BSC 595.01W Research Literature and Techniques

Spring 2023 Course Syllabus

Course Location and Times: Web-based, D2L

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Johanna Delgado Acevedo, PhD

Email: J.Delgado-Acevedo@tamuc.edu

Office Location: STC 262

Office Hours: virtual by appointment

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: less than 48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings
Textbook(s) Required: No textbook is required
Software Required: Please see technology requirements.
Other Materials: Peer reviewed articles

Course Description: This course is designed for the non-thesis option students in the last semester of their MS in Biology program. Upon satisfactory completion of this course the students are deemed to have met all the academic requirements for graduation. This course has three major components. The first component will consist of a weekly learning activity on the major aspects of scientific literature review related to a topic to be selected by each student from a range of broad topic areas provided by the instructor of record. The second one is the integration of the information obtained on the selected topic and production of a scientific research paper. The third part will be a comprehensive exit examination that will contain questions from at least five graduate courses offered by the Department of Biological and Environment Sciences.

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

1. Research literature coursework

This coursework is designed to provide graduate students with fundamental knowledge and working experience in gathering scientific information and producing a systematic review from a variety of authentic sources in a selected area. In addition to independently writing and submitting assignments, students will also learn some major aspects of writing an insightful scientific review. One major purpose of this course is to improve the written communication skills of the students. There will be short power point files on major areas in the process of preparing and writing a scientific review paper in a professional scientific format. The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

2. Production of a scientific research review paper

The first step will be the identification of a topic for the review. Topics will be selected in consultation with the instructor from the broad areas provided. Once the topic is finalized before the set deadline the student will start working on the review and will submit a complete draft for review to the instructor before the set deadline. The instructor will provide feedback or corrections as necessary. The student is expected to address all the concerns/corrections and will submit the final copy of the review before a set deadline. Check the course schedule for the deadlines.

3. Comprehensive exit examination

Students are expected to take a comprehensive exit exam as a part of the BSC 595 course and as a requirement for graduation by **WEEK 12** of the semester. Questions for different courses will be prepared by the faculty teaching each graduate course. Each student will select at least five graduate courses related to their discipline within biology for this exam. Therefore, not all the students will have the same set of questions. Students are expected to dedicate time each week to reading, writing, and practicing the skills we cover in this course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:
1. Define literature review and understand the concept of systematic review.
2. Understand the differences between traditional reviews and systematic reviews.
3. Describe the main steps associated with the review process and understand the importance of setting a timeline.
4. Defining scope of the review and write the review within that scope.
5. Understand the search concepts and practice data mining.
6. Identify the importance of assessing the relevance of information gathered.
7. Describe the steps associated with the synthesis of collected information.
8. Understand the methods of analysis and integration of findings.
9. Describe the main elements required when writing and presenting the review.
10. Produce an insightful research review.

Course Requirements

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

- Proficiency in using the D2L Brightspace Learning Management System through myLeo Online
- Students should also be able to submit their work as necessary.
- Proficiency in use of Microsoft Word, and PowerPoint
-Other relevant graphics programs for preparing effective PowerPoint presentations

Instructional Methods:

This course is being offered as a "Web Based" course. All course materials will be posted in D2L. The course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes for all instructional units in the course. In case of any difficulty in accessing or understanding any course material, contact me immediately via e-mail.

Student Responsibilities:

- Dedicated study time each week to go over the materials at D2L
- Studying previous course materials to take exit exams
-Students are encouraged to take as many exams as possible rather than taking the minimum required number of exams.
- Regularly check both myLEO Online and university email accounts for announcements or class emails.
- Submit exams and assignments on time, before deadlines.

Assessments

There will be three types of assessments that will contribute to the grade. These are:
1. Research literature coursework assignments; there will be six assignments.
2. Scientific literature review (essay)
3. Meeting deadlines

A passing grade (30/50 or 60%) in the Comprehensive exit exam is required for BSC 595 course completion and graduation. This score is also utilized as one of the assessment tools for Institutional Effectiveness of the graduate program. **This score is not counted towards the course grade.**

Important information:

1. All assignments should be submitted before the deadlines.
2. **There will be no extra credit points for** offering to do additional work. A student's grade will be based exclusively on the points he/she earns in the categories listed above.

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Formatting Guidelines:*

Assignments: paper size – letter; margins – 1" all sides; font size – 12; font types – Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri only; line spacing – single; page limits – one page only; file format – MS Word (Don't convert your file to a PDF).
Review paper/essay: paper size – letter; margins – 1" all sides; font size – 12; font types – Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri only; line spacing – double; page limits – minimum 20, maximum 30, excluding form pages, figures and table, and bibliography/list of references; **file format – MS Word only (not PDF).**
*Submissions not conforming to these guidelines will not be accepted and graded.

Grading:
Assignments: 60%
Meeting deadlines: 10%
Review paper/Essay: 30%
Comprehensive exit exam: 0% (Not counted towards the course grade)

1. If a student submits all the assignments before the deadline, he/she will get 10%. For each late submission 2% will be deducted. Therefore, consistent late submission of the assignments may result in a deduction of up to one letter grade.
2. There will be six assignments and each one will contribute 10% to the final grade in the course.

Assignment grading plan (total 10%):
Presentation of a clear purpose: 2%
Main idea: 2%
Organization: 2%
Style and conclusions: 2%
Grammar: 2%

Grading Scale:
A = 89.5-100%
B = 79.5-89.49%
C = 69.5-79.49%
D = 59.5-69.49%
F = <59.5%

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

ALL DATES AND Units COVERED ARE TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Week of	Agenda
Jan 10 (Week 1)	Unit 1: Scientific process; differentiating science from pseudoscience and quasi science. Introduction to literature review; importance of review in scientific research; how to review a scientific paper. Identify and finalize the topic for Research Literature Review **Assignment 1 Deadline:** Submit your selected topic for instructor's approval by 01/22/2024, 11:59 PM CST
Jan 15 (Week 2)	Continuation of Unit 1 Prepare a synopsis and formulate a hypothesis of a research article for peer-review. **Assignment 2 Deadline:** Submit research paper synopsis by 01/29/2024, 11:59 PM CST
Jan 22 (Week 3)	Unit 2: Approaches for literature review Identification of the types of research; analysis structure and limitations of a research article. **Assignment 3 Deadline:** Submit peer-review of the article by 02/05/2024, 11:59 PM, CST.
Jan 29 (Week 4)	Continuation of Unit 2 **Assignment 4 Deadline:** Submit a working outline of the review paper by 02/12/2024, 11:59 PM CST.
Feb 5 (Week 5)	Unit 3: Planning and preparation of literature review; avoiding plagiarism.
Feb 12 (Week 6)	Unit 4: Identifying and defining the scope of the review. **Assignment 5 Deadline:** Submit complete Introduction by 02/26/2024, 11:59 PM CST.
Feb 19 (Week 7)	Unit 5: Literature search methods and the use of citation software.
Feb 26 (Week 8)	Unit 6: Assessment of scientific evidence and findings **Assignment 6 Deadline:** Submit a complete summary of the research review paper by 03/12/2024, 11:59 PM CST.
Mar 11-16	**Spring Break**
Mar 18 (Week 9)	Comprehensive Exit Exam (**Final Deadline:** 03/26/2024 by 11:59 PM CST) **– Graduate school requires the end reports by April 7th for graduation**
Mar 25 (Week 10)	Unit 7: Analysis of information

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Apr 1 (Week 11)	**Review paper draft deadline:** Submit the final complete draft of the research review paper by 04/09/2024,11:59 PM CST
Apr 8 (Week 12)	Unit 8: Synthesis of included research literature; referencing styles; structure of abstracts; credits for other sources
Apr 16 (Week 13)	Unit 9: Writing up and presenting data
Apr 22 (Week 14)	**Deadline:** Submission of final copy of the review paper by **05/01/2024,** 11.59 PM CST
Apr 29 (Week 15)	Comments and Review

*Please check the academic calendar
*THE SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Attendance: Although this is an online course, participation can be tracked easily via D2L. Weekly sign-ins to D2L and completing assigned reading, assignment and exam will be tracked.

Makeup Policy: Remember this course has hard deadlines for **graduation** purposes. **NO make-up chance for the Comprehensive Exit Exam! If missed,** the student will receive a zero for the exam and not graduate this semester. **All other assignments** are due on exact time unless you have made a prior arrangement with me which can only be granted for unusual or extenuating circumstances and in case of health issues (proper medical excuse is required). Please see EXCUSED absences as defined in the Student's Guidebook (link below). There are no extra credits, and late submissions will result in lower-than-expected grades.

Syllabus Change Policy: The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Browser support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

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Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products. Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:
⯀ Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
⯀ For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
⯀ The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017,

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			D2Lsupports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.	
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.	

• You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:

> o 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred

> o Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive

> o Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

• **For Zoom Meeting sessions *8 Mbps* is required.** You must have a:

> o Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer

> o Speakers or headphones.

> o *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

• Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp

• Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.

> Pop-ups are allowed.

> JavaScript is enabled.

> Cookies are enabled.

• You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:

o Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/

o Adobe Flash Player *(version 17 or later)* https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/

o Adobe Shockwave Player https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/

o Apple Quick Time http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/
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• At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu**.**

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Brightspace Support

Need Help?

Student Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words "click here**"** to submit an issue via email.

System Maintenance

D2L runs monthly updates during the last week of the month, usually on Wednesday. The system should remain up during this time unless otherwise specified in an announcement. You may experience minimal impacts to performance and/or look and feel of the environment.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

The grading of the assignments, quizzes, and exams will be completed within 1-5 days depending on the length of the assignment or test. In most cases, the grading will be completed within 24 hours and the questions will be discussed during the next class period. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with the instructor outside the office hours to discuss any issue related to the course individually or in groups.

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University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.
http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: Netiquette
http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

TAMUC Attendance
For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.

http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf

Academic Integrity
Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf

ADA Statement
Students with Disabilities
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 have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Waters Library- Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

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Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu
Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/

Nondiscrimination Notice
Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement
Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.
For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer.
Web url:
http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf
Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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