infections.
4. Students will learn characteristics of viruses, and explain how stages of the viral cycle can be targeted with inhibitors.
5. Students will learn basics of the immune system, especially the functions of fever and cytokines. Students will be able to explain how vaccines work with antibodies, memory cells, and cytotoxic cells to protect a patient, and how herd immunity works to protect a population.
6. Students will demonstrate understanding of antibiotic resistance, selection, vaccination, and immune response by composing explanations to patients of how their treatments will work in a scaffolded activity and writing assignment.
7. Students will learn the difference between scientific method and diagnostic thinking, and will demonstrate understanding by completing case studies involving differential diagnosis activities applying learned concepts.

Class Policies in short:

Attendance at lecture activities is required*

Follow all safety rules

Respect your colleagues & instructors

Zero-Tolerance for Cheating & Plagiarism

Late work policy for uploaded documents: -10% each day for maximum 3 days

Late work policy for quizzes, videos, readings that close at certain time: email to ask for reopening; first one submit planner; rest penalized:

Max score 75% - 2nd

Max score 60% - 3rd ... rest 0%

No unexcused absences for exams

Expectations of Students:

Students are expected to follow rules & wear PPE as determined by the instructor.

Students are expected to participate; keep track of, and complete assignments by due date, and attend required classes (send documentation of excused absences ahead of class to instructor). Activity pages turned in without attendance in class activity or permission of instructor will receive a zero grade and be flagged for plagiarism with the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Students are expected to follow University Policy and Academic Conduct requirements, including doing students' own work, not cheating, not plagiarizing, and citing sources appropriately.

If you have an accommodation, email professor during the first week of class to check in.

Required: a free online microbiology book will be provided to you by your instructor.

Online systems: Canvas (provided through University); Instant feedback program (provided through instructor for activities). **Calendar** is provided first day as in print & download.

If you prefer an additional online book: Microbiology by OpenStax:

<https://openstax.org/details/books/microbiology>

If you prefer an old-school hard copy resource to have for additional reading: Microbiology Basic & Clinical Principles, by Lourdes Normal-McKay. Do NOT purchase any additional online learning packages from publisher. There will be no assignments from publisher packages.

Coursework: (grade weights may be adjusted during semester if unforeseen circumstances require)

Full list of assignments available on course calendar.

Lecture Videos: recorded by instructor, provided on online system, include questions scattered throughout. Questions & completion result in lecture video grades (12% of final grade).

After Lecture Checks: fill out & upload after watching lectures (3% of final grade).

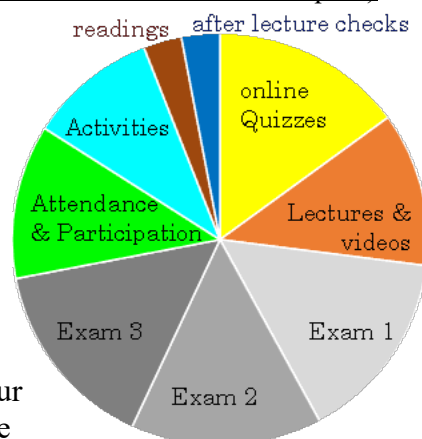
Online quizzes: over lecture material, open book, open slides, open notes, open for 1 week prior to due date. Completed on online system (15% of final grade).

Exams (3 of them): given in class (or online if safety requires), over lecture materials & activities. Reviews will occur over required zooms or in lab. Printed review flashcards will be provided during review session. Exams will be given on online system, attendance required for in person online exams. (15% each for total of 45% of grade)

Activities: graded group activities to explore & synthesize concepts & practice essay answers for exams, some during lab time, some during lecture meetings. (12% of final grade)

Attendance & Participation: attendance & participation credit in required in person lectures, lecture activities & reviews (some during lab time, some during lecture time) (10%)

Lecture Readings: supplemental readings by instructor, provided on online system, include questions throughout which give lecture reading grade (3% of final grade).



UT Tyler grading policy (rounding 0.50 to next percent):

00-59.49% = F 59.5-69.49% = D 69.5-79.49% = C 79.5-89.49% = B 89.5-100% = A

NO EXTRA CREDIT will be offered at the end of semester as a grade adjustment, or to individual students. Extra credit assignments may be given to entire class during the semester, or may be offered for following safety protocols or clean up protocols. Attendance boost may be applied to students who are within 0.5% of next letter grade, if they attended all lecture activities (whether scheduled for lecture or lab time).

Academic Integrity Policy: Student dishonesty in this class includes, but is not limited to: plagiarism or failure to cite sources, using another's words/ideas and claiming as one's own; use of automated programs (AI) to write or reword copied-and-pasted text to "avoid plagiarism"; turning in another person's work as one's own, no matter where it was obtained; copying the work of another student or providing course materials to other students (including from past semesters); signing in another student to attendance records; using or possessing, in lap or hand, an unauthorized (not-in-lockdown) device during an exam; otherwise cheating on an assignment or exam. Any occurrence of academic dishonesty can result in a score of zero on an assignment, nullification of all extra credit done by the student, failure of the course, and reporting to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Comportment: Students are expected to behave in accordance with University Policy and with safety regulations dictated by the instructor; and behave professionally to not create a disruptive learning environment for fellow students. Tobacco and nicotine products, including e-cigarettes, pose a distraction and potential medical risk to other students, and will not be used in lecture or in lab.

Absence Policies:

Students are expected to attend required activities & reviews during lecture time and lab time for lecture credit. Students are allowed to do up to four lectures online only and are required to attend to other lectures in person. The required lectures are posted on the calendar students receive at the beginning of the semester, and students are expected to make arrangements to attend all but four hybrid lectures and the required lectures (and all labs) in person. Having to work is not an excused absence.

In the case of an excused absence, students must submit documentation and let the instructor know as soon as possible prior to the scheduled class.

Multiple absences require documentation through the Student Accessibility Resource office at saroffice@uttyler.edu (903-566-7079) for a plan to accommodate absences and prepare alternative work.

Missed Exams: students who notify the professor with an excused absence ahead of an exam day, complete with required documentation, may be accommodated ONCE with a make-up exam within one week of the absence, which may or may not be in the same format as the scheduled exam (at the instructor's discretion). If a student misses a class or exam without contacting the instructor ahead of the start of the class or exam, no make up exam or assignment need be offered.

Arriving late for exams: habitually arriving late for class and being late for an exam may result in the student not being allowed to take the exam, or being penalized points on that exam, or the exam being offered in a different format (such as essay format).

Late Work & Make-Up Work: A single missed assignment may be made up by any student for full credit by submitting a semester planner that includes both due dates & planned times for working on assignments to the instructor by email (see example in lab book). A second missed assignment may be made up for a maximum of 75% by contacting the instructor within 2 days. A third missed assignment may be made up for a maximum of 60% within 2 days. For uploaded documents or projects, late penalty is -10% every 24 hours for a maximum of 3 days, after which a score of zero will be given. **Assignments will not be accepted after the 3rd day of being due.**

Artificial Intelligence Policy: *UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage*

discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

For this course, the work submitted by students in this course will be generated by themselves. This includes all process work, drafts, brainstorming artifacts, editing, and final products, including lab data sheets and identification keys. This extends to group assignments where students must collaboratively create the project, complete a project, or answer questions. Any instance of the following constitutes a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code: a student has another person/entity do any portion of a graded assignment, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, using a previously submitted assignment, and/or using AI tools (such as ChatGPT). Current students and previous students providing materials for students to copy from will be reported to the Office for Judicial Affairs for violations of Academic Integrity Policy, as will the students copying the materials.

Withdrawals & Incompletes: Make up assignments are provided at the instructor's discretion, dependent upon the type of assignment, attendance, previous completed assignments, the student's diligence about contacting the instructor quickly, and the amount of time elapsed since material was missed. Missing assignments may not be provided after 3 weeks or after an exam is given, depending upon whether materials are pertinent to the next exam. Please email the instructor as soon as possible regarding missed assignments, missed classes or zoom meetings, or required quarantines. Please follow up the email if an answer has not been received within 1 week.

If circumstances force a withdrawal from the class, please contact the registrar's office to formally withdraw from the course by the required date and email your instructor to let them know. If you fail to submit the form on time, you will receive an F in the course. You are not automatically withdrawn if you stop attending classes; you must file the form.

Best Practices & Hints:

- Download slides for lecture videos before watching videos. Slides are in the Slides Page, with a link to the dropbox folder.
- Keep up with **Lecture Videos**, you will answer questions as you watch them & at the end to receive credit for the videos. They will be reopened after being graded (look for them on a date at the end of the semester) so you can review as you need to.
- Fill out **After Lecture Checks** during or after watching Lecture Videos; exam questions are often pulled from these After Lecture Checks. After Lecture Checks are posted in the dropbox folder also.

- **Online Quizzes** are open for at least one week; open them early and review the questions, then use class slides, notes, videos & class readings to answer (answers are graded based on course materials)
- Attend required lab times and required in person lectures to complete **activities** and **reviews**, which will be crucial for exams as well as counting for credit. (See calendar for required activities)
- **Lecture Readings** do count for credit (4%) but could be considered supplemental if you are short on time. These will be “due” on the day on the calendar, but will be reopened for you to read later if needed, although points won’t be counted after the due date.

READING IS NOT ENOUGH. PRACTICE TESTING IS CRITICAL. Our Review Materials are specifically designed to make self-testing or study-groups extremely easy.

WE PRACTICE LONG ANSWERS for exams together in the activities or talk about them in videos, so be sure and pay attention to those!

INTERESTED IN MORE?

Medical Microbiology text online: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK7627/>

Blog & Book: Puswhisperer: a year in the life of an infectious disease doctor. Mark Crislip, MD. (Books on amazon, blog on Medscape: <http://boards.medscape.com/.29f3af03/>)

The Great Influenza, by John M Barry.

Lecture Objective	Student Learning Goals
Pandemic control & updates	Latest info on Covid-19 pandemic and our protocols will be covered, including receptor targets of the virus & current best practices.
Factors of Molecular Interaction	Molecules interact, and their interactions are governed by their charge, hydrophobicity/hydrophilicity, and 3-dimensional shape
Information flow	Information in a cell is stored in DNA, in units known as genes. This information is passed to messenger RNA, and from there it is used to make proteins.
Enzymes	Enzymes (and to some degree, ribozymes) do much of the “work” in the cell, in terms of metabolism, growth, and reproduction. Which enzymes a cell has determines its characteristics, as we will see in lab tests.
Building Blocks of Cells	Carbohydrates, Lipids, Proteins, and Nucleic Acids are the main building blocks of cells, and are built by linking atoms together into molecules, and molecules together into macromolecules.
Metabolism	Life is dependent upon the ability to store and harvest energy. Molecules can store energy in high energy bonds, and then release energy when those bonds are broken. Specific processes (photosynthesis, aerobic respiration, anaerobic respiration, and fermentation) are used by cells to store and release energy from molecules. One of the main chemical “batteries” of the cell is the molecule ATP
Growth & Culture	Cells have specific processes to grow and reproduce themselves. Environmental conditions can affect enzyme function, which in turn will affect bacterial growth rates and metabolism.
Cells	Humans are eukaryotes, with nuclei and other membrane bound organelles, a complex genome, and mitochondria for aerobic respiration. Bacteria are prokaryotes, with no membrane bound organelles, no nuclei, a shorter genome, and aerobic respiration occurs at their outer membrane. Most bacteria have cell walls composed of peptidoglycan, and the differences in bacterial cell structure can be used to classify bacteria in the lab. Differences between bacteria cells and human cells can be targeted by antibiotic drugs to selectively inhibit the growth of bacteria, while leaving the eukaryotic hosts unharmed (usually).
Antibiotics & Resistance	Antibiotics are drugs which are used to selectively inhibit the growth of bacteria. There are multiple possible targets and mechanisms of action. Antibiotic resistance occurs when a bacterial cell is able to circumvent the activity of antibiotics, either through an enzyme that stops antibiotic action, or a mutation

	that alters the target of an antibiotic. Resistance can be caused by random mutation or by selection. Education of patients as to why following instructions when prescribed antibiotics is critical is emphasized.
Genetics	Review of information flow. Mutations occur as changes in the sequence of DNA, which thereby alters sequence of mRNA, which can then alter protein structure and function. Students are expected to explain how a single gene mutation (examples: sickle-cell anemia, cystic fibrosis, etc) can cause disease. Epigenetics (and effect on multiple generations) is briefly introduced. p53 and DNA repair is introduced, along with the ability of some viruses, such as HPV, to disable p53 and thereby predispose to dysregulated cell growth and potentiate cancer development.
Viruses & Antivirals	Viruses are introduced as distinct from cells. Classification according to structure and nucleic acid is introduced. Stages of viral infection in a cell are delineated, and special properties of retroviruses (reverse transcriptase, integrase) are emphasized. We will discuss the “functional cure” of HIV positive babies and why it is called a “functional cure” rather than a cure. The flu virus is emphasized, and the differences between seasonal flu viruses and the bird flu virus is explored. The term cytokine storm is introduced and explained. Timely virus topics are explored, including Coronavirus, CHIKV, Ebola, Dengue, and West Nile. Antivirals are discussed in terms of their action and their severe limitations. Comparison is drawn between antibiotic resistance and selection for antiviral resistant strains.
Prions	Prions are introduced as non-viral, non-cellular, proteinaceous infectious particles. Mechanism of prions and their effect on the nervous system is introduced. Story of how difficult it was to get medical community to accept completely new paradigm is discussed. (See additional information in Germicides and Sterilization)
Fungi and Parasites, Antifungals and Antiparasitics	Opportunistic fungal pathogens are introduced, as well as secondary infections resulting from antibiotic use. Parasitical pathogens are introduced. Malaria is used as example parasite life cycle, with directions to CDC sites for life cycles of any other parasites of interest. Antifungal medicines briefly mentioned and general mechanism of action explained (not in detail!). Antiparasitic medicines briefly mentioned and general mechanism of action explained (not in detail!). Emphasis is placed on fungi and parasites being eukaryotic, so therapeutic index trickier).
Diseases & Systems	Disease patterns are introduced, with infectious dose, attachment, and incubation times included. The importance of contagiousness and virulence is explained. Mechanisms by which many diseases cause symptoms due to inflammation & immune system reactions are covered with emphasis on meningitis, Guillain-Barre, rheumatic fever, and sepsis.
Epidemiology	Epidemiology and the process of human disease are discussed. Koch’s Postulates is introduced as a type of epidemiological study, and its ability to establish causation is emphasized. Types of epidemiological studies and how to interpret data are given in an activity. Prevalence vs. incidence graphs and morbidity and mortality data are introduced. Propagation of disease is discussed, and how disease spread is controlled. The current COVID-19 outbreak will be discussed.
Immune System	The immune system is introduced, beginning with first line defenses. Second line defenses are introduced and the process of eliciting a fever response are learned as though students must explain them to a patient. Emphasis is placed on fever being beneficial up to 104 degrees, and why. Inflammation is introduced, but detailed mechanism not explored. 3 rd line of defense (adaptive immune response) is introduced, from antigen presentation to humoral and cytotoxic response. Effects of suppressor T cells and memory cells discussed.
Vaccines	What vaccines are and how they work is explored to the point where students can explain this to patients. Examples of first developed vaccine by naturally attenuated virus (smallpox) given, to development of artificially attenuated virus (polio), to genetically engineered acellular vaccines. Herd immunity introduced. Problems with whooping cough vaccine are explored to the point of students

	being able to explain why reduced protection with modern TDaP to patients. Discussion ends with evidence why autism is not caused by vaccines, and how various vaccine types work. A vaccine project is assigned to be completed in stages, with the final project submitted during finals week.
At this point the class switches from concept-based format to specific disease format, utilizing critical thinking skills.	Differential Diagnosis as separate from scientific method is reviewed, and preparations made for Diagnostic Activities at end of semester with the following review topics:
Systemic Diseases of:	
Immune System	Autoimmune disease and immune deficiency are differentiated, with students expected to be able to explain the difference. Examples of each are given, along with causative pathogens. Microbiomes are introduced as important to the normal function of the immune system, and types of microbiome comparison and microbiome disruption are discussed.
TORCHZ	Diseases which can infect pregnant mothers and are associated with fetal problems are introduced, focusing on Toxoplasmosis, congenital Rubella, Cytomegalovirus, Herpesviruses, and Zika. The differences between pathogens acquired as an adult vs congenital syndromes causing permanent damage in utero are emphasized, including congenital rubella and congenital syphilis.
Childhood Diseases	Diseases classically associated with childhood are introduced, including newborn meningitis and its prevention, ophthalmia, candida, scalded-skin syndrome, otitis media, RSV, pertussis, measles, mumps, varicella-zoster, group A strep infections, trachoma, river-blindness, pinworm, and acne.
Viral vs Bacterial Infections	This concluding section compares viral vs bacterial infections which commonly infect the cardiac system, respiratory system, GI system, nervous system, and urogenital tract. The format of comparing viral vs bacterial illnesses is used to help with differential diagnosis techniques.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT MUST APPEAR IN EACH COURSE SYLLABUS

Student Resources Link: <https://uttyler.instructure.com/courses/39397/pages/student-resources>

University Policies & Information Link:
<https://uttyler.instructure.com/courses/39397/pages/university-policies-and-information>