

BIOL 3380-110, 10745, RESEARCH METHODS

Spring 2021

Texas A&M University-Central Texas

COURSE DATES, MODALITY, AND LOCATION

Time/Day:

Lecture: TR 2:30 pm – 3:45 pm: Students and faculty meet synchronously via WebEx Meeting

This is a 100% online course. Online activities and supplemental materials made available through the A&M-Central Texas Canvas Learning Management System [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Linh Pham

Office: 302 F Heritage Hall

Phone: 254-519-8012

Email: All communication should be conducted through Canvas “Inbox”. No exceptions!

Office Hours

Virtual office hours:

Wednesday: 9:30 am – 12:00 am

Thursday: 9:30 am – 12:00 am

I am available for WebEx meeting with students on an appointment-basis. WebEx appointment must be made in advance.

Student-instructor interaction

In this course, interaction with the instructor is one of the most effective ways to learn.

*Therefore, I encourage my students to attend my office hours through Canvas Inbox whenever you have questions. If students cannot make it to my office hours, do not hesitate to contact me at **Canvas “Inbox”** for a WebEx appointment. I will reply within 24 hours, usually within couples of hours on weekdays. Response time may vary in weekends and holidays.*

WARRIOR SHIELD

Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Warrior Shield is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in Warrior Shield through their myCT email account.

Connect to Warrior Shield by [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login) [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Account/Login] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in Warrior Shield, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

COVID-19 SAFETY MEASURES

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University-Central Texas has adopted policies and practices to minimize virus transmission. All members of the university community are expected to adhere to these measures to ensure their own safety and the safety of others. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses, course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.) and co-curricular programs:

- Self-monitoring—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction. Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities.
- Face Coverings— Face coverings must be worn inside of buildings and within 50 feet of building entrances on the A&M-Central Texas Campus. This includes lobbies, restrooms, hallways, elevators, classrooms, laboratories, conference rooms, break rooms, non-private office spaces, and other shared spaces. Face coverings are also required in outdoor spaces where physical distancing is not maintained. The university will evaluate exceptions to this requirement on a case by case basis. Students can request an exception through the Office of Access and Inclusion in Student Affairs.
 - If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the Office of Student Conduct. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.
- Physical Distancing—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in the course and course-related activities.
- Classroom Ingress/Egress—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- The university will notify students in the event that the COVID-19 situation necessitates changes to the course schedule or modality.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Overview and description

BIOL 3380 involves the study of the scientific methods, types of research, and research design as related to biology and biochemistry. In this course, students are required to review, analyze, and interpret research findings in their major field. In particular, students are expected to design and carry out a long-term project in which they will have to present oral reports and write a scientific paper with the assistance of their instructor.

This is a ***Writing Intensive*** course, which means writing will be an integral part of measuring your mastery of course content. Throughout the course, you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills. Since learning to revise your writing is fundamental to improving writing skills, I will give you detailed feedback that includes specific strategies for how to improve your writing.

Prerequisite: Junior Status

Course Objective or Goal

By the end of the course, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in:

1. Research terminology
2. Ethical principles of research, ethical challenges and approval processes
3. Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods to approach research
4. Components of a literature review process
5. Critical analysis of published research articles
6. Communication of research result in oral form and writing form
7. Writing scientific papers

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Exhibit integrative problem solving skills such as literature search, experimental design, data interpretation, and data evaluation.
2. Develop ability to think critically about biology and biochemistry
3. Communicate ideas in oral form using professional language
4. Develop and improve ability to write scientific critiques and papers using professional language

Required Reading and Textbook(s)

This is a Writing Instructive (WI) course so writing will be an integral part of my instruction and our interactions. Writing will also be a fundamental way that I measure student mastery of course content. WI means that you will have several opportunities to work on improving your writing skills.

- Required: A short guide to writing about Biology by Jan A. Pechenik, ninth edition

- Suggested: Experimental design for the life sciences by Graeme D. Ruxton and Nick Colegrave, third edition.

I expect you to read the corresponding chapters in your textbook before coming to class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements	Percentage	Points	SLOs
Assignments	38%	380	1, 2, 4
Oral Presentation	12%	120	1, 2, 3
Term Paper	50%	500	1, 2, 4
Total	100%	1000	

1. Assignments: There are seven assignments. Four of them are writing intensive including three scientific paper critiques and one formal lab report.
2. Oral Presentation: There is one oral presentation. Detailed rubric of the oral presentation is attached to the end of this syllabus.
3. Term Paper: There is one term paper; you will have multiple submissions throughout the semester and the final version will be submitted at the last week of the semester. Detail rubric of the term paper is attached to the end of this syllabus.

Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion

Percentage	Course Grades
90% or higher	A
80-80.99%	B
70-79.99%	C
60-69.99%	D
59.99% or lower	F

A 4.00 (90 +) Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.

B 3.00 (80-89%) Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.

C 2.00 (70–79%) Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

D 1.00 (60–69%) Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully course requirements.

F 0.00 (<60%) Represents failure and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an “I” (incomplete).

I (Incomplete) The “I” shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an “I” requires a written agreement between the instructor and student specifying the time and manner in which the student will complete the course requirements. In no event may any such written agreement allow a period of longer than one year

to complete the course requirements. For graduate and professional students, an “I” is to remain on the transcript until changed by the instructor or department. For all other students, work to make up an I must be submitted within one year of the last day of final examinations of the term in which the “I” was given; if not submitted by that time, then the “I” will automatically change to an F. *To obtain an incomplete you must have been doing passing work in the course.*

Posting of Grades

- Student grades will be posted on the Canvas Grade book.
- The turn-around time for grades is as follows:
 - For short assignments such as paper critiques and homework: 7-10 days.
 - For exams, technical and term papers: 10-14 days.

Grading Policies

Read these carefully as I am strict with my policies.

Grading Policy and Point Breakdown. Grades in this course will be criteria-based on a number of activities including presentations, assignments, term paper, and participation. This means that grades will not be curved and anyone achieving a 90% or above will receive an A in this course.

Grade Dispute Policy. Grading disputes must be put in writing (with justification such as supporting statements from the text or another credible source) and given to me no earlier than 24 hours after the assignment has been returned. I will consider your request carefully, but reserve the right to adjust your grade up or down.

Late Assignments. I expect all assignments to be turned in on time. Late assignments interfere with my ability to provide timely, detailed feedback, as well as with your ability to learn and process new material. Accordingly, any unauthorized late assignment will receive a **5% reduction in grade for each day it is late.** No assignments will be accepted after the closing date on Canvas.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

Complete Course Calendar

The following schedule may be subjected to modification and corrections during the course of the semester.

Week	Lecture Topics	Chapters/Deadlines
Week 1 (Jan 18-24)	- Introduction to Research in Biology and Chemistry - Term paper topics	Chapter 1

Week	Lecture Topics	Chapters/Deadlines
Week 2 (Jan 25-31)	- Locating Useful Sources and Literature Research <i>- <u>Assignment 1: References</u></i>	Chapter 2 <u>January 28: Topic Approval</u>
Week 3 (Feb 1-7)	- Paper Outlines - Exercise on paper outlines	-Reading assignment provided by instructor
Week 4 (Feb 8-14)	- Citing Sources and Listing References - Practice: Refworks Citation <i>- <u>Assignment 2: Citation</u></i>	- Chapter 2 + reading assignment
Week 5 (Feb 15-21)	- Reading and Writing about Statistical Analyses <i>- <u>Assignment 3: Application of Statistics in Biology and Chemistry</u></i>	Chapter 4 <u>February 16: Term paper outline</u>
Week 6 (Feb 22-28)	- Paper Critique - Exercise on Paper Critique	Reading assignment provided by instructor
Week 7 (Mar 1-7)	- Annotated Outline - Exercise on annotated outlines - Reading a Scientific Paper and Note Taking <i>- <u>Assignment 4: Writing critiques on reading assignment 1.</u></i>	-Chapter 3 -Reading assignment provided by instructor
Week 8 (Mar 8-14)	- Tables and Figures	-Reading assignment provided by instructor <u>March 11: Term paper annotated outline</u>
Mar 15-21 Spring Break – No class		
Week 9 (Mar 22-28)	- Writing a Lab Report <i>- <u>Assignment 5: Write a formal Lab Report on the hypothetical set of data from a biochemistry lab</u></i>	-Chapter 9 -Reading assignment provided by instructor

Week	Lecture Topics	Chapters/Deadlines
Week 10 (Mar 29 – Apr 4)	- Presenting Research Findings: Preparing Talks and Poster Presentation <i>- <u>Assignment 6: Writing critiques on reading assignment 2.</u></i>	-Chapter 11
Week 11 (Apr 5-11)	- Drafting and Revising a Review Paper <i>- <u>Assignment 7: Writing critiques on reading assignment 3.</u></i>	-Chapter 6 -Reading assignment provided by instructor <u>April 6: First submission of the term paper</u>
Week 12 (Apr 12-18)	- Preparing the Final Submission	-Reading assignment provided by instructor
Week 13 (Apr 19-25)	- Writing Letter of Application - Prepare Oral Presentations	- Chapter 12 - Guess lecture on C.Vs.
Week 14 (Apr 26- May 2)	- Student Oral Presentations	
Week 15-16 (May 3 - May 9) (May 10 - May 14)	- Student Oral Presentations - Final Review of the Term Paper	<u>May 6: Final submission of the term paper</u>

Important University Dates

Link to the current Academic Calendar: [<https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/academic-calendar.html>]

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Technology Requirements

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. **We strongly recommend the latest versions of Chrome or Firefox browsers. Canvas no longer supports any version of Internet Explorer.**

This course requires any computer meeting the minimum computing requirements, plus web camera, speaker, and microphone (or headset).

Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com/>] or access Canvas through the TAMUCT Online link in myCT [<https://tamuct.onecampus.com/>]. You will log in through our Microsoft portal.

Username: Your MyCT email address. Password: Your MyCT password

Canvas Support

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

Online Proctored Testing

A&M-Central Texas uses Proctorio for online identity verification and proctored testing. This service is provided at no direct cost to students. If the course requires identity verification or proctored testing, the technology requirements are: Any computer meeting the minimum computing requirements, plus web camera, speaker, and microphone (or headset). Proctorio also requires the Chrome web browser with their custom plug in.

Other Technology Support

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [http://hdc.tamu.edu]

Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete the [Drop Request](#) Dynamic Form through Warrior Web.

[<https://dynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com/casAuthentication.ashx?InstID=eaed95b9-f2be-45f3-a37d-46928168bc10&targetUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fdynamicforms.ngwebsolutions.com%2Fsubmit%2FForm%2FStart%2F53b8369e-0502-4f36-be43-f02a4202f612>].

Faculty cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar’s Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed. Once you submit the completed form to the Registrar’s Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar’s Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, working with others in an unauthorized manner, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be referred to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the Student Conduct process](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html),
[https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a report](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0),
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0].

Academic Accommodations

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Office of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717) Canvas page (log-in required)
[https://tamuct.instructure.com/courses/717]

Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit [Student Affairs](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more

about these [requirements and guidelines](#) online, please visit the website [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, on a remote online basis. Visit the Academic Support Community in Canvas to view schedules and contact information. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Student success coaching is available online upon request.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, success coaching, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 501-5836, visit the Office of Student Success at 212F Warrior Hall, or by emailing studentsuccess@tamuct.edu .

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive online tutoring support at no additional cost. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas except writing support. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

University Writing Center

The University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free service open to all TAMUCT students. For the Spring 2021 semester, all services will be online as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The hours of operation are from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. The UWC is also offering hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. By providing a practice audience for students’ ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students’ texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-to-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by making an appointment via [WOnline](https://tamuct.mywconline.com/) [<https://tamuct.mywconline.com/>]. In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the

UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

For Spring 2021, all reference service will be conducted virtually. Please go to our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index] to access our virtual reference help and our current hours.

OPTIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS

A Note about Sexual Violence at A&M-Central Texas

Sexual violence is a serious safety, social justice, and public health issue. The university offers support for anyone struggling with these issues. University faculty are mandated reporters, so if someone discloses that they were sexually assaulted (or a victim of Domestic/Dating Violence or Stalking) while a student at TAMUCT, faculty members are required to inform the Title IX Office. If you want to discuss any of these issues confidentially, you can do so through Student Counseling (254-501-5955) located on the second floor of Warrior Hall (207L).

Sexual violence can occur on our campus because predators often feel emboldened, and victims often feel silenced or shamed. It is incumbent on ALL of us to find ways to actively create environments that tell predators we don't agree with their behaviors and tell survivors we will support them. Your actions matter. Don't be a bystander; be an agent of change. For additional information on campus policy and resources visit the [Title IX webpage](https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html) [https://www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix.html].

Behavioral Intervention

Texas A&M University-Central Texas cares about the safety, health, and well-being of its students, faculty, staff, and community. If you are aware of individuals for whom you have a concern, please make a referral to the Behavioral Intervention Team. Referring your concern shows you care. You can complete the [referral](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2) online [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=2].

Anonymous referrals are accepted. Please see the [Behavioral Intervention Team](https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html) website for more information [https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/bat.html]. If a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911 or A&M-Central Texas University Police at 254-501-5800.

OTHER POLICIES

SCIENCE POLICIES

Lecture courses

1. There will be no bathroom breaks allowed during any exam. Be sure that you address this issue before beginning an exam.
2. Any student needing to take an exam at a **different time** as rest of students due to sickness or other accommodations will receive a **different version of exam**. This includes sickness, special accommodations, etc....
3. All students needing special accommodations must submit an accommodation form from the Office of Access and Inclusion listing the specific accommodations needed. Students are responsible for scheduling their own exam times with the TAMUCT Testing Center.
4. Any student missing an exam in class for any other reason (i.e. illness, death in family, etc....) must provide documentation for missing the exam (e.g. doctor's note, obituary notice, etc....). Exams must be made up within one week of original scheduled date, no exceptions.

Laboratory courses

1. Attendance policy: A maximum of 3 absences will be allowed; additional absences in lab will result in an "F" for the entire course, regardless of excuse.
2. Laboratory Safety training: All students are **required** to take the mandatory Laboratory Safety Training Module - found on in your Modules tab in CANVAS. You must take the training and **bring the signed "Safety Agreement Form"** to your instructor **before you are allowed in lab!!!** This is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** - any lab absences because you have not taken the training will be considered **unexcused!**
3. Laboratory Coats: Students who have laboratories in **Warrior Hall** (rms. 407, 410, 413) are required to purchase a laboratory coat from the TAMUCT Hanik Bookstore in Founder's Hall. Due to the nature of chemicals used in *Heritage Hall*, lab coats will be provided for these laboratories.

INSTRUCTOR POLICIES.

Read these carefully as I am strict with my policies.

Canvas Assignment Submissions. Please keep in mind that it is your responsibility to submit your work on time to the correct location and ensure that the correct document is submitted to Canvas properly. Failure to do so will result in a late penalty or zero. Also, please be aware that technical errors in Canvas are very rare and tech support has sophisticated tools to determine if students have actually submitted assignments or posted to discussion boards.

Grading Policy and Point Breakdown. Grades in this course will be criteria-based on a number of activities including exams, assignments, lab reports, and attendance. This means that grades will not be curved and anyone achieving a 90% or above will receive an A in this course.

Grade Dispute Policy. Grading disputes must be put in writing (with justification such as supporting statements from the text or another credible source) and given to me no earlier than 24 hours after the assignment has been returned. I will consider your request carefully, but reserve the right to adjust your grade up or down.

Late Assignments. I expect all assignments to be turned in on time. Late assignments interfere with my ability to provide timely, detailed feedback, as well as with your ability to learn and process new material. Accordingly, any unauthorized late assignment will receive a 5% reduction in grade for each day it is late. No assignments will be accepted after it has been graded and returned.

Exams. The exams will be a mixture of multiple choices and short answers, designed to provoke reflection, critical thought, and application of knowledge. You are encouraged to prepare for the exam by reviewing reading materials, outlining a draft of a response, and discussing these thoughts with your peers. You will then demonstrate your individual, integrated thoughts on the topic in a closed-book exam during the class period.

Missed exams. If you know you will miss an exam, please contact me BEFORE the exam. I will gladly give make-up exams if the student has an unavoidable reason for missing the exam (i.e. death in the family, severe illness). Keep in mind that I will expect documentation of your reason for missing the exam (e.g. doctor's note, obituary notice). Exams must be made up within a week of the original scheduled date, no exceptions regardless of excuse.

What I expect of you. To get the most out of this class, you are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner, which includes contributing to class discussions, being punctual, and notifying me of absences in advance.

Class Attendance. I expect that you attend each class session and arrive on time. If an unavoidable situation arises that prevents you from attending class, I expect that you also promptly contact me to discuss the missed material and get the notes from a classmate. I will not distribute my notes to students as they are often abbreviated and do not contain the detail needed to sufficiently understand the material.

What you can expect of me. You can expect me to start and end class on time, be available through office hours, e-mail, and by appointment, be responsive to student suggestions for course improvement, answer questions to the fullest extent possible and/or direct you to appropriate resources, return graded assignments and exams within a reasonable time frame, and treat you with respect as future colleagues.

Discussion. The topics in this class encompass a diversity of issues that merit in-depth thought and discussion. Since individuals will be expressing their opinions, I expect that you will respect others' contributions, as you would want them to do for you.

Credits and Workload expectations. For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of two hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to receive an average grade for the course. A student taking a four-credit class that meets for four hours a week should expect to spend an additional eight hours a week outside the classroom in order to earn an average grade.

Class Structure. Classes will involve a balance of active lecture and engaging learning activities. I believe that students learn the theories and concepts much better when they have an active role. I know that this may be new to some of you, but please keep an open mind and I know that you will get more out of this class because of it.

Copyright Notice

Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

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Term Paper Rubric

Category	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Below expectations	Does not meet expectations	Score
Introduction	Thoroughly addresses the topic. Engages reader. Logical progression from broad to narrow topic. Clearly states main topic and previews structure of paper.	The introduction states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction states the main topic but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper.	There is no clear introduction or main topic and the structure of the paper is missing.	10.0%
Thesis Statement	Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose in single sentence. Engaging and thought provoking.	Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose in single sentence.	States the paper's purpose in a single sentence.	Incomplete statement or confusing.	5.0%
Body	Each paragraph has thoughtful supporting detail sentences that develop the main idea.	Each paragraph has sufficient supporting detail sentences that develop the main idea.	Each paragraph lacks supporting detail sentences.	Each paragraph fails to develop the main idea.	35.0%
Organization/Structural Development of Topic	Writer demonstrates logical and subtle sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs; transitions are used to enhance organization.	Paragraph development present but not perfected.	Logical organization; organization of ideas not fully developed.	No evidence of structure or organization.	5.0%
Depth of discussion	In-depth discussion & elaboration in all sections of the paper.	In-depth discussion & elaboration in most sections of the paper.	Omission of pertinent content or content runs-on excessively. Quotations from others outweigh the writer's own ideas.	Cursory discussion in all the sections of the paper or brief discussion in only a few sections.	10.0%
Conclusion	The conclusion is engaging and restates the thesis. Relates topic back to 'real world' applications.	The conclusion restates the thesis.	The conclusion does not adequately restate the thesis.	Incomplete statement or confusing.	10.0%
Spelling/Punctuation	No errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	Almost no errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	Many errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	Numerous and distracting errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	2.5%
Grammar	No errors sentence structure and word usage.	Almost no errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Many errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Numerous and distracting errors in sentence structure and word usage.	2.5%
In-text citations	All facts are cited using primary literature or peer sources. Correct format with no errors	Some facts are cited. Correct format, very few errors.	Few facts are cited. Correct format, few errors	No in-text citations.	5.0%
Literature cited	Done in the correct format with no errors. Includes more than 10 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	Done in the correct format with few errors. Includes more than 5 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	Done in the correct format with some errors. Includes more than 3 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	Done in the correct format with many errors. Includes more than 0-3 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	5.0%
Figures and tables	Tables/figures numbered consecutively in separate series. Title is complete enough to be understood without referring to text. Legend, headings, and units of measure are included. Footnotes used as necessary to provide clarity with respect to:Units of measure that do not fit in the heading, explanations of abbreviations and symbols, statistical significance of entries.	Tables/figures numbered consecutively in separate series Title is complete. Legend, headings, and units of measure are included. Footnotes used to provide clarity.	Tables/figures numbered, but not sequentially. Title is incomplete. Legend, headings, and units of measure are not fully included. Footnotes used but do not provide enough clarity	Tables/figures not numbered. No title. Legend, headings, and units of measure are not included. Footnotes are not used but are needed.	10.0%
Total					100.0%

Oral Presentation Rubric

Category	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Below expectations	Does not meet expectations	Score
Language Use and Delivery	Effectively uses eye contact. Speaks clearly, effectively, and confidently using suitable volume and pace. Fully engages audience. Dresses appropriately. Selects rich and varied words for context and uses correct grammar.	Maintain eye contact. Speaks clearly and uses suitable volume and pace. Attempts to engage audience. Dresses appropriately. Selects words appropriate for context and uses correct grammar.	Some eye contact, but not maintained. Sometimes speaks unclearly. Occasionally engages audience. May dress inappropriately. Occasionally selects words inappropriate for context and uses incorrect grammar.	Uses eye contact ineffectively. Fails to speak clearly and audibly and uses unsuitable pace. Does not engage audience. Dresses inappropriately. Selects words inappropriate for context and uses incorrect grammar.	10%
Organization and Preparation	Clearly outlines structure of presentation. Maintains clear focus on topic. Effectively includes smooth transitions to connect key points. Ends with logical, effective, and relevant conclusion.	Outlines structure of presentation. Maintains focus on topic. Includes transitions to connect key points. Ends with coherent conclusion based on evidence.	Incompletely outlines structure of presentation. Somewhat maintains focus on topic. Includes some transitions to connect key points. Ends with a conclusion based on evidence.	Does not outline structure of presentation. Does not establish or maintain focus on the topic. Uses ineffective transitions that rarely connect points. Ends without a conclusion.	10%
Content	Clearly defines topic and significance. Supports topic and key findings with analysis of relevant and accurate evidence. Provides evidence of extensive, valid research with multiple, varied sources. Provides evidence of complex problem solving and critical thinking. Combines and evaluates existing ideas to form new insights.	Clearly defines topic. Supports topic and key findings with evidence. Presents evidence of valid research with multiple sources. Provides evidence of problem solving and critical thinking. Combines existing ideas to form new insights.	Defines topic. Supports topic with evidence. Presents evidence of research with sources. Provides some evidence of problem solving and critical thinking. Combines existing ideas.	Does not clearly define topic. Does not supports topic with evidence. Presents little or no evidence of valid research. Shows little or no evidence of problem solving and critical thinking. Shows little or no evidence of the combination of ideas.	55%
Quality of Graphics/Slides	Consistent use of formatting: (fonts, sizes, color, punctuation...). Correct use of grammar with rich and varied sentence structures. Transition/animation/sound used effectively and smoothly.	Consistent use of formatting: (fonts, sizes, color, punctuation...). Correct use of grammar. Transition/animation/sound used effectively or smoothly.	Inconsistent use of formatting: (fonts, sizes, color, punctuation...). Some incorrect use of grammar. Transition/animation/sound not used effectively or smoothly.	Inconsistent use of formatting: (fonts, sizes, color, punctuation...). Significantly incorrect use of grammar. Transition/animation/sound not used.	10%
Questions and Answers	Demonstrates extensive knowledge of the topic by responding confidently, precisely, and appropriately to all audience questions and feedback.	Demonstrates knowledge of the topic by responding precisely and appropriately to questions and feedback.	Demonstrates some knowledge of the topic by responding accurately and appropriately to some questions and feedback.	Demonstrates incomplete knowledge of the topic by responding inaccurately and inappropriately to questions and feedback.	10%
Timing of Presentation	Keeps time within ± 1 minute.	Keeps time within ± 2 minutes.	Keeps time within $\pm 3-4$ minutes.	Keeps time within ± 5 minutes or more.	5%
Total					100%

Laboratory Report Rubric

Category	Exceeds expectations	Meets expectations	Below expectations	Does not meet expectations	Score
Introduction	Thoroughly addresses the topic. Engages reader. Logical progression from broad to narrow topic. Clearly states main topic and previews structure of paper.	The introduction states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.	The introduction states the main topic but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper.	There is no clear introduction or main topic and the structure of the paper is missing.	10.0%
Thesis Statement	Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose in single sentence. Engaging and thought provoking.	Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose in single sentence.	States the paper's purpose in a single sentence.	Incomplete statement or confusing.	5.0%
Body	Each paragraph has thoughtful supporting detail sentences that develop the main idea.	Each paragraph has sufficient supporting detail sentences that develop the main idea.	Each paragraph lacks supporting detail sentences.	Each paragraph fails to develop the main idea.	35.0%
Organization/Structural Development of Topic	Writer demonstrates logical and subtle sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs; transitions are used to enhance organization.	Paragraph development present but not perfected.	Logical organization; organization of ideas not fully developed.	No evidence of structure or organization.	5.0%
Depth of discussion	In-depth discussion & elaboration in all sections of the paper.	In-depth discussion & elaboration in most sections of the paper.	Omission of pertinent content or content runs-on excessively. Quotations from others outweigh the writer's own ideas.	Cursory discussion in all the sections of the paper or brief discussion in only a few sections.	10.0%
Conclusion	The conclusion is engaging and restates the thesis. Relates topic back to 'real world' applications.	The conclusion restates the thesis.	The conclusion does not adequately restate the thesis.	Incomplete statement or confusing.	10.0%
Spelling/Punctuation	No errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	Almost no errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	Many errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	Numerous and distracting errors in punctuation, capitalization and spelling.	2.5%
Grammar	No errors sentence structure and word usage.	Almost no errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Many errors in sentence structure and word usage.	Numerous and distracting errors in sentence structure and word usage.	2.5%
In-text citations	All facts are cited using primary literature or peer sources. Correct format with no errors	Some facts are cited. Correct format, very few errors.	Few facts are cited. Correct format, few errors	No in-text citations.	5.0%
Literature cited	Done in the correct format with no errors. Includes more than 10 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	Done in the correct format with few errors. Includes more than 5 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	Done in the correct format with some errors. Includes more than 3 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	Done in the correct format with many errors. Includes more than 0-3 major references (e.g. peer reviewed science journal articles, books, and no more than professional two internet sites. No encyclopedic type references).	5.0%
Figures and tables	Tables/figures numbered consecutively in separate series. Title is complete enough to be understood without referring to text. Legend, headings, and units of measure are included. Footnotes used as necessary to provide clarity with respect to:Units of measure that do not fit in the heading, explanations of abbreviations and symbols, statistical significance of entries.	Tables/figures numbered consecutively in separate series Title is complete. Legend, headings, and units of measure are included. Footnotes used to provide clarity.	Tables/figures numbered, but not sequentially. Title is incomplete. Legend, headings, and units of measure are not fully included. Footnotes used but do not provide enough clarity	Tables/figures not numbered. No title. Legend, headings, and units of measure are not included. Footnotes are not used but are needed.	10.0%
Total					100.0%

CHEM 3380– Research Methods

Syllabus Contract

Directions:

- First, read the syllabus.
- Second, read the statement below to confirm your personal reading and understanding of the contents of the syllabus.
- Third, provide confirmation by printing the document and providing your signature and date of completion in the space provided below.
- Last, submit this contract to me. Note that your grade for the first assignment will not be calculated until this contract is received.

I have received a copy of the syllabus. I have read and understand the policies of this course as stated in the syllabus.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____