

BIOL 3412 - Cell Biology

Spring 2026 Syllabus, Section 201, CRN 27427

Instructor Information

Ahmed Giasuddin, Ph.D.

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Office: LBV 385D

Office Hours:

MWF 3:00 to 5:00 PM or by appointment.

Please contact me via official email rather than blackboard.

Times and Location

MWF 10:50am-11:45am in Academic Innovation Center 128

Course Description

Additional Course Information

Course Description

BIOL 3412 is an advanced biology course that focuses on the fundamentals of cell biology, including its structure, function, and molecular mechanisms. The course is designed to help students understand the cell as the basic unit of life. The course is divided into four parts: chemical and molecular foundations, molecular genetic mechanisms, cell structure and function, and cell growth and development. Topics include membranes, protein structure and function, basic molecular genetic mechanisms, cell transport, protein transport, and cell signaling. Students are required to take BIOL 3412 concurrently with BIOL 3012, which is the Cell Biology Laboratory

Prerequisites: BIOL 1306/1106 (Principles of Biology I), BIOL 1311/1111 (Principles of Biology II), BIOL 1413/1013 (Principles of Biology III), or BIOL 2421 (General Microbiology), and CHEM 2423 (Organic Chemistry I) or permission of instructor

Check the final exam schedule as finals approach for any changes: <https://www.tamiu.edu/registrar/finalexamschedule.shtml>

Course Expectations

- To successfully complete this course, you must have a solid background in the coursework. You must also make an effort to stay up-to-date with the assigned readings and lectures. It's recommended that you read your textbook before the class for which the reading is assigned. If you need assistance, don't hesitate to seek help from your professor or your SI (session instructor).
- Please feel free to seek my help whenever you feel confused or have any doubts regarding the course material. You can come to my office hours or email me your questions. Your feedback is extremely important to me as it would help me understand whether I have explained the concepts clearly or not.
- To learn effectively in this course, you need to put in effort by completing the reading assignments, attending classes regularly, and seeking help when you need it. Don't hesitate to ask any questions, no matter how trivial they may seem. Remember, if you knew everything about cell biology, you wouldn't be enrolled in this course.
- It is highly recommended that you attend your classes regularly. There is a significant connection between attending classes and achieving good grades in the course. Most students perform better in their studies by attending classes regularly, paying attention during lectures, taking notes, and reviewing them. If necessary and helpful, I may give unannounced quizzes.

- Late assignments, reports, and quizzes will not be accepted under any circumstances. If you miss a deadline due to an excused absence, please submit your work on the first day you return to class. Note that announcements and assignments made in class are your responsibility even if you are not present. For instance, I may announce a quiz or reschedule an exam, and such changes will be communicated during class time. If you are absent, you may not be aware of these changes and may miss out on important information
- **Student Instructions** for accessing the course material
- The Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch) (located inside Blackboard) is your home for all the materials included in the program. Simply log into Blackboard and click on the “Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch)” icon:
 - **eBooks**
 - o Are automatically loaded into Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch) and you can access them by clicking the **Launch Button**.
 - **Courseware**
 - o Are posted directly into Blackboard by your Instructor and will be listed in Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch) as **See Course in LMS**.
 - o Or a code is emailed directly to your .edu email and listed in Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch) as **Access code was emailed**.
 - **Physical Books**
 - o Show as **Print** and are listed as **Purchased** inside of Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch). You will receive an email with a QR code once your physical books are available. Head over to the TAMIU Bookstore with that email to grab your physical books.

Student Support

- Visit the TAMIU Books IncludED Program page
- Help section inside **Digital Textbook Portal (Buy or Launch)**
- Customer Service Portal (self-service or submit a request)
- Visit the **TAMIU Bookstore**
- Email: texasaminternational@bkstr.com

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop a foundational understanding of cell biology, providing the necessary background for graduate-level courses and an appreciation of this diverse field.
 - Identify the fundamental components of cells and explain their roles within the cell.
 - Explain the mechanisms involved in various biological processes.
- Students will learn about recent advances in cell biology and their applications, with a focus on biomedical science and biotechnology.
- Examinations and in-class discussions will foster critical thinking skills.
 - Answer applied questions using the concepts learned in class and from readings.

Important Dates

Visit the Academic Calendar ([tamiau.edu](https://www.tamiau.edu)) (<https://www.tamiau.edu/academiccalendar/>) page to view the term’s important dates.

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Essential Cell Biology	Alberts et al.	13:9780393680362

Other Course Materials

To go to the bookstore, [click here \(https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home\)](https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home).

[Any additional course materials can be added here. If there aren't any additional materials, you may REMOVE this section by clicking on the eyeball. **Please don't forget to remove these instructions.**]

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-90.9
C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

- Exams and quizzes may contain objective and challenging questions, testing basic and applied knowledge.
- Before (approximately 5 min prior the quiz/exam) and during quizzes/exams, students are prohibited from having any technical or electronic devices, such as books, notes, phones, or computers

Grading And Assessment Policy

***The syllabus is subject to change.**

Make-up Quiz/Exam: If you miss an exam or quiz without an excuse, it will be graded as zero. You cannot take a make-up exam for an unexcused absence. However, you can take a make-up exam if you miss the exam due to an excused absence. An excused absence can be verified, like sickness with a doctor's certification, or a sponsored university activity. Refer to TAMIU's Course Policies for other examples of excused absences. Keep in mind that the make-up exam needs to be taken before the exam discussion and within one week after the missed exam. Make sure to arrange the make-up exam with the professor as soon as possible to avoid delays.

If you missed an exam for a valid reason, you can request a make-up exam. To do so, please email giasuddin.ahmed@tamiu.edu with the subject 'Request for Make-Up,' including a written request, the reason for an excused absence, and documentation to verify your excused absence.

After logging in, please put your phone and smartwatch inside your bag during quizzes, exams, and the final exam. Please also note that, if deemed necessary, you may place your phone and smartwatch on my table during quizzes/exam/final exam.

At the end of each chapter, you will have a quiz based on the chapter concepts on the following class.

The course grade is computed based on two components - the lecture and the lab grades. The lecture grade accounts for 75% of the total grade, while the lab grade contributes 25%. It's important to note that passing both the lecture and the laboratory is crucial to passing the course.

Calculating the course grade: %lecture grade X 0.75 plus %lab grade X 0.25

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Attendance and assignment	10%
Exam #1	15%
Exam #2	15%
Exam #3	15%
Quizzes	20%
Finals	25%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
1/21	Introduction to Cells	Chapter 1	
1/26	Protein Structure and Function	Chapter 4	



2/2	DNA and Chromosome DNA Replication and Repair	Chapter 5 Chapter 6	
2/9	Review Exam 1	Chapter 1, 4,5, and 6	Exam 1 on Feb 13 (Friday)
2/16	From DNA to Protein:How cells read the genome	Chapter 7	
2/23	Control of Gene Expression	Chapter 8	
3/2	Analyzing the structure and function of genes Spring Break	Chapter 10	
3/9	Membrane Structure Review	Chapter 11	
3/16	Review Exam2 Membrane transport	Chapter 7, 8,10, and 11 Chapter 12	Exam 2 on Mar 18 (Wednesday)
3/23	Intracellular Compartments and Protein Transport Cell signaling	Chapter 15 Chapter 16	
3/30	Cytoskeleton The Cell cycle	Chapter 17 Chapter 18	
4/6	The cell Cycle Sexual Reproduction and Genetics	Chapter 18 Chapter 19	
4/13	Cell Communities:Tissues, Stem cells and Cancer Review	Chapter 20	
4/20	Exam 3	Chapter 12, 15,16,17, 18,	Exam 3 on April 24 (Friday)
5/4	Final Exam	Comprehensive	Final Exam on on May 8 (Friday)

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the

date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

In the classroom, students are expected to listen attentively, participate respectfully, and adhere to established rules. Behavior that interferes with the class lecture may result in disciplinary action, ensuring a productive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Any disputes over academic matters should be addressed calmly and constructively, ideally during designated times such as office hours or after class. If a student does not agree with a decision, they can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss their concerns in more detail. Should further resolution be needed, the student may escalate the matter to the department head or use formal grievance procedures as outlined in the sections below. (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4 (<https://www.tamtu.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

TAMTU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMTU student, you are bound by the TAMTU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMTU student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at Student Handbook (<https://www.tamtu.edu/handbook/index.shtml>).

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMTU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism:** Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
 - *Caution:* Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
 - *Caution:* Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.
- **Penalties for Cheating:** Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to

the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an “F” in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an “F” in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a “W”

- **Caution:** Chat groups that start off as “study groups” can easily devolve into “cheating groups.” Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMIU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student’s TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member’s charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member’s e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

You may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course. In general, you should get credit for a work product only once.

AI Policies

Your instructor will provide you with their personal policy on the use of AI in the classroom setting and associated coursework.

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download the SafeZone app, which is a free mobile app for all University faculty, staff, and students. SafeZone allows you to: report safety concerns (24/7), get connected with mental health professionals, activate location sharing with authorities, and anonymously report incidents. Go to SafeZone (<https://www.tamiu.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml>) for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services for Students located in Student Center 124. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Office of Disability Services for Students.

For accommodations or assistance with disabilities, contact the Disability Coordinator, Karla Pedraza, at karla.pedraza@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2763, or visit Student Center 124.

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA’s for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the “Leave of Absence Request” form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: [Student Handbook \(https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml\)](https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml)).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. Students who experience or observe alleged or suspected discrimination due to their pregnant/parenting status, should report to the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site, *Report It*, at <https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/index.shtml>).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodation. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student needs a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.#As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOAs for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule.#Both rules can be found in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.

For parenting-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the Parenting Liaison, Mayra Hernandez, at mghernandez@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2265, or visit Student Center 226.

For pregnancy-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the TIX Coordinator, Lorissa Cortez, at lorissaM.cortez@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2857, or visit Killam Library 159.

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit>) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a "W." To qualify for an "incomplete" and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a "W", and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an "Incomplete Grade Contract" and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the "I" to automatically be converted to an "F"; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an "incomplete" may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar's Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamiu.edu) (<https://www.tamiu.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.