



Course: Introduction to Life Sciences II (Non-Majors)

Course Number & Section: BIOL 1309_003 (3 credits)

Instructor: Tara Korzekwa, MSc. **Email:** tara.korzekwa@tamusa.edu **Office:** STEM 311Z

Office Hours: Tuesday & Wednesday 11AM – 1PM; before/after class; by appointment; feel free to email me!

Meeting Times: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00AM – 9:50AM

Location: Face-to-Face in STEM 173; occasional virtual meetings may occur and will be posted through Blackboard Announcements and sent through Jagwire Email.

REQUIRED COURSE PREREQUISITE: None.

It is recommended that BIOL 1308 – Introduction to Life Sciences I be taken prior to BIOL 1309

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Textbook (E-book): McGraw Hill; Biology: The Essentials, 4th Edition, Marielle Hoefnagels

****BOOK FEE WAS ASSESSED-YOU SHOULD HAVE ACCESS ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS** through the online Connect system** Do not pay again if you hit a paywall!

**You may also purchase a loose-leaf copy at a special rate from the publisher. This is a great option if you know you will need a physical copy of the text. Order using the link within Connect.

Connect: Connect is the online learning platform that accompanies your textbook. You must register for it separately. Student registration can be found via the link provided on Blackboard under the Course Content tab. This is also the same location your ebook can be found.

Blackboard: This is where you will go for lecture notes, assignment submission links, grades, and weekly announcements. Power-point versions of lectures will be posted on Blackboard; Announcements regarding lectures or labs may be posted on Blackboard; Grades for individual assignments/labs etc... will be posted on Blackboard as we go along.

Recommended (HIGHLY) Material: You will be required to bring an **882-E scantron** for each of your exams (4 total; see schedule) and **a pencil**. You can purchase a scantron packet from the bookstore.



← Seek by iNaturalist app (free!); see Methods of Assessments Section below

You are also **HIGHLY** encouraged to work off of a **computer or laptop with audio/microphone** as a phone does not have the capacity to run some of the virtual material. If you need a computer or wi-fi, please contact IT directly for assistance. IT contact information can be found in the Table of Contents in Blackboard as well as the University website. Furthermore, computer labs on campus are open and available to you! Finally, it is up to the student to have a **stable internet/browser connection** when conducting any online coursework.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students examine the principles of organismal biology, biodiversity and ecology in the modern world and how these principles relate to issue in today's society and their broader meaning to the public. Topics in this course include the study of life at the organismal level considering their morphology, life histories, physiology and ecology. The nature and evolution of biological diversity and how that diversity is studied is included.



Laboratory-based exercises are included. This course meets the standards for the Life and Physical Sciences category of courses under the core curriculum.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, student will

1. Develop critical thinking skills, communication skills, and empirical and quantitative skills through working as a team.
2. Gain an appreciation for the diversity of life on Earth.
3. Describe modern evolutionary synthesis, natural selection, population genetics, micro and macroevolution, and speciation.
4. Describe phylogenetic relationships and classification schemes.
5. Identify the major phyla of life with an emphasis on plants and animals, including the basis for classification, structural and physiological adaptations, evolutionary history, and ecological significance.
6. Compare and contrast how different organisms carry out similar life functions.
7. Illustrate the relationship between major geologic change, extinctions, and evolutionary trends.
8. Understand the basic principles of population, community, and ecosystem ecology.
9. Evaluate if an ecological question is best answered via experiments at the population, community, or ecosystem level.
10. Apply scientific reasoning to investigate questions and utilize scientific tools such as microscopes and laboratory equipment to collect and analyze data.
11. Use critical thinking and scientific problem-solving to make informed decisions in the laboratory or field.
12. Critically assess content and illustrate its broader meaning to the public.

COURSE CONTENT

List of Topics:

1. Evolution
 - a. Trace the history of evolutionary thought
 - b. Describe the Darwinian Theory
 - c. Modern Synthesis Theory
 - d. Models of speciation
2. Taxonomy
 - a. Compare the reproductive and morphological concepts
 - b. Binomial names
 - c. Five kingdoms and the characteristics of each
 - d. Use of dichotomous keys
3. Biodiversity
 - a. Plants: Colonization of Land, Evolution of Seed Plants, Plant Form & Function
 - b. Invertebrates: Basic survey of organisms within the various invertebrate phyla
 - c. Vertebrates: Survey of the main vertebrate groups focusing on homologous characters.



- d. Comparative survey of how different organisms from invertebrates to vertebrates carry out life functions: nutrition, circulation and gas exchange, osmoregulation and excretion, hormones and endocrine system, reproduction, development, nervous system, sensory and motor mechanisms.
4. Ecology and the Biosphere: basic principles of
 - a. Population & Community ecology
 - b. Ecosystems
 - c. Conservation biology and restoration ecology

GRADING and METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

| | |
|--|---|
| Lecture Exams | <u>2 at 100pts; 1 at 70pts; 1 at 80pts = 350 pts</u> |
| Animal Group Dating Profile Group Presentation | 50 pts = 50 pts |
| Connect Homework | <u>10 out of 12 at 20 pts each = 200 pts</u> |
| Connect Quizzes | <u>5 out of 6 at 20 pts each = 100 pts</u> |
| The Environment & You Assignments | <u>11 out of 12 at 10 pts each = 110 pts</u> |
| Attendance / Participation Points | = <u>90 pts</u> |
| | 900 pts total |

1. Competencies will be demonstrated on homework, quizzes, activities/projects, and exams. Exams may have a combination of essay, listing, matching, multiple choice, and true/false questions. All types may not be included on each exam.
2. A student must master 70% of the competencies in order to receive credit for the course. A student demonstrating 90% or more knowledge of all competencies will receive an A in the course.
3. **All Connect homework and quiz submissions will be online. There will be several activities that are conducted during class time and/or outside with either in-class and/or online submissions.**
4. **All exams will be face-to-face during scheduled class time.**
5. All exams and assignments will be graded on a point system.
6. All exams and assignments are scheduled on the tentative syllabus schedule and Blackboard Calendar.
7. You may turn assignments in ahead of the deadline, **but if you miss the deadline, your assignment will be assigned a zero. I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK.**
8. There is the potential for extra credit opportunities for this class. These will be announced during class time so be sure to attend class regular because not all can be made up.

****HINTS FOR SUCCESS.** Complete assignments and submit them in on time. Do not wait until the night before to study for exam or complete assignment. All assessments are provided with plenty of completion time.

Lecture Exams & Group Presentation (Face-to-Face):

1. You will be given **four (4) Lecture Exams**.
2. Your Lecture Exams will consist of approximately 40-50 questions in the format stated in Grading Scheme #1 above. Exams 1 & 2 are worth 100 points each. Exam 3 is worth 70 points & Exam 4 is worth 80 points each (mini-exams).
 - Exams will be **given during the scheduled class time**; Feedback will be limited and provided during office hours or by appointment.
 - Exams must be taken on the scheduled class date/time in syllabus & Blackboard.



3. Animal Group Dating Profile Presentation (Group Effort worth 50 points)

- All semester you will be working in a group of approximately 3-4 team members on various activities. At the end of the semester *in lieu of an animal diversity/comparative anatomy lecture exam*, each group will research an animal group/phyla that will be *presented on the last day of class* (see schedule below).
- A presentation grading rubric and more details will be provided during Unit 4. *The goal of this activity is to begin applying the general biology concepts that you are learning about to your own personal environment as well as showcasing students' creativity skills.*

4. Exams & the Group Presentation must be taken/conducted when scheduled.

- You may make up an exam **only if**
 - you contact me within **one day (24-hours)** of the scheduled exam
 - your absence is one approved by college policies (illness, death in the family, other immediate-family emergencies). Documentation will be required.
 - Again – **if I do not hear from you within 24 hours of the scheduled exam, you have forfeited the right to make up the exam.**

Connect Homework (online):

- **Two (2)** out of the **twelve (12)** Connect homework assignments will be dropped and the remaining **ten (10)** will be included for this portion of your course grade.
- Each chapter(s) will have a set of Homework Questions. You will have 2 attempts to answer these questions and each attempt will have an unlimited time frame so you will have plenty of time to read the textbook in order to find the answers. This is the only assessment in which I highly encourage you to find the answers to the questions in your textbook.
- All Connect Homework assignments will be available beginning the first day of the course unit so you may work ahead; however, each one has a Due Date corresponding with the exam schedule, so complete these first, and then use them to study for your quizzes and exams.
- Connect Homework assignments cannot be made up.

Connect Quizzes (online):

- You will complete a series of **6** Connect Quizzes covering the material from the chapters you will study this semester. I will drop your lowest Connect Quiz grade.
- All Connect quizzes will be available beginning the first day of the course unit; however, each quiz is timed (20 minutes for 20 questions with 2 attempts); therefore, it is recommended to complete the corresponding homework(s) first then take the quiz for each exam.
- Quizzes will cover the main ideas for each exam.
- Connect Quizzes cannot be made up.



The Environment and You Assignments (11 out of 12):

1. Class Assignments (varies online & face-to-face):

- Throughout the semester, you will complete a series of hands-on activities corresponding with course topics. Additional details will be provided on Blackboard and during class time.

Therefore, please come to class because each assignment type is different!

- Class assignments have corresponding due dates & cannot be made up. Please see tentative schedule. **Therefore, please come to class! Not all assignments can be made up or may be conducted only during class time.**

- ****Some activities are conducted outside with online submissions; therefore, please plan accordingly regarding weather and time management.****

2. Seek by iNaturalist (free app!)

- You will become familiar with a few tools/apps the public has access to learn about the organisms all around you. These tools are part of a field called Citizen Science that biologists can use to help gather various types of data.
- There will be several small assignments that will use the Seek by iNaturalist tool that you will work on throughout the semester. **Assignment details are provided on Blackboard and during class time and each has an associated due date!** *The goal of this activity is to begin applying the general biology concepts that you are learning about to your own personal environment.*

3. Scientific Article Reviews

- You will be encouraged to become habitual readers of newspapers and magazines, focusing on articles related to current environmental issues/topics. Throughout the semester and corresponding with each course unit (time between exams), you will conduct an article review on different environmental issues/topics that we discuss **during the current course unit**.
 - There will be a total **five (5)** article reviews for this portion of your grade.
 - You will submit via Blackboard a short review about the current environmental issue/topic that you learned about in a scientific journal, magazine, newspaper, or the Internet (No blogs or social media). **The topic MUST be associated with the current unit!**
 - Type two paragraphs, ~ ½ - 1 page, 12 pt. font, standard margins and line spacing. In the first paragraph, summarize the article and in the second paragraph, summarize your reaction and opinion of the article. Source of the article must be cited (APA format). **The submitted file must be in PDF or Word format (compatible with Blackboard) to receive credit.** *Additional details, requirements, and grading rubric is found in Blackboard.*

Attendance / Participation:

This is a face-to-face course; therefore, actually coming to class is important. I will randomly take attendance during some lecture days, which can consist of roll call, activity participation, question of the day submissions, etc. Therefore, if you miss class and attendance is taken, you have forfeited your attendance points for that day unless you provide a university-excused absence documentation (per the syllabus). **Attendance is worth 90 points**, which *will be awarded on the first attendance day and will be deducted afterwards, if applicable.*



Grading

Throughout the semester you will be informed of your grade standing. Grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Grade Scheme:

90 – 100 = A
80 - 89 = B
70 - 79 = C
60 - 69 = D
≤ 59.5 = F

I will consider scaling up from a B to an A if you have earned an **89.7 and** you have great attendance.
I will *not* scale up from a B to an A (regardless of your attendance) if you have earned an 89.1%, that is a B through and through.

Makeup Policies:

Due to the nature of this course and the fact that exams, quizzes, and homework/assignments are given plenty notice and/or are open for more than one day, make-up opportunities will only be allowed for:

- Hospitalization (evidence required),
- Hospitalization of an immediate family for which you are the primary caretaker (evidence required), or
- Incapacitating illness, such as COVID (evidence required).

If any of the above have prevented you turning in exams, quizzes, or assignment by the due date, you must contact me within 24 hours of the due date. **Due dates for anything assigned will be strictly enforced.**

Blackboard and Course Communication

All grades and assignments will be posted and accessible through the course's Blackboard site. Students must log-in regularly to both the Blackboard site and to their TAMU-SA email account to keep updated on information related to the class. Each student MUST have an active TAMU-SA email account. This will be the email address that is used for any communication between me and you. Students who e-mail me Monday-Thursday ordinarily can expect a response within 48 hours. Students who e-mail Friday-Sunday ordinarily can expect a response by 9:00 PM on Monday.

Use of Generative AI Permitted Under Some Circumstances or With Explicit Permission

There are situations and contexts within this course where you may be asked to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to explore how they can be used. Outside of those circumstances, you should not use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any student work (assignments, activities, discussion responses, etc.) that is part of your evaluation in this course. Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate with attribution what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, students should reach out to their instructor for clarification before submitting work for grading. Use of AI-generated content without the instructor's permission and/or proper attribution in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

STUDENT OBLIGATIONS

- Attendance:** Regular and punctual attendance in all classes and laboratories, day and evening, is required. Students who are absent for any reason should always consult with their instructors prior to absence (if possible). Both tardiness and early departure from class may be considered forms of absenteeism. A student may be dropped if there are excessive absences. Review the college policies on attendance and excessive absences as stated in the college catalog.



2. **Students will need to check their emails daily in case of changes or updates to the class.**
3. A student absent for the equivalence of **2 weeks** of classes may be automatically dropped from the course with a "W".
4. The instructor will only withdraw students for nonattendance until the official Withdrawal Date. Students who have not withdrawn themselves or requested withdrawal by the instructor, and stop attending class after this date will receive a performance grade (A/B/C/D/F).
5. It is not the instructor's responsibility to provide a student with any notes, assignments, or reviews missed due to student absence. All materials may be obtained by contacting the instructor during office hours, getting with a classmate, and/or downloaded from your Blackboard course. All material for the course is located on Blackboard.
6. **Email Etiquette:** Professional email etiquette is a requirement when communicating with me (or anyone) online. A proper greeting (e.g. Mrs. Korzekwa, Professor Korzekwa, Hello Mrs. Korzekwa, etc.) with a coherent message needs to be included with every email sent to me. **Emails that do not satisfy these conditions will be ignored. *Please do not write emails as you would text or include the entire email body in the subject heading, and please be respectful to all.***
7. **Assessments:** All homework, quizzes, and assignments are due Sunday by midnight on the Blackboard website. You are encouraged to get ahead on assignments. Once the deadline has passed, your score will be zero with no make-up opportunity if it has not been completed, unless your instructor states differently. Blackboard will have a calendar displaying when all assignments and exams are due. It is the student's responsibility to frequently check this calendar. Finally, it is up to the student to have a stable internet/browser connection when conducting online assignments. Feel free to utilize the campus or contact IT for assistance.
8. **Grades:** All grades are final at the end of the semester. If there is an issue, please make an appointment with me and be prepared to defend your case (i.e. bring ALL assignments, etc.).
9. **Studying Tips:** In college, it is expected that for every credit hour you spend in class, you spend 3 hours working on that material at home. Thus, in the class, it is expected that in addition to coming to class, you also spend 9 hours a week on outside work pertaining to this class. This of course takes time-management skills. Please take this into consideration when planning your semester activities.
10. **Laptops and Cell Phones:** If you are going to use your laptop for taking notes, please sit in the back row as research has shown computers disrupt others around and behind you. If I catch you doing something other than taking notes on your computer, you will be asked to leave. ALL cell phones must be placed on silent or off and put away during class time. If you are caught using a cell phone then you will be marked absent and possibly asked to leave the class. Please inform me prior to class if you are expecting an emergency notification. *Since some assessments are online, you are HIGHLY encouraged to work off of a computer or laptop with audio/microphone. Please coordinate with IT and feel free to use the campus resources such as computer labs, as needed.
11. **Questions:** Biology is an exciting discipline in the sciences, and one that I really enjoy teaching! If you have any questions over the content, email me!

| <i>TENTATIVE</i> COURSE SCHEDULE | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------|--|----------|--|----------|
| *All Exams will be given <u>face-to-face during class time</u> on the dates indicated below. Homework, quizzes, article reviews, and other assignments will be <i>due Sundays by midnight</i> through Blackboard or McGraw Connect on the date indicated below. | | | | | | |
| <u>LATE SUBMISSIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.</u> | | | | | | |
| JANUARY | | | | | | |
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| 14 | 15 MLK Day (Holiday) | 16 | 17 First Class Day: Syllabus Overview | 18 | 19 Ch. 12 Intro to Evolution | 20 |
| 21 | 22 Ch. 12 Intro to Evolution / HWE Activity / Team Pre- Assess. | 23 | 24 Ch. 12/13 Evidence of Evolution / Fossils | 25 | 26 Ch. 13 Microevolution / HWE Activity/ Team Pre-Assess. | 27 |
| FEBRUARY | | | | | | |
| 28 Ch. 12/13 HW & Quiz 1 Due @ 11:59PM | 29 Ch. 14 Macroevolution | 30 | 31 Ch. 14 Taxonomy & Phylogeny | 1 | 2 Modeling Process of Evolution Activity | 3 |
| 4 Ch. 14 HW, Quiz 2, & Mod. Evol. Activity HW Due @ 11:59PM | 5 Ch. 14 / Activity / Review | 6 | 7 Exam 1 <i>*Connect Extra Credits Due*</i> | 8 | 9 Ch. 18 Population Ecology | 10 |
| 11 Article Review 1 Due @ 11:59PM | 12 Ch. 18 Population Ecology / Pop. Sampling Activity | 13 | 14 Ch. 19 Community Ecology; Intro to SEEK app. | 15 | 16 Ch. 19 Community Ecology; Intro to SEEK app. | 17 |
| 18 Ch. 18 HW Due @ 11:59PM | 19 Ch. 19 / Activity & Human Pop. / Ecological Footprint | 20 | 21 Ch. 20 Ecosystem Ecology / Eco. Footpr. | 22 | 23 Ch. 20 Conservation Biology | 24 |

| MARCH | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------|--|----------|---|----------|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| 25 Ch. 19 HW Due @ 11:59PM | 26 Activity / Review | 27 | 28 Exam 2 <i>*Connect Extra Credits Due*</i> | 29 | 1 Ch. 15 Early Earth | 2 |
| 3 Ch. 20 HW, Quiz 3, Article Review 2, & Ecological Footprint Due @ 11:59PM | 4 Ch. 15 Bacteria/Archaea / Microbe Review Sheet(s) | 5 | 6 Ch. 15 Bacteria/Archaea / Microbe Review Sheet(s) | 7 | 8 Ch. 15 Protist Diversity / Microbe Review Sheet(s) | 9 |
| 10 | 11 Spring Break! | 12 | 13 Spring Break! | 14 | 15 Spring Break! | 16 |
| 17 SEEK Round #1 & Invasive Species Creative Assignment Due @ 11:59PM | 18 Ch. 15 Protist Diversity / Microbe Review Sheet(s) | 19 | 20 Small Things Microscope Activity | 21 | 22 Ch. 15 Fungi | 23 |
| 24 Ch. 15.1 HW due @11:59PM | 25 Ch. 15 Fungi / Review | 26 | 27 Mini-Exam 3 <i>*Connect Extra Credits Due*</i> | 28 | 29 No Classes – Study Day! | 30 |
| APRIL | | | | | | |
| 31 Ch. 15.2 HW, Quiz 4, & Article Review 3 Due @ 11:59PM | 1 Ch. 16 Plants | 2 | 3 Ch. 16 Plants / Review | 4 | 5 Ch. 17 Animal Overview / Kickoff Group Animal Diversity Dating Profile | 6 |
| 7 | 8 Ch. 17 Animal Diversity Overview / Kickoff Group | 9 | 10 Animal Skulls CSI Activity | 11 | 12 Ch. 17 / Human Evolution / Review | 13 |

| Ch. 16 HW, Quiz 5, & SEEK Round #2 due @ 11:59PM | Animal Diversity Dating Profile | | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|--|----------|--|----------|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| 14 Ch. 17.1 HW, Ch. 17.2 HW, Quiz 6, & Human Evolution HW Due @ 11:59PM | 15 Mini-Exam 4 <i>*Connect Extra Credits Due*</i> | 16 | 17 Ch. 23 Form Fits Function Overview | 18 | 19 Comparative Anatomy: Nervous & Endocrine Systems | 20 |
| 21 Article Review 4 & Ch. 23 HW Due @ 11:59PM | 22 Comparative Anatomy: Circulatory & Respiratory Systems | 23 | 24 Comparative Anatomy: Digestive & Excretory Systems | 25 | 26 Comparative Anatomy / Presentation Workday / Team Post-Assess. | 27 |
| MAY | | | | | | |
| 28 SEEK Round #3, Connect Virtual Labs, & Article Review 5 Due @ 11:59PM | 29 Animal Diversity Dating Profile Group Presentations (In Class) / Team Post-Assess. <i>Last day of scheduled classes!</i> | 30 <i>Study Day – No Class!</i> | 1 <i>*Seek Extra Credit Due @ 11:59PM (up to 15)*</i> | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | *You will <u>not</u> have a final exam for this course; please reference the syllabus.* <i>Final Grades Due – Monday, May 13</i> | | | |

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance).

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services.

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). For more information and self-help resources, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>

Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be

missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units. Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or

program at the University. The university will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, [Student Code of Conduct](#), on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

We expect that students 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.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Important Dates:

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| January 16 | First day of class |
| January 31 | Census Date |
| March 11-17 | Spring Break – No Classes |
| March 29 | Study Day – No Classes |
| April 13 | Last day to drop with an automatic “W” |
| April 20 | Last day to withdraw from the University |
| April 29 | Last day of scheduled classes |
| April 30 | Study Day – No Classes |
| May 1-7 | Final Examinations |
| May 7 | End of Spring Semester |
| May 13 | Final Grades Due |

The complete academic calendar is available online:

<https://catalog.tamusa.edu/undergraduate/academic-calendar/>



College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Natural Sciences - Biology Program
Spring 2024 Syllabus