BIOL 4114-060 Scientific Communication I
Fall 2020

Meeting time: Monday 12:20 – 1:15 PM
Meeting classroom: Virtual via ZOOM

Instructor: Matthew Greenwold, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Biology
Office: HPR 117
Virtual Office Hours: Thursday 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM (via ZOOM) or by appointment
Email: mgreenwold@uttyler.edu
Phone: 903.566.6303

Course Description: Current topics in biology. Reports on research published in professional journals. Oral presentation required.

In this course, I want you to learn how to use online resources to find primary research articles on a topic of your choice and then be able to effectively communicate the scientific research to the general public. We will focus on written communication (including social media – twitter) and oral communication geared for the general public.

Scientific Communication II (next semester) will focus on communicating research to peers/scientists.

COVID-19: This course has moved online to limit your exposure to the virus. This course will meet online via Zoom Monday 12:20 – 1:15 PM. You must connect to the Zoom meetings through Canvas in order for me to be able to count your attendance.

If you want to meet face-to-face with me, please email me to set up an appointment. A face mask is required, and social distancing must be maintained during the meeting.

Course Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to:
- Search and find peer-reviewed research articles.
- Comprehend and summarize peer-reviewed research articles
- Formulate intelligent questions when presented scientific research.
- Effectively communicate peer-reviewed research to the public.

Required Course Materials: Access to a computer, a high-speed internet connection, and a microphone for Zoom meetings. No required textbook.

Grading: Your grade will be based on four assignments, attendance and a final exam. The grade distribution is:

Assignment 1 = 15%
Assignment 2 = 15%
Assignment 3 = 20%
Assignment 4 = 20%
All late assignments will incur a 10% per day penalty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-90%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 59%</td>
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**Assignment 1: DUE Sept. 20th 11:59 PM.** Pick a topic in the field of Ecology and/or Evolution and find and download three peer-reviewed research articles. At least one of the articles must have been published in the past two years (2018-2020). Write a brief summary (250-300 words) on your topic and how your chosen articles relate to that topic. Submit your summary and the research articles (PDF versions) via Canvas. This will be your podcast topic therefore make sure you are interested in the topic.

*How do I select a good topic?* I suggest you visit a couple of the major journal websites and read recent titles/abstracts and see if one of them sounds interesting. Here are a few of my favorite journals:

- *Science* ([https://science.sciencemag.org/](https://science.sciencemag.org/))
- *Nature* ([https://www.nature.com/nature/research](https://www.nature.com/nature/research))
- *BMC Biology* ([https://bmcbiol.biomedcentral.com](https://bmcbiol.biomedcentral.com))
- *Molecular Biology and Evolution* ([https://academic.oup.com/mbe](https://academic.oup.com/mbe))

**Assignment 2: DUE Oct. 11th 11:59 PM.** Write a “news” article and a “tweet” on your most recently published article from assignment 1. This “news” article (500-700 words) should relate the significance of the results to the general public. The “tweet” (< 200 characters) should be a simple statement to engage the public. Here are some questions to consider: What are the broader implications of this research to the public? How does this article further our knowledge in its research field?

**Assignment 3: DUE Nov. 1st 11:59 PM. First Podcast due.** This will be the first part of the overall assignment. Each pair of students will be assessed on their performance as the 1) host and interviewer and 2) as the expert in their field or interviewee. I will assign groups and the order you will perform each role will be based on your last name. The person with the last name that appears first alphabetically will host the first podcast and then will be the “expert” in the second
podcast due Nov. 22nd. The interviewer or host will introduce the guest expert and ask questions. The guest expert will present and answer questions on the topic and research articles from Assignments 1 and 2.

There are several ways to record your podcasts. Students can use Zoom to record the podcast if they want to be able to show a figure or simply a cover slide (you do NOT need to appear in Zoom video). Another way is to use the Canvas podcast feature. You will upload your completed podcasts to Canvas. I will discuss other software that you can use to improve your podcast as well as the specific elements important to a podcast in lecture.

Assignment 4: DUE Nov 22nd 11:59 PM. Part two of the podcast project.

Final Exam: Dec. 9 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM. The final exam will be cumulative and based on the lecture material. It will consist of multiple-choice questions and administered through Canvas using ProctorU to ensure academic integrity.

Attendance: Attendance is worth 10% of your grade. You may miss ONE lecture without losing points. Attendance will be checked during Zoom meetings via a simple question using either Zoom polling or Zoom chat. You must log in to the Zoom meetings through Canvas to ensure your first and last names are clearly displayed for attendance. I am required to provide attendance data for Financial Aid, midterm, and final grades submissions; therefore, it is critical that you attend our class meetings. If you cannot attend for reasons of Illness or other acceptable situations, please contact me to determine the best course of action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 24th</td>
<td>Introduction to course – Overview of Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 31st</td>
<td>Ms. Christine Forisha – “Online Literature Searches”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 7th</td>
<td>No Classes – Labor Day Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 14th</td>
<td>Dr. Joseph Glavy – “Blueprint of the Nuclear Pore Complex”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 21st</td>
<td>Literature comprehension / meet your partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 28th</td>
<td>Who is your audience?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 5th</td>
<td>How to effectively communicate to the public - writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 12th</td>
<td>How to effectively communicate to the public - verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 19th</td>
<td>Podcasts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 26th</td>
<td>Podcasts / meet with your partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 2nd</td>
<td>Podcasts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 9th</td>
<td>Formulating thought provoking questions</td>
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<td>Nov. 16th</td>
<td>Scientific communication in the world of social distancing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 23rd</td>
<td>No Classes – Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 30th</td>
<td>Scientific communication in the world of social distancing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 9th</td>
<td>Final Exam – 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM</td>
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Last day to drop with a “W” is September 4th.
According to the UT Tyler Handbook of Operating Procedures: "The information contained in
the course syllabus, other than the grading criteria and absence and make-up policies, may be
subject to change with reasonable advance notice as long as the change is without prejudice to
the students."

**Important COVID-19 Information for Classrooms and Laboratories**

Students are required to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth, and follow social
distancing guidelines, at all times in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories), as
specified by [Procedures for Fall 2020 Return to Normal Operations](#). The UT Tyler community of
Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its [Honor Code](#) and a sign of good
citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.

Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher
than normal temperature will be excused from class and should stay at home and may join the
class remotely. Students who have difficulty adhering to the Covid-19 safety policies for health
reasons are also encouraged to join the class remotely. Students needing additional
accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University
Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu.

**Recording of Class Sessions**

Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in this course.
Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to
FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in this course unless appropriate
consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of
students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not
be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

**UT Tyler Honor Code**

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that
will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

**UT Tyler Resources for Students**

- UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for
  math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career
courses.
- UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

**ProctorU**

The final exam in this course will be proctored using ProctorU. Beyond the cost of initial
equipment needed (e.g. a camera for your computer), there will not be any additional cost for
proctoring. You will need to create a ProctorU account and install the ProctorU extension before
attempting any assessment.
To create a ProctorU account, follow the ProctorU tool within Canvas. Please make sure you are using the current version of Chrome or Firefox and download the ProctorU extension available at http://bit.ly/proctoruchrome or https://www.proctoru.com/firefox.

In order to use ProctorU, you will need the following:

- High-speed Internet connection
- Webcam (internal or external)
- Windows, Mac, or Chrome Operating System
- Up-to-date Chrome or Firefox browser and ProctorU extension installed
- Valid photo ID
- Quiet environment to take your assessment

Requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web Camera</td>
<td>640x480 resolution</td>
<td>1280x720 resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>PC Users</td>
<td>Windows Vista</td>
<td>Windows 10 (10 S is not supported)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mac Users</td>
<td>OS X 10.5 or higher</td>
<td>OS X 10.13 High Sierra</td>
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<td>Internet Download Speed</td>
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<td>1.5 Mbps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet Upload Speed</td>
<td>.364 Mbps</td>
<td>1 Mbps</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAM</td>
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<td>2 GB</td>
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<td>Ports</td>
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<td>1935, 843, 80, 443, 61613, UDP/TCP</td>
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You can visit the Test Taker Resource Page for additional information at https://bit.ly/ProctorMe or the UT Tyler office of Digital Learning at https://www.utyler.edu/digital-learning/proctoru-resources/ for links to information videos and a computer system check.

Students Rights and Responsibilities
To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: http://www.utyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php

Campus Carry
We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at http://www.utyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php

UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University
All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.
Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.utttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies
Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.utttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy
Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.
Disability/Accessibility Services
In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance
Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities
If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement
It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation
Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct
Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the 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.

i. “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:
   • copying from another student’s test paper;
   • using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
- paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

ii. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.

iii. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.