BIOL 407 – PRACTICUM IN BIOLOGY LABORATORY TEACHING
BIOL 114, Fall 2021

INSTRUCTOR
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CLASS TIME/LOCATION
Biol 114 Lecture: MWF 10:30-11:30am, JEB 104
Biol 114 Lab: Days/times vary. All lab sections meet in LSS 351.
TA meetings: Fri, 12:00-1:00pm. All meetings will be held in LSS 351.

Biol 115L: Days/times vary. All lab sections meet in LSS 356.
TA meetings: Fri, 9:30-10:30am. All meetings will be held in LSS 356.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides undergraduate students the opportunity to experience laboratory teaching first-hand. Students gain experience in preparing introductory lectures, laboratory preparation and clean up, peer education and mentoring, classroom management, assessment and providing student feedback. Students also synthesize and apply their knowledge of biology to instruct their peers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
Learn and Integrate—Students will practice a variety of laboratory skills and apply their knowledge to help guide other students in laboratory exercises. Students will also learn and apply new teaching methods.

Think and Create—Students will create and communicate weekly introductions to the laboratories that help explain the main concepts being addressed. They will use multiple teaching strategies and apply the concepts to real world issues to gain student attention and fully explain the information under study in the laboratory that week.

Communicate—Students will create and articulate a broad range of scientific concepts to primarily freshmen and sophomore students. Students will spend three hours a week circulating within laboratory classes helping answer student questions or mentoring students that have questions on lecture material. Communicating effectively in written form is also essential, providing their students with valuable feedback on the concepts under study.

Clarifying Purpose and Perspective—Students will learn to manage information, time, people and their own work. They will be open to mentoring a diverse group of students. Students will gain a tremendous amount of confidence and expand their knowledge of self and others from teaching and mentoring.

Practice Citizenship—In this course, students will establish themselves as leaders within a group of twenty-four peers. They will make ethical decisions and use responsible behaviors in order to gain the respect of their classes. They will learn how to be firm and fair in dealing with the diverse groups
of students they teach. They will collaborate with the instructor, lead TA, lab coordinator and other Teaching Assistants in order to successfully complete this job. Finally, teaching assistants will mediate group discussions and presentations.

**COURSE MATERIALS**
Textbook. Freeman, 7th Ed. *Biological Science*. If you do not own a copy, one can be loaned to you.

Biol 114 (or 115L) BbLearn. This is the same BbLearn site that your students have access to. This is how you will keep up to date with what is happening in the overall course.

Biol 407 BbLearn. This is the BbLearn site just for TAs. Materials include a copy of the syllabus and TA basic information, as well as instructor materials for each lab.

**EMAIL**
Communication in this course (either with me or your students) will occur primarily by university-sponsored email. Please be sure to check your UI email account often (at least once per day during the school week), and ensure that my email address (and your students’) is not blocked.

**GRADING**
Your grade will be based on end-of-the-semester student and instructor evaluations. Instructor evaluations will account for (but may not be limited to) lab meeting and TA meeting attendance, timely return of homework, and professionalism in the classroom. Please see the TA Assessment Form for more information.

**GRADING SCALE**
- Total ≥ 90% = A
- 90% > Total ≥ 80% = B
- 80% > Total ≥ 70% = C
- 70% > Total ≥ 60% = D
- Total < 60% = F

**OFFICE HOURS**
You are not required to host a specific office hour each week, but you must be available to meet with students outside of the standard lab times (at reasonable times of the day). Give your students your preferred contact information, and make the time to meet with them as they discover they need assistance. Student meetings may be held in the lab (if no lab section is in session), other spaces on campus (like the library), or via Zoom.

**LECTURE ATTENDANCE**
Attendance at lectures is recommended, schedule permitting. If you are unable to attend lectures regularly, study guides of each chapter are posted to Bblearn for you to review. This will allow you to know what material your students will have covered prior to lab meeting.

**LABORATORY AND TA MEETING ATTENDANCE**
You are required to attend every scheduled TA meeting and assigned lab section. If you must miss a lab section, it is your responsibility to find a substitute (the instructor or another current TA for the course). If you must miss a TA meeting, please reschedule with me ahead of time.
LECTURE EXAMS
Schedule permitting, I will ask you to proctor one or more lecture exams and assist with grading.
There are four lecture exams (held during regular class time) during the semester, as well as a final exam during finals week. If you have a schedule conflict that prohibits your participation, you will be asked to assist in other ways.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR
TAs are held to a high standard of conduct in the classroom. You are expected to be proactive in student learning. You should come to lab meetings fully prepared with a thorough understanding of the lab procedures and background material. You should engage your students during the lab meeting (i.e., don’t just sit in the front of the room waiting for questions! Walk around, participate in the lab, encourage inquiry!). Your students will be more receptive to you and the material if you are actively involved and demonstrating excitement for biology.

If you do not know the answer to a question, then say, “I don’t know, but I will find out.” Then, help the student look up the answer or ask the instructor or another TA for feedback. Do not just make up an answer.

Please refrain from texting, talking on the phone, checking email, etc… while in lab (unless you’re trying to get help). Also, I realize that you may have friends in your lab section. Please, do not display favoritism, and refrain from engaging in personal conversations during class.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT; TUTORING & COLLEGE SUCCESS
If students are struggling and need additional help outside of lecture, lab, office hours and general email, please direct them to Academic Support and the Tutoring & College Success Office (http://www.uidaho.edu/studentaffairs/asap/tutoring-and-college-success). Acting as a tutor to individual students or small groups of students outside of the classroom is a conflict of interest for TAs, and is not permitted.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All student information and educational records are confidential. You are required to follow FERPA guidelines (http://www.uidaho.edu/registrar/faculty/ferpa). All TAs must pass a university FERPA tutorial/quiz on VandalWeb.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES
Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. Please notify the instructor during Week One of classes if accommodations are required. For more information, and for accommodation approval, please visit https://www.uidaho.edu/current-students/cdar