

General Biology I – Attributes of Living Systems
BIOL 1306 - 3 credits
Texas A&M University San Antonio, College of Arts and Sciences
Spring 2026 Syllabus

Ms. Marie Tipps

Office: SciTech 311K - **Office phone:** 784-2230

e-mail: tmtipps@tamusa.edu (BEST way to contact me)

Walk-in Office hours: Monday/Wednesday 11:00-1:00 p.m.

We can also schedule an online or in-person meeting as needed.

Class Meeting Times and Location(s):

Lecture: Mon/Wed 9:30-10:45; SciTech 242

Textbook for Lecture *REQUIRED***:**

Biology – Raven et al. – 13th edition McGraw Hill – ****BOOK FEE ASSESSED-SHOULD HAVE ACCESS ON FIRST DAY OF CLASS**** If you hit a pay wall – DO NOT PAY AGAIN!

**You may also purchase a loose 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.

Other Required Materials:

- **Lab: MUST BE ENROLLED IN BIOL 1106 LAB CONCURRENTLY (unless already taken)**
- **Blackboard – this is where you will go for lectures, 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.
- **On-Line Learning System Components**
 - We will be using “McGraw Hill Connect” which is an on-line tool for learning and studying modules. You will have access to this via blackboard. It will require a one-time set-up.



- **CircleIn**

Our class will use the [CircleIn](#) app to study and help one another succeed in this course. Studying and learning alone is one of the hardest parts of a course, so please leverage one another.

With CircleIn, you can

- **Ask anonymous questions**
- Connect with all students taking the same course in addition to those in this class with you, via the course and class chat. Please note, this app does NOT require you to give out your personal contact information to anyone.
- Participate in video study rooms
- **Stay organized** with assignments and tasks using the planner feature
- **Create, study & share flashcards, notes & resources** with every student taking the course.
- Provide **anonymous weekly course feedback** to share with me and the class what you're struggling with and what questions you have and you can help each other resolve those questions.
- **Have access to the AI Tutor 24/7** to help when you're stuck on a homework problem, reviewing for a quiz, need step by step guidance, want feedback or would like to better understand a concept. Think of it as a helpful study partner who's patient, responsive, and always available.

My expectation is that you engage with your classmates each week on CircleIn. For those of you needing help, use it to ask questions, and for those of you willing to help others, please check it often to look for questions that haven't been responded to yet. CircleIn is a leaderless student community where each of you is stronger together, particularly when you engage. I will get regular updates on how the class is doing on CircleIn.

Lastly, CircleIn is paid for by Texas A&M University-San Antonio, so you will never see advertising, you won't be asked for a credit card or banking info and you can communicate with any student directly through CircleIn, so you don't have to give out any personal contact information to set it up. Please take advantage of it today.

To get started:

- [Download the App](#) and visit the [CircleIn's Web Version \(PC or MAC\)](#)
- [Search for Texas A&M University – San Antonio](#)
- [Enter your School Log-In Credentials](#)
- [Select Authorize and Get Started!](#)



Catalog Description and Prerequisites:

Course Description: This course examines the fundamental molecular, cellular, and genetic principles characterizing living organisms including the role of the scientific method in the discovery of these principles. Specific concepts include the chemical basis for life, energy transformations, cell structure and function, the metabolic processes of respiration and photosynthesis, cell reproduction, and basic concepts of heredity and genetics. This course is designed for students majoring in science fields. This course meets the standards for the life and physical Sciences category of courses under the core curriculum.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will develop critical thinking skills, communication skills, and empirical and quantitative skills.
2. Students will understand and apply the scientific method to novel questions in order to develop a strategy to answer those questions.
3. Students will understand the role of the scientific method in scientific discovery.
4. Students will summarize the laws of matter and energy as they apply to living organisms
5. Students will classify the organic and inorganic components that make up living organisms
6. Students will explain the role of water in the fitness of the environment
7. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the differences between eukaryotic and prokaryotic cells.
8. Students will identify components of plant and animal cells, including the structure and function of cell organelles.
9. Students will understand cellular membranes as they relate to transportation of molecules into and out of cells.
10. Students will understand the energy transforming principles of photosynthesis and cellular respiration.
11. Students will understand the cellular cycles of mitosis and meiosis
12. Students will understand the basic principles of gene to protein
13. Students will apply the principles of Mendelian genetics to solution of basic genetics problems to better understand inheritance patterns and be able to discuss how they can contribute to the solution of medical and social dilemmas.
14. Students will be able to discuss recent advances in modern genetics considering the medical, social, and economic impacts of the new findings.

Course Content

5 Regular Exams OR Projects – (100 points each)

- Exams or projects will cover topics based on material from each unit. You will be notified at the beginning of each unit whether or not you will have an Exam or a Project covering the material for that unit. If you are assigned a project – the information will be posted at the beginning of the unit for what the project will entail.
- Exams will have 35-50 questions ranging from multiple choice, short answer, true/false, drawing, matching, fill-in-the-blank, etc. Not all types of questions will be on every exam.
- Exams will not be scaled, however you will be informed of the class average on that exam and thus it will give you an idea of your standing in the class (see scaling policy on FINAL GRADES below).
- If you feel that your exam was graded incorrectly, I would be happy to discuss it with you within 1 week of taking the exam.

1 Cumulative Final Exam – (100 points)

- The final exam will cover material discussed throughout the semester. Major highlights will include understanding vocabulary and big picture concepts for each of the units we will cover during the semester.

13 Online Homework Assignments –

- On-line homework assignments are a way to guide you through sections of your book and help you to assess whether or not you are understanding the material. These will be completed as per the deadlines listed on the schedule provided—deadlines are strict so plan ahead to make sure you complete these in time. Your 3 lowest grades will be dropped. You will have up to 5 days after the initial due date to complete the assignment with a 10% deduction in points per day late.

In-Class Activities/SmartBook Assignments –

- There will be hands-on activities and concept checks throughout the semester that will help demonstrate concepts, practice word problems, and reinforce concepts that you will be responsible for completing in class.
- These in-class assignments should help assess where you are in terms of the concepts being taught. If you struggle with these activities, this should help identify where you need to focus your studying or where you need to ask for more help.
- You will also be required to complete the adaptive SmartBook assignments as part of this category of points. These SmartBook assignments should be beneficial to helping you learn vocabulary and understand the main concepts of the chapters. Think of them as directed reading of the chapters as they are tailored to the course we are teaching.
- In the gradebook, everything labeled “ICA” or “SB” will count towards this category.
- I will drop 5 of the lowest grades in this category.

Dos & Do Nots

- Do come to class regularly and on time – it affects your grade, not because of points assessed, but because of understanding the material.
- Do take notes on the print outs of my lectures
- Do ask questions in class
- Do seek out help from me and your peers
- Do NOT have your cell phone out during class unless asked to do so.
- Do NOT check social media sites on your laptop during my lecture feigning that you are taking notes
- Do NOT come in late or miss class and ask me to be caught up
- Do NOT leave early without talking to me prior to class beginning

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Lecture Attendance: Attendance will be taken daily however you will not be assessed points. However, keep in mind that attendance may be used at the end of the semester as an additional evaluation of your performance (i.e. if your grade is borderline and you have attended class regularly I will be more inclined to bump you up to the next grade). If you must miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining what you missed (announcements, class notes, handouts, etc...) from a fellow classmate, not me.

In which case make a buddy: _____

Exam Day Attendance: Mandatory – If you arrive late, you have only until the end of the period to take it. So, my advice: show up early.

MAKE UP POLICIES:

Homework Assignments: Because these are on-line and because they will be open and available for more than one day, you should have ample opportunity to complete these. Thus – there are no make-ups. There is a 5-day grace period for turning in these assignments; however, you will lose points per day late. If there is an emergency that is considered a university-excused reason that prevents you from taking a quiz or completing an assignment in the allotted timeframe, you must contact me within one day of the due date. If I do not hear from you within that time period, you have forfeited the right to make up the assignment or quiz.

Quizzes & Exams:

- You may make up a quiz or an exam only if:
 - you contact me within one day (24 hours) of the scheduled exam
 - your absence is one approved by TAMUSA 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.

In-class activities – as mentioned above, any hands-on activities we conduct in class cannot be made up as they require your presence and will usually be conducted as a group. However, if you miss for an excused reason, we can discuss the reason why and then you will be exempt from the points given in class.

Grading

EXAMS/PROJECTS= 60% of your grade (take total points earned / total points available X 0.60) = A

HOMEWORK =15% of your grade (take total points earned / total points available X 0.15) = B

ASSIGNMENTS/QUIZZES = 25% of your grade (take total points earned / total points available X 0.25) = C

(A + B + C) x 100 = FINAL COURSE PERCENTAGE

Final Grade:

A = 90-100%.....I will *consider* scaling up if you earn an 89.7%, but I will **NOT** scale up for an 89.49% or less
B = 80-89%..... I will *consider* scaling up if you earn an 79.7%, but I will **NOT** scale up for an 79.49% or less
C = 70-79%..... I will *consider* scaling up if you earn an 69.7%, but I will **NOT** scale up for an 69.49% or less
D = 60-69%..... I will *consider* scaling up if you earn an 59.7%, but I will **NOT** scale up for an 59.49% or less
F = below 60%

Email Etiquette

Professional email etiquette is a requirement when communicating with me (or anyone) online. A proper greeting (e.g. Professor, Mrs. Tipps, Marie, Professor Tipps, Hello Mrs. Tipps, etc.) with a coherent message and the name of the course in the subject line.

For example:

To: tmtipps@tamus.edu

Subject: Question about Gen. Biol. Class

Ms. Tipps,

My name is “your name here” and I was wondering what format the midterm will be in.

Best, “your name here”

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.

Please allow 24 hours for a response during the regular week and 72 hours for a response over the weekend. I will not regularly be answering e-mails sent after 5:00 p.m. so please plan accordingly.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

*All Exams will be given face-to-face during class time on the dates indicated below. Homework, quizzes, discussions, and other assignments will be *due Sundays by midnight* through Blackboard or McGraw Connect on the date indicated below. **LATE SUBMISSIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.**

Week Of:	Monday	Wednesday	Assignment Due Dates (11:59PM on Blackboard <u>unless noted</u>)
1/19	No Class – Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	Syllabus & Intro to Gen Bio I	-
1/26	Scientific Method	Atoms, Molecules, & Bonds	
2/2	Properties of Water	Organic Molecules	SBs 1-3 due 2/8
2/9	Organic Molecules	Exam 1 on 2/11 during class time.	HWs 1-3 due 2/10
2/16	General Features of Cells	General Features of Cells	
2/23	Membrane Structure	Movement Across a Membrane	SB 4 & 5 due 3/1
3/2	Energy	Enzymes	HW 4 & 5 due 3/6
3/7	Spring Break – No Class!	Spring Break – No Class!	Project 1 Due 3/16
3/16	Cellular Respiration	Cellular Respiration	SB 6-8 due 3/22
3/23	Photosynthesis	Exam 3	HW 6-8 due 3/24
3/30	Cell Cycle	Mitosis	
4/6	Meiosis	Patterns of Inheritance	SB 10-12 Due 4/12
4/13	Patterns of Inheritance	DNA Structure	HW 10-12 due 4/19 Project 2 Due 4/20
4/20	DNA Structure	Transcription	SB 14 & 15 due 5/1
4/27	Translation	Mutation	HW 14 & 15 due 5/3
5/4	Exam 5 on 5/4	-	-
5/11	*Monday, May 11: Cumulative Final Exam from 12-1:50pm in STEM 242*	-	-



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SAN ANTONIO

University Email Policy and Course Communications

All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at helpdesk@tamusa.edu or at 210-784-HELP (4357). If you don't hear back within 48 hours, contact them again. They have many requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to follow up with them.

Academic Accommodations for Individuals 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, Disability Support Services is in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us at the website 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 academic accommodation with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center

All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. 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. Online tutoring is also available for after hours and weekend assistance.

While tutoring hours may change based on tutor schedules and availability, the current tutoring hours for MATH in the ALC are as follows:

Day of the Week	Appointments Available	Walk-in Tutoring (no appointment needed)
Monday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Thursday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Friday	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Counseling/Mental Health Resources

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and 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, visit our website, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

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 24/7/365 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 or through the TELUS student support App.

The [TELUS Student Support App](#) provides a variety of mental health resources to include 24/7/365 support for in the moment distress, crisis support, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.

Emergency Preparedness

JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification system. 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 the [Jag E Alert System website](#). You can access more information about [Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan on our website](#). 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 by the published Census Date (the first week of class). Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend prior to the published Census Date (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.

Jaguar Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center (WLDCC)

The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, 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 e-portfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects.

The Writing Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center in JagWire under the **Student Services tab**. Click on **Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center** to make your appointment. Students wanting to work in real time with a tutor can schedule an **Online Appointment**. Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an **e-Tutoring appointment**. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on the [Writing Center's website](#). The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing: writingcenter@tamusa.edu.

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 [submit a CARE report for support](#). Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources. The [General's Store is a food pantry](#) that is available on campus as well.

Military Affairs

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots' Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamu.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the wide variety 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 with an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course 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, equal 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 on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to 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, based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the University's Civil Rights Officer at 210-784-2061 or titleix@tamu.edu. Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university. If you have experienced any form of sex discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking based on sex, 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, sexual violence, or other related sex-based misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamu.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 accommodation for pregnant students as it would be

provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that is 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. Young Jaguars can support parenting students with daycare if students meet this criteria: (1) must be enrolled in classes at Texas A&M-San Antonio in the current semester, (2) must be Pell eligible or a single parent, (3) child(ren) must be aged 3 to 12-years-old, and (4) child(ren) must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. For more information, please contact Young Jaguars at youngjaguars@tamusa.edu or call (210) 784-2636.

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, and pregnancy/parenting 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 students' 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, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with 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 a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

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](#) or visit the resources available in the [OSRR website](#).

Important Spring 2026 Dates

Dates	Event
January 13	Tuition and Fee Payments deadline
January 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Classes
January 20	First Day of Class
February 4	Census Date
March 6-23	Midterm grading period
March 9-14	Spring Break
April 3	Study Day – No classes
April 17	Last day to drop with an automatic withdrawal
May 1	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the university
May 4	Last Day of Classes
May 5	Study Day – No classes
May 6-12	Final Exams
May 19	Commencement

The complete [Academic Calendar](#) as available on our website.