

AG 595 – Research Literature and Techniques (Summer II, 2012, TAMUC)
Three-Page Syllabus

Logistics: The class will “meet” by two different methods. A conference call will be held on Thursdays at 7 pm (adjourn at 9 pm). Call will originate in 135 AgIT or 155 AgIT. Another 20 to 40 hours of “class time” (depending on your efficiency) will be held using **E-College** (i.e., web-enhanced). The Course begins Thursday 10 July 2012 and ends Thursday 9 Aug 2012. There will be total of 5 “class” sessions.

Instructor: Jim Heitholt, 903-886-5351, Jim.Heitholt@tamuc.edu

Office: 135 AgIT (hours anytime I’m in my office or available by mobile)

Text: None (handouts or web sites with selected readings will be assigned)

Course Objectives:

Provide students with a thorough understanding of how one develops and conceives a scientific investigation that solves a biological or agricultural problem.

Teach the students the background associated with the Scientific Method as discussed by AAAS and other resources such as Gauch (2003).

Instill in students the necessity of understanding all aspects of their specific projects and to instill a desire for them to understand as much about their discipline as possible.

Discuss with the students, the personal qualities and attitudes that allow scientists to be more productive and develop strong collaborations.

Provide students with the necessary background to become proficient in different types of scientific writings.

Train students to be able to interpret the statistical components associated with scientific publications and be able to employ these components in their own scientific writings.

Have the students learn how to submit protocols to “animal subject” and “human subject” University committees so that projects involving these categories are done ethically.

Teach students to design survey instruments and questionnaires. Develop skills to optimize information from each question asked.

Teach students how to employ selected experimental designs that optimize the use of resources and increases the chances of their research providing useful findings.

For the student to prepare a detailed outline of scientific paper worthy of presentation as a poster at a meeting or submission as a paper to a reputable journal.

Provide students with information about the latest library resources that will enable them to conduct a thorough literature review.

Have the students learn how to discern the difference between scientific literature, popular press articles, editor-review publications, abstracts, poster presentations, etc. Teach the students how to evaluate the quality of these publications regardless of their category.

Have the students learn how to present user-friendly data in a wide array of formats (posters, papers, verbally, etc.).

Have the students learn how to prepare a grant proposal.

Student Learning Outcomes

After selecting an agreed upon topic (student and instructor), the student will prepare an *outline* for a (1) grant proposal, (2) literature review, (3) poster, (4) slide show, and/or (5) refereed paper. If the student chooses to go beyond the outline alone, credit toward a higher grade will be strongly considered (please see “Grading” section below).

Grading:

The student will choose two of the five categories listed in the SLOs and provide the instructor with a document will be based upon submissions from two of the five choices. The student will submit the first document (or presentation) by Thursday 26 July 2012 and the final document (or presentation) will be due Thursday 9 Aug 2012.

Regardless of the choice from the SLO, each assignment will be worth 25 points, with extra credit possible depending upon its depth and quality.

Attendance and class participation – 10 points possible per session.

Assignments are due on the dates agreed on with a three-point-per-day deduction for late.

Final grade will follow the conventional 90+, 80+, 70+, 60+, and 59- for an A, B, C, D, and F, respectively.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Requests from students with disabilities for reasonable accommodations must go through the Academic Support Committee. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Halladay Student Services Building

Room 303 A/D

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Civility Statement - Professionalism

Students are expected to attend class and/or laboratory as scheduled. Their participation in class discussion and instructional activities should follow the basic principles of common courtesy, decency, and cooperation with peers and instructional personnel. Rude and disruptive behavior, as well as cheating, in any form, will not be tolerated. The use of tobacco products in the classroom, laboratory, or field trip sites is prohibited. Inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated. Failure to comply with instructor's guidelines may result in suspension from class for the remainder of the day's instruction. Repeat offenses may result in additional consequences.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Students are expected to do their own work. Assistance with written assignments, such as proofreading or editing, is encouraged as long as the final concepts and product are those drafted and authored by the student. Information or materials (including ideas, quotes, data, procedures, etc.) from sources other than the student must be given proper credit through appropriate citation. The discipline of Agricultural Education uses the APA format (5th edition) as its primary style guide for publications, including research papers and reports. Assistance with this format and general guidelines for written assignments are available at the following two sources:

The Online Writing Lab at Purdue University

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

The Writing Center @ TAMU-Commerce

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/litlang/CSC/index.htm>

Academic honesty and integrity is expected of all students. Cheating including but not limited to copying, talking to classmates during testing, using notes when prohibited by instructor, and plagiarism (as defined by the Council of Writing Program Administrators <http://www.wpacouncil.org/node/9>) will not be tolerated. Penalties may include grade reduction or suspension from class, depending on the frequency and severity of the violation.