

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP IN STEM (BIOL 4395) – SPRING 2023

Primary Instructor: Jeffrey T. Olimpo, Ph.D.

Office: B226, Biology Bldg. (W 1:30 - 2:30pm)*

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*Please note that I am available to meet either in person or via Zoom, depending upon your preference. Please reach out to me via e-mail to schedule a time to connect.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to *a study of our backyard!* This course offers students a unique opportunity to explore the relationship between disease, the environment, and public health through intensive, self-driven research and civic engagement experiences with accompanying lecture content. As opposed to traditional laboratory coursework, this means that *you* will be determining your own research trajectory, outreach plans, and future directions (with our assistance). We (as your instructors) seek to promote an environment where reasonable risk is rewarded, overcoming failure is part of true scientific inquiry, and the contributions that *you* make to science and to our community are invaluable. Welcome to the course! 😊

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide students with authentic research, leadership, and civic engagement opportunities in STEM. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast various styles of leadership, with particular attention to how their own leadership approach(es) align with these styles
- Utilize scientific process skills to make informed decisions throughout all aspects of the experimentation process
- Demonstrate an increased understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods, as evidenced in written and oral deliverables
- Make meaningful empirical and personal connections between diseases and the environment
- Describe, succinctly, the results of their research to both lay and scientific audiences
- Plan, execute, and evaluate one or more civic/community outreach efforts that are informed by their independent research projects
- Establish productive partnerships with individuals on and off campus

COURSE MATERIALS

1. All course handouts will be made available via Blackboard and/or distributed in class
 2. Laboratory notebook (a *non*-spiral bound composition book will suffice) and pen
 3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): laboratory coat, safety glasses (optional)
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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As members of a scholarly community dedicated to healthy intellectual development, students and faculty are expected to share the responsibility of maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity in their academic work. All material for this course must be your work and no one else's. **Cheating or plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated.** This includes, but is not limited to, copying someone else's work on an assignment. Please note that all suspected instances of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be referred to the Dean of Students Office, in accordance with UTEP policies and procedures.

The honor code also states that all members of the UTEP community are entrusted with the task of upholding and promoting five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UTEP community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

COMMUNICATIONS

When you e-mail us, please include a proper subject, any message you are responding to, the course name and CRN, as well as your name. Please use your UTEP account to ensure that the e-mail is not blocked by the university's spam filter. If you e-mail us directly from our Blackboard course, essential information like the course name and section will automatically be included. We will do our best to respond to your e-mail within 48 hours. If you do not receive a response within this timeframe, we ask that you please re-send your e-mail. Please be sure to regularly check the e-mail account listed for you in Blackboard, as this is where all course correspondence will be sent.

CENTER FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Students needing special accommodations in this course must be registered with the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) Office in Room 106 of the Union East Bldg. You may contact them at (915) 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu for more information. Once you are registered with the CASS Office, please notify us as soon as possible so that we may meet to discuss appropriate accommodations, as recommended by CASS.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The IT Support Team can assist with Blackboard, password resets, and student e-mail accounts. Hours and other helpful information can be found at <http://www.helpdesk.utep.edu>.

COURSE GRADING & EXPECTATIONS

COURSE GRADING:

- Attendance/Discussion (15 wks. @ 20 pts./wk.) 300 pts.
- Photoblog Entries (10 @ 25 pts./ea.) 250 pts.
- Outreach Plan ~ Draft 50 pts.
- Outreach Plan ~ Final Version 100 pts.
- COURI Poster Presentation 150 pts.
- Outreach Evaluation Activity 50 pts.
- Final Outreach Presentation 100 pts.

A = 900 – 1,000 pts.	D = 600 – 699 pts.
B = 800 – 899 pts.	F = <600 pts.
C = 700 – 799 pts.	

ATTENDANCE

Your attendance is **required** for all sessions, unless otherwise noted. Class will begin promptly at **3:00pm** and will run no later than **4:20pm**. If, for whatever reason, you cannot make it to class on time, please do your best to enter quietly when you do arrive. Please note that classes may be held in either a face-to-face or virtual format, as determined by the instructional team. Your safety is our top priority, hence our decision to structure the course in that manner. Further, if you are aware of any factors that may impact your attendance, please let us know as soon as possible so that we may work together to find a viable solution.

LABORATORY CONDUCT

Please make every effort to be courteous to your fellow students and the course instructors. Policies regarding responsible conduct of research and ethics are expected to be adhered to (we will discuss these in class) and are essential not only in a “local” sense but in a broader, professional sense as well. Transparency and open lines of communication in the laboratory are critical. Therefore, please report all laboratory accidents, suspected instances of research misconduct, etc. to us ASAP.

BLACKBOARD

This course makes extensive use of Blackboard® (<https://adminapps.utep.edu/blackboardlearn>). You will use Blackboard to submit assignments, download or print course materials, and check your grades. Please note that your login and password are the same as you would use to access your UTEP e-mail account.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Details regarding expectations and grading criteria for all course assignments will be distributed and discussed in class at least one week before the assignment is due.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

	Week	Date	Topic(s)	Assignment(s) Due
Independent Research Projects	1	1/18	Course Overview; Leadership Styles	-
	2	1/23	Community Partnerships I	-
	3	1/25	Community Partnerships II	-
		1/30	<i>Workshop Session (Research)</i>	Photoblog (PB) #1
	4	2/1	Biases and Intercultural Sensitivity	-
		2/6	Collaboration and Attribution	PB #2
	5	2/8	<i>Workshop Session (Outreach Plan)</i>	Outreach Plan (Draft)
		2/13	Productive Failure and Collective Growth	PB #3
	6	2/15	Deep Reflection to Maximize Potential	-
2/20		<i>Workshop Session (Outreach Launch Prep.)</i>	PB #4	
2/22		Community Impacts: Did It "Work"?	Outreach Plan (Final)	
Outreach and Science Communication	7 - 13	2/27 - 4/12	Civic/Community Outreach Projects	PB #5 (3/6)
			(Spring Break ~ Week of 3/13)	PB #6 (3/27)
			Poster Preparation (Week #13)	PB #7 (4/10)
	14	4/17	Poster Preparation (Final Touches)	-
	15	4/19	Poster Presentation Rehearsal	PB #8
		4/22	COURI SPRING SYMPOSIUM	** SAT./POSTER **
		4/24	~~ NO CLASS ~~	PB #9
	16	4/26	Civic/Community Outreach Debrief Activity	-
5/1		Final Presentations (Groups 1 - 3)	PB #10	
	5/3	Final Presentations (Groups 4 - 6)	-	

* Please note that the course drop date is Mar. 30th.