**NUTR 481 – Section 905, Spring 2018**

**Thursdays 8:00 am – 9:15 am**

**123 HPCT (Heep)**

**Instructor:** Erin D. Giles, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

**Office:** 214 A Cater Mattil

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*When sending me an email, please put “481” in the subject line; this allows me find any emails from NUTR 481 students using a simple search*

**Office Hours:** My door is always open, but if you’d like to ensure that I’m in my office when you drop by, please email or call to set up a time

**Prerequisite:** Senior classification in Nutritional Sciences

**Course description:** Review and critique of current research literature in the nutritional sciences.

Culminates in oral presentations, a research paper, and critical discussions.

**Learning objectives:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate:

1. The ability to conduct independent research by locating and critiquing scientific literature related to nutrition.
2. The ability to understand experimental data and summarize the information.
3. The ability to think critically and formulate arguments based on experimental data.
4. Effective writing and oral communication skills appropriate for a professional scientific setting.

**Text:** No required text. However, the following are useful writing resources:

*“The Elements of Style”* by Strunk and White

*“Little Brown Handbook”* by Fowler

In addition, refer to the guides provided on the library website:

<http://tamu.libguides.com/c.php?g=402356&p=2737390>

**Computer Software:** For reference management, students are expected to download **EndNote** (free)

 *Helpful links to download and then the basics of how to use this program:*

<http://tamu.libguides.com/c.php?g=579536>

**And/Or**

<http://msl.library.tamu.edu/research/endnote.html#fndtn-panelOne>

**Evaluation:** Student presentation 90 points

Research paper 80 points

Abstract 5 points

Participation 25 points

**TOTAL 200 points**

**Final grade:** Based on following scale:

A 180 – 200 D 120-139

B 160 – 179 F < 120

C 140 – 159

To pass this course, you must pass both the writing and speaking components.

**Class policies: Due dates are firm. No late assignments will be accepted without a 5 point per day penalty. This includes required draft submissions.**

**Cell phones:** Cell phones and PDA’s must be turned off or to vibrate. If it is an emergency and you must take a call, please leave the classroom.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. University rules apply governing what constitutes an excused absence. The following link lists what Texas A&M considers excusable absences: <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>. Absences caused by illness or injury will need to be accompanied by a physicians note. Please be aware that the validity of notes will be confirmed through the physician’s office.

**Each un-excused absence will result in 4 points being subtracted from your final grade.**

**Plagiarism:** As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated.

Students **must upload ALL written assignments** onto the **“TurnItIn”** website to identify places where plagiarism might exist. After submission, you must go through the report generated and **revise your assignment** to address these problems **BEFORE submitting your final version** for evaluation and/or grading. Paper evaluation will include a determination as to whether you revised the document appropriately. **If this is not done, 5 points will be deducted from your final grade.**

**Plagiarism on any assignment will not be tolerated, and it will be recommended that you receive an “F” in this course if evidence of plagiarism is found.**

**Academic Integrity:**

As stated in Texas A&M’s Student Rules <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/RulesAndProcedures/HonorSystemRules.aspx>

*Student Rule 20.1.2.3: Definitions of Academic Misconduct.*

*Student Rule 20.1.2.3.5: Plagiarism: The appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. Examples include: Failing to credit sources used in a work product in an attempt to pass off the work as one's own. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from individuals or other sources.*

*Student Rule 20.1.2.3.6: Complicity: Intentionally or knowingly helping, or attempting to help, another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.*

**Required online tutorials:**

To ensure your understanding of academic integrity, plagiarism, and the importance of citation, you are required to complete two online tutorials through the TAMU Libraries web page for this course.

* Go to <http://library.tamu.edu/libraryInstruction/tutorial-directory.html>
* You must **login** to be able to **email me the results** of the proficiencies.
* Once logged in, complete *Citing Your Sources* and *Academic Integrity & Plagiarism*
* Upon completion, choose the “Email Results” button and email me the results by the specified date (see class schedule for due dates)
* **Failure to complete (with a grade of at least 85%) and send the results of the proficiencies to me will result in a deduction of 5 points from your final grade.**

**Cheating:** *Aggies do not lie, cheat, or steal, nor do they tolerate those who do.*

Visit <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu> for more information.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement:**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. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, currently located in the Disability Services building at the Student Services at White Creek complex on west campus or call 979-845-1637. For additional information, visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

**TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to change)**

Week 1 (1/18) *Introduction, class expectations, and How to download EndNote*

**Start brainstorming research ideas – bring 2-3 possible topics to class next week**

Week 2 (1/25) *How to Search Literature Databases & Introduction to EndNote (Arwen Meador)*

**Presentation date selection** (come to class with preferred dates in mind)

**Homework:** read paper(s) for discussion next week

Week 3 (2/1) *How to Evaluate Research Publications*

**Deadline to submit paper topic** (Email Dr. Giles by end of day)

Week 4 (2/8) *How to Write a Scientific Paper*

*Class discussion of research articles using critical evaluation criteria*

Deadline for submitting abstracts of references you anticipate citing in your paper

🡪 Save EndNote file to Google Drive OR e-mail word doc / PDF to Dr. Giles

🡪 Instructions will be provided on required format

Week 5 (2/15) Work on Paper (No Class)

Week 6 (2/22) *How to Prepare & Deliver an Oral Presentation*

**Online Citation & Academic Integrity Tutorial proficiency results due**

Week 7 (3/1) *Writing Studio*

**Draft of paper for peer review due by class time**

**🡪** Submit to Turn-It-In by class time (8am)

**🡪 Bring printed copy of your draft paper for critique in class**

Week 8 (3/8)Student seminars (2 presentations)

**Draft of paper due to Dr. Giles – will accept submissions up until Friday, March 9th at midnight.** *(Word Doc saved as: “Last Name – Draft – key words”)*

SPRING BREAK (3/15) SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

Week 9 (3/22) Student seminars (2 presentations)

Week 10 (3/29) Student seminars (2 presentations)

Week 11 (4/5) Student seminars (2 presentations)

Week 12 (4/12) Student seminars (3 presentations) (**final paper & abstract due by class time**)

Week 13 (4/19) Student seminars (3 presentations))

Week 14 (4/26) Student seminars (2 presentations)

Fri May 4th Final Exam Timeslot (**Friday, May 4th @ 1pm**)

***Mandatory*** Course Evaluation & Graduating Class Exit Survey

***Note from Dr. Giles to the class****: In the journey of learning, the more proactive you are, the more you will learn. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask at the end of each class, e-mail or visit my office. I am here to help you!*

**ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend each class session and to be in class on time.

* **4 points will be deducted for each class missed**.
* The Texas A&M policy on excused absences will be followed. See Texas A&M web page at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07> under Part I: Academic Rules for a list of University excused absences. However, only official documents (doctor, legal, etc.) will be accepted to explain excused absences.
* You may only attend the section of seminar that you are registered in.
* If an absence cannot be avoided, please notify me **prior** to class.

**PARTICIPATION (25 points)**

**Peer review of paper (10 points):** Your participation in the peer review process requires that you provide a draft paper that is at a stage where it can be critiqued by your peers (5 points). The remainder of your grade will come from your participation in evaluating the work of your peer(s) (5 points).

**Peer review of powerpoint slides OR practice run through of presentation at least 1 week prior to presentation date (5 points):** This will be completed outside of class time. You will be partnered with someone in the class (likely the other student(s) presenting the same week as you). You will either need to provide your slides to your partner(s) for critical feedback and/or do a practice run through of your presentation. You can submit a copy of your slides with comments, handwritten notes made during your practice session, or another form of documentation that demonstrates your efforts.

**Discussion questions (10 points):** Once student presentations begin, students are expected to ask a question during each presentation period (1/week, not for each speaker).

* Questions should be thoughtful, and should demonstrate the ability to think critically.
* Simply asking a question does not fulfill your participation requirement.
* **2 points will be subtracted from the final score for each week you do not ask a question / are not engaged in the discussion** (at the discretion of the instructor).

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (85 Points)**

Select a nutrition-related topic of interest and identify a question to be answered by your research this semester. This requires that you (1) find high quality original research studies on the topic and (2) no more than 3 high quality reviews of literature. High quality = (a) current – 2012‐2017, older with permission only and (b) from a respected journal – we will discuss this more in class (if in doubt, ask!). These can be human studies, animal studies, or studies using other preclinical models. Studies that have different conclusions about their research result in a more interesting paper and presentation

**Original research studies** – papers in peer‐reviewed journals from 2012‐present (recent research); if you cannot find recent research on the topic either ask for help (could you use different search terms?) or perhaps it’s not an appropriate subject for NUTR 481.

**Reviews of literature** – this is the format of the paper that YOU will write for this class – an analysis of research about a topic that is based upon many original research studies and reviews of literature on that issue. Read these carefully so that you understand what a review of literature involves. Reviews published in peer‐reviewed journals from 2012‐present only (recent research)

Your topic should be focused enough to allow you the opportunity to develop a good conclusion.

* **Do NOT select something as broad as diet and breast cancer**. A reasonably focused topic would be: “Does consumption of dietary phytoestrogens increase the risk for (or promote the growth of) estrogen-receptor positive breast cancer?”
* Submit your **paper topic** *(in the form of a question)*to me by the **3rd week** of class, and the **abstracts** from your proposedreferences by the **4th week** of class.
* **You are NOT permitted to use a topic that you have used for a paper in a previous class or in another class this semester.**

Good writing skills are necessary for the accurate dissemination of information. Therefore, points will be deducted for spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors on all writing assignments.

Format: **double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and be in a 12-point times new roman font**.

The assignments described are all designed to help you develop the final paper. Therefore, you will receive feedback on each of them that should be used in preparing the next document.

**All students** are advised to **obtain assistance with writing assignments** from the **University Writing Center.** They are able to help with brainstorming concepts, narrowing down your topic, and developing outlines, which will provide you with additional pointers for these assignments or help you past writer’s block, if it occurs. This is a **free service** (paid for by your student fees). The writing center has one location in the West Campus Library, and **online writing critiques** are also available.

*University Writing Center:* [*http://writingcenter.tamu.edu*](http://writingcenter.tamu.edu)

Plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in a zero on the assignment.

**PAPER DRAFT**

The draft version of your paper gives us a chance to provide you with feedback on the document prior to submitting the final version. Part of your participation grade will come from having a draft complete for the in-class “Writing Studio” the 7th week of class.

**Due dates** for draft of paper

Week 7 (3/1) Upload a copy of your paper to Turn-it-in by class time (8am)

Also bring a printed copy of your paper to class for peer review

Turn-it-In will generate a report. Use this report, along with the feedback from your peer(s) to modify your paper. You will then submit your modified paper through Turn-It-In for Dr. Giles to provide feedback.

Week 8 (3/8) Revised DRAFT for Dr. Giles to read is due via Turn-It-In

 **Deadline: midnight Friday, March 9th**

Late submissions will not be accepted and upload options will be turned off at the times listed above

Failure to submit the two versions of the paper by these deadlines results in subtraction of **5 points per day** (Mon-Sun) from the final class grade

The text of the paper should be **~1500 words** or approximately 6 pages long (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font). This word count/page guide does not ***does not include the title page or reference list***

You must use at least **10 references** to support your hypothesis/thesis. You are allowed to use review articles, but the ***majority*** of your paper must discuss ***data from original research articles (minimum of 5)****.* ***Do not simply write about results from 1 or 2 papers and use the other references as introductory/supporting material.***

Your paper should be written like a mini-review article. You must include data in tables and figures to support your statements. ***Do not simply copy and paste all of these from the references you are using; you need to create some of your own using only the relevant information from the papers.***

***You must submit the paper to the TurnItIn site***

* *Prior the deadline, you are expected to submit a draft on TurnItIn, so you will have time to retrieve the report, correct, and then resubmit a revised copy.*
* ***I will grade the paper found on the TurnItIn site so make sure the final version is found there.***
* Paper evaluation will include a determination as to whether you revised the document appropriately. **If this is not done, 5 points will be deducted from your final grade.**

***The paper must show critical thinking.*** To demonstrate critical thinking, you must:

* ***Critique the studies and the information contained in them***
	+ This is especially important in areas where conclusions derived by the various papers are not consistent and this is due to a study not being performed well or having limitations.
* ***Synthesize your own conclusions based on the information discussed in the references you use***
	+ Avoid simply presenting an idea discussed in another course or a pre-existing belief you held prior to reading the papers
	+ The conclusion cannot be simply that more research must be performed to derive a conclusion
* ***Only use information you find in papers published in peer-reviewed journals***
	+ Do not use textbooks or information given in other classes (notes, etc.); these are not acceptable references

**FINAL PAPER (80 Points) + ABSTRACT (5 Points)**

**Due dates** for final paper (uploaded onto the TurnItIn site)

First submission to get report: Sunday **April 8th** @ midnight (get feedback and revise)

Final submission Dr. Giles will grade: Thursday **April 12st** by class time (12th week of class)

* Late submissions will not be accepted and upload options will be turned off at the times listed above
* Failure to submit the two versions of the paper by these deadlines results in subtraction of **5 points per day** (Mon-Sun) from the final class grade

***Paper must be submitted electronically (uploaded to TurnItIn)***

* *4 days before the deadline, you are expected to submit a draft on TurnItIn, so you will have time to retrieve the report, correct, and then resubmit a revised copy.*
* Retrieve the report and modify the document before submitting your revised copy (to correct errors noted in the TurnItIn report)
* ***I will grade the paper found on the TurnItIn site so make sure the final version is found there***
* Paper evaluation will include a determination as to whether you revised the document appropriately. If this is not done, **5 points will be deducted** from your final grade

**ABSTRACT (5 Points)**

The abstract should provide a concise overview of the paper and presentation. It should be written as a single paragraph containing between 200 and 400 words.

**To be submitted via Turn-It-In with your final paper**

**PRESENTATION (90 Points)**

The presentation is an overview of the topic selected for your paper, critically evaluating the topic or question and forming an opinion based that is supported by the research you present. Do not simply go through each of the papers used for your paper in a random order. To provide an overview you must be very selective in the information presented.

The presentation needs to contain:

* Introduction
* Body of the talk including figures/tables – this **must include data from a minimum of 5 key original research papers** (don’t just present information from 1 or 2 papers)
* Conclusions

The presentation is required to be **15 minutes** in length

* A +/- 2 minute window is allowed before point deductions occur.
* Grading of the presentation component is shown on the evaluation sheet.

**Peer review of PowerPoint slides OR practice run through of presentation –** described under participation in the syllabus.

Optional: if you would like my feedback on your slides or presentation outline, send sample slides **2 weeks before** the scheduled presentation date. These will be reviewed and retuned with recommendations before the presentation date.

*Make sure you are comfortable with the equipment. Bring in a draft of your presentation and test it on the computer at least one week before your talk.*