

Course Syllabus
BIOLOGY 132 – NEUROPHYSIOLOGY
Fall 2011

Contact information:

Dr. Adam Rechs
Office: Sequoia 120B Phone: (916) 278-6244 E-Mail: rechs@csus.edu
Office Hours: TR 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.; W 9 - 10 a.m.; or by appointment.
Web page: <http://www.csus.edu/indiv/r/rechsa/index.htm>

Course Information:

Lecture: (Sequoia 456) MWF noon - 1:15 p.m.

Description: In Neurophysiology, the organization and function of the nervous system will be explored. The first section will cover neurons, their mechanism of communication and how they are put together to build systems within the nervous system. The second section will explore in-depth sensory and motor systems. Brain and behavior will comprise the last section of the course. Disease states will be introduced, as appropriate, to strengthen conceptual understanding through examples of dysfunction.

Prerequisites: Biology 131 (Systemic Physiology)

Recommended Text: Bear, Connors and Paradiso
 Neuroscience: Exploring the Brain, any edition.
 Baltimore, Maryland, Williams and Wilkens, 2001

Course Format/Requirements: This 3-unit lecture course will meet three times a week. The material is complex, so to follow lecture, it is encouraged that students read the background material in the textbook before coming to class.

Evaluation: Four exams will be given, each worth 100 points. The exam format will be scan-tron and short answer. A #2 pencil and a scan-tron (form 882E) are required. For each test approximately 2/3 of the exam points will come from multiple-choice questions and 1/3 of the points will come from short answer questions. In addition there will be two homework assignments, each worth 20 points. The total number of points available for the course is 420. Extra credit (if offered) can account for no more than 7% of your grade.

Make-up exams: Exam's may only be taken on a day other than the scheduled date for serious or compelling reasons. Having too many exams on the same day or wanting to leave for vacation early are not serious or compelling reasons

Grading: Final letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A	90-100%	Outstanding achievement
B	80-89%	Excellent performance; clearly exceeds course requirements
C	70-79%	Meets course requirements
D	60-69%	Passed, but not at average achievement standards
F	< 60%	Failure to meet course requirements

Breaking points for plus and minus grades will be decided at the end of the semester. If the class average is relatively low a curve will be used to determine the letter grades.

Attendance: It is not mandatory that you attend the lectures and your grade will not be based in any way on attendance. It's your tuition money; spend it how you see fit. However, it is strongly recommended that you attend lectures since the material is complex and there may be in-class assignments.

Drops or Incompletes:

Students may drop the course during the first two weeks of class for any reason. Students may petition to drop after the two weeks because of a serious or compelling. The petition will need to be approved by both the instructor, the department chair, and (if after September 24th) the Dean of the College. A successful petition will result in the course grade denoted on your transcripts with a "W".

Academic Misconduct: Cheating of any type of communication between students will not be tolerated during an exam. Using materials not allowed during the exam or looking at another student's exam is also considered cheating. Students who fail to comply will be given a zero for that exam, the incident will be reported to the Biology Department Chair and the Dean of Students, and the student may receive an "F" in the course.

Plagiarism is using other people's words without giving them credit, giving the appearance that the words were your own. This is not allowed in this course. So while working together on assignments is encouraged, all submitted work must be in your own words.

Tips for doing well in the course:

- Don't study alone. Finding people in the class to study with is extremely beneficial. Ask each other to explain how each process works.
- Budget enough time for studying. Conventional wisdom is that to do well in a course you should spend 2-3 hours studying outside of class for each hour you spend in lecture. That means for this course alone you should study 6-9 hours per week.
- Don't put off studying until the exam begins to draw near. It takes time for the brain to process and understand new information to the level that will be expected of you, so give your brain time to do that by studying early on.
- Memorization of facts is important, but when you study you should also be trying to integrate all of the facts to see how they all fit together.
- Learn to have good study habits by taking Dr. Paradis' study skills online tutorial:
<http://www.csus.edu/indiv/p/paradisj/studyskills.htm>
- Ask questions when you aren't clear on a concept. Do this in lecture, lab, and office hours. Odds are if you don't understand it than neither do a lot of other people in the class. Since much of the information builds on itself, don't let me move on until you understand what I just went over.
- Take advantage of office hours. I guarantee that one-on-one in office hours I can make any concept clear to you.
- If after the first test your score is not what you hoped for, then make a change in your studying. Continuing to study the same way as before will most likely yield similar results.