

NEU 311L: NEUROSCIENCE LABORATORY

FALL 2025 SYLLABUS

Course information

Location: Giltner Hall room 268

Section 1: Mon 9:10am -12pm

Section 2: Mon 1-3:50pm

Section 3: Tues 9:10am-12pm

Section 4: Tues 1-3:50pm

Section 5: Wed 1-3:50pm

Course Description

Overview of neuroscience research methodology, including experimental design, data analysis, and presentation of results. Topics include neurophysiological, anatomical, and behavioral investigations in crayfish, fruit flies, and humans. This is a writing-intensive course. Two credits.

Class Structure

NEU311L is a laboratory in-person course. Every week, students attend their in-person class session and learn and apply hands-on techniques, such as EEG, behavioral animal testing and electrophysiology. They work with peers and in small groups for projects. Part of the semester will be dedicated to writing a research manuscript based on group projects.

Prerequisites

NEU 301 AND completion of the Tier I writing requirement AND STT 201 (or STT 231 or STT 421) AND BS 171 (or BS 191H or LB 145). If a student was able to enroll without meeting these requirements, they will be dropped from the course. If you find that you are not proficient in skills and concepts that are needed for you to succeed in this course, please express your concerns to an instructor.

Recommended Background

PSY 101

Learning Objectives

NEU311L focuses on a set of competencies that are important for individuals pursuing an undergraduate neuroscience degree:

Critical/integrative thinking

- Read & analyze primary research papers
- Critique & develop experimental designs and methodology
- Integrate findings from diverse fields to address a research question or develop a testable hypothesis

Basic neuroscience knowledge

- Cellular & molecular function of neurons (including how neurons communicate)
- Basic neuroanatomy
- Sensory & motor systems

Scientific inquiry/research skills

- Develop a hypothesis & design experiments to test this hypothesis
- Collect, analyze, and interpret data

Independent, self-motivated thinking

- Find answers to questions that may not be specifically addressed in a course
- Overcome barriers/impediments to learning/research

Communication skills

- Present information orally in an organized and understandable manner
- Communicate scientific information in written format for scientific publication
- Communicate scientific information to the lay public

Quantitative skills

- Analyze & interpret quantitative information, including graphs and statistics
- Quantitatively manipulate data & information
- Represent information in a quantitative format

From: Kerchner M, Hardwick JC, and Thornton JE. (2012) Identifying and Using 'Core Competencies' to Help Design and Assess Undergraduate Neuroscience Curricula. JUNE, 11:A27-A37.

Contact Information

Primary Course Instructors

❖ **Charlotte Vanacker, Ph.D.** (she/her) vanack40@msu.edu

Dr. Vanacker is the laboratory coordinator for all sections this semester and instructs sections 1 and 2 of this course.

Office Hours: Tues 1-3pm

Office hours will take place in person or via Zoom:

Biomedical Physical Sciences Building

567 Wilson Road, Room 2201G

Office phone: 517-884-5137

Zoom link: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/9459826115>

Meeting ID: 945 982 6115

❖ **Byron Gipson, Ph.D.** (he/him) gipsonby@msu.edu

Dr. Gipson instructs sections 3, 4 and 5 of this course.

Office Hours: Thurs 2-4pm

Office hours will take place in person or via Zoom:

Biomedical Physical Sciences Building

567 Wilson Road, Room 2201K

Zoom link: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/97353135509>

Meeting ID: 973 5313 5509

❖ **Cameron Prigge, Ph.D.** (she/her) priggeca@msu.edu

"Prigga"

Dr. Prigge is currently in maternity leave and will instruct 6 of this course when she returns.

Office Hours: Tues 2-4pm

Office hours will take place in person or via Zoom by appointment:

Biomedical Physical Sciences Building

567 Wilson Road, Room 2205

Office phone: 517-884-5040

Zoom link: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/2806912862>

Meeting ID: 280 691 2862

Assistant Instructors

Gianna Sorge, B.S. (Sections 1 and 2) (she/her) sorgegia@msu.edu

Office hours: Tues 3-4pm

Abigail Mondro, B.S. (Sections 3 and 4) (she/her) mondroab@msu.edu

Office hours: Wed 11am-12pm

Tanwir Hashem, M.S. (Section 5) (she/her) hashemta@msu.edu

"Tan-weer Haa-shem"

Office hours: Thurs 4-5pm

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/94286433828>

Meeting ID: 942 8643 3828

Passcode: NEU311L

You may also schedule an appointment with professors and AIs at a different time.

Updated 8/12/25 CLP BG CV

Lab Technician

Julia Podstolowicz, B.S. (all sections) (they/she) podstolo@msu.edu
"Pohd-stoh-whoa-veech"

Undergraduate Learning Assistants (ULAs)

Grace Tatterton (section 1)	(she/her)	tatter2@msu.edu	Tues 10-11am
Kaveri Nambiar (section 2)	(she/her)	nambiark@msu.edu	Mon 8-9am
Evan Wilson (section 3)	(he/him)	wils1858@msu.edu	Mon 3-4pm
Lorenzo Thrasher (section 4)	(he/him)	thrash31@msu.edu	Wed 8-9am
Adelyn Davis (section 5)	(she/her)	davis478@msu.edu	Mon 1-2pm
Jocelyn Mills (lab ULA)	(she/her)	millsjoc@msu.edu	

Help room hours:

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/94286433828>

Meeting ID: 942 8643 3828

Passcode: NEU311L

Important Note!

Please follow through if you make an appointment with our TA's and ULA's. Their lives are quite busy too.

Administrative Drop for Non-Attendance

Students who do not submit the first worksheet assignment within one week of the deadline will be dropped from the course.

Course Materials

All lab protocols, assignments, readings, and background information will be provided on D2L, and Eli Review. You will be expected to look up and review certain topics for NEU311L, so your textbooks and notes from NEU301/302 and your statistics class will be extremely helpful for NEU311L. Here are some recommended websites and readings:

[Foundations of Neuroscience, Open Edition](#)

[Designing Neuroscience Experiments](#)

[FREE Brain Facts](#)

[MSU link to PubMed](#)

[FREE Data Science Textbook](#)

[FREE Online Stat Book](#)

Computer/Internet/Software Requirements

You are required to have access to a laptop computer (not a tablet like an iPad and not a notebook-style computer like a Chromebook) with an up-to-date operating system, download capabilities, and reliable internet access. Instructions are provided for the Windows and MAC operating system. Students must use the FREE Office 365 Suite through MSU and download the desktop versions to their computers, since the web versions do not have all of the features needed for this course. Using alternatives (like Google Docs and open-source programs) and then converting to these file types is not advised. You may need to download LabChart Reader (free) or other free softwares to your computer. During class, students will be provided with a lab computer for running softwares and analyses. If you experience an issue regarding your access to either a working computer or the internet, you need to email your course instructor within 24 hours of the issue. These issues will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Desire2Learn (D2L) & Eli Review

Course content, quizzes, worksheets, homework instructions and submission drop boxes, gradebook, and course announcements are handled by the [D2L course site](#). Each weekly lab session has a dedicated D2L module. These D2L modules are further divided into submodule that include prelab work, in class work and post lab work. Please set up your D2L profile and your notifications (email, mobile) so you receive announcements in a timely manner. You are responsible for checking to make sure that your grades have been entered correctly, that your quiz responses have been logged and that your homework are properly submitted. It is not your professor's responsibility to verify that your work is submitted on time. We use **Turnitin on D2L** for all the work students submit to check for plagiarism. The tool compares each student's work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a 'similarity

score.' The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student's work. Students may also consult the similarity report generated by TurnItIn and may resubmit assignments prior to their due date if they wish.

You are required to participate in peer review of homework assignments using the Eli Review website. All students are required to set up an **Eli Review** account via [Sign in - Eli Review](#). Starting with homework 2, we will ask that you submit your homework to Eli Review the day prior to your lab for class discussion purposes. Later this semester you will have to submit your manuscript homework to Eli Review for peer-reviewing. Instructions to join our course will be provided in class and a join code is available on D2L.

All assignments must be uploaded to the proper folder on D2L or Eli Review, otherwise you may be subject to penalties. You are responsible for confirming that everything that you submit to D2L and Eli Review is successfully posted to the site by the specified due date and time on the schedule AND that all files are the correct versions and are not corrupted.

Updated versions won't be accepted after the assignment due date AND sending screenshots or proof to your instructor to request an updated grade is unacceptable. Assignments must be submitted in the format specified. No credit will be given for files submitted in other formats, corrupted files, or incorrect versions of a file (such as an earlier version or the incorrect assignment).

Students are not permitted to send files to one another to review. If you upload a file that is highly similar to that of another student (even if it was unintentional), both students will receive a 0 grade for that assignment and will be issued an academic dishonesty report.

Email Correspondence

Emails may be sent directly to your MSU account or via D2L. You are required to utilize email communication for correspondence to and from the instructors outside of class. You should set up D2L emails and MSU emails to forward to the email address that you use most often.

Email communication must follow professional etiquette standards. They should not be pleading, demanding, or aggressive in tone. Those that do not meet these standards will receive a response requesting modification prior to receiving a response. Please allow 24 hours for a response from the instructors to an email sent Monday-Thursday and 48 hours for a response to an email sent Friday-Sunday. Excuses related to unsent emails or emails sent to the wrong address are unacceptable.

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem, you may:

- Visit the [MSU Tech Support Help Site](#)
- Visit the [Desire2Learn Help Site](#)
- Visit the [Eli Review Help Site](#)
- Call the MSU IT Service Desk at (517) 432-6200, (844) 678-6200, or e-mail at ithelp@msu.edu

Tier II Writing Requirement

An important part of one's professional development is to practice writing in their discipline and thus is required by MSU. NEU311L fulfill this requirement and does so by providing opportunities to engage in both formal and informal writing.

*****Failure to submit all manuscript components will result in a grade reduction. See the Penalty Chart below.*****

Course Schedule

A tentative course schedule for your section is provided on D2L and includes important deadlines. All lab sessions are required.

If the schedule needs to be modified due to unforeseen circumstances, students will be alerted of changes via email to their MSU account or as a D2L announcement in a timely manner.

Grading

You should check the D2L gradebook at least once per week and/or whenever a new entry has been posted. The grading scheme is described thoroughly below. Instructors are not able to predict the grade that each student will earn in this class prior to the completion of all assignments. If you start to struggle due to circumstances outside of your control, the best advice we can give is to communicate them to the instructors early and often.

Assessment	Percentage
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Updated 8/12/25 CLP BG CV

Pre-lab Quizzes (7)	10%
Worksheets (12)	10%
Experiment Homework (5)	15%
Manuscript Homework (5)	30%
Midterm (1)	10%
Skills Assessments (12)	10%
Final Cumulative Assessment (1)	15%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

4.0 = 90% and above

3.5 = 85%-89.9%

3.0 = 80%-84.9%

2.5 = 75%-79.9%

2.0 = 70%-74.9%

1.5 = 65%-69.9%

1.0 = 60%-64.9%

0 = below 60%

Each missed class/worksheet will result in a zero on the lab assignments that day and a 5% reduction to the final grade in the course.

Pre-lab Quizzes (Total number = 7)

Pre-lab and background videos, as well as occasional manuscripts, are posted to D2L for students to study one week prior to lab. Allow at least one hour per week to review this background material, take notes, and take the associated quiz on D2L. The quizzes make up 10% of your final grade. Weekly pre-lab quizzes are allowed *only one-attempt* and are **due by 11:59 PM the evening prior to your scheduled class**. Quizzes submitted after the deadline but before class begins will result in a 0 for that quiz and students will be allowed in class. **IMPORTANT NOTE: If the quiz is not completed before lab, you will not be allowed to participate in the lab (see "Penalty Chart").**

Worksheets (Total number = 12)

Completion of the worksheet associated with the in-class experiment/exercise every week is necessary to succeed in this class. Worksheets must be completed in-person during class. Checkpoints in the worksheet indicate when you should check your work with an instructor or using the provided key before moving on. Each student is responsible for self-correcting their responses as needed and seeking out additional help from an instructor if they do not understand why their initial response was incorrect. This is crucial as your worksheet entries are often necessary to complete the associated homework and are important to successfully take your skills assessment. The instructional team is not responsible for checking for accuracy of your worksheet. Worksheet grades are all or nothing and serve as attendance points. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Each missed class/worksheet will result in a 5% reduction to your final grade in the course. Having more than 2 missed class/worksheet will result in a 0 in the course, as it will be considered insufficient attendance to pass.**

Homework Assignments (Total number = 10)

Most labs have an associated homework assignment that is due on the day of the following class. For each homework you are required to carefully read the instructions posted on D2L, as homework will be different from each other. Examples are: making a figure and a legend, answering post-lab questions, providing statistical test values, writing an introduction. You should plan to spend **one hour or more each week** working on the homework. **IMPORTANT NOTE: no extension allowed on homework for missed lab.** The formatting of graphs, legends, references, etc. must follow the guidelines provided on D2L to receive full credit. Rubrics used to grade your homework are available to you on D2L. Homework assignments based on **experiments** earlier in the semester (up to the midterm) count for 15% of your final grade. Homework assignments based on completion of the research project **manuscript** (Tier II writing requirement) count for 30% of your final grade. Homework submissions from experiments are due to D2L by 11:59 PM one week after the class related to that homework was assigned. Manuscript homework includes multiple submissions and will be explained in class.

Skills Assessment (Total number = 12)

Students will complete a weekly skills assessment in class. The skills assessments focus on the core competencies listed at the top of this syllabus. Skills may be assessed as part of the experiment/ exercise performed in class, as written-

response questions, as oral questions, or as lab practical-style challenges. The quizzes, worksheets, and homework are meant to prepare you for these assessments. Skills assessments count for 10% of your final grade. On occasion, the instructors may opt to offer limited opportunities to re-attempt certain questions/skills for half credit.

Cumulative Assessments (Total number = 2)

There are *two* cumulative assessments over the semester that include a set of multiple choice, true false, open answer questions and a set of practical questions (that usually requires the observation of set equipment). The quizzes, worksheets, skills assessments, and homework are meant to prepare you for these assessments. There is only one attempt at these assessments. The midterm cumulative assessment focuses on material covered in the lab up until the midterm and is worth 10% of your final grade. The final cumulative assessment focuses on material covered in the lab over the entire semester and is worth 15% of your final grade.

Research Projects

Students will attempt to replicate a published peer-reviewed experiment related to a previous lab exercise. Since this project builds on the classes and homework leading up to the project, it is of utmost importance that each student has had exposure and practice in the topic areas. Each student will write their own, individual research manuscript based on their group project.

Peer review and revision

Peer review and revision will be used for the Manuscript assignments. You are **required** to participate in the peer review process and to upload your **written homework assignment to the correct D2L AND Eli Review dropboxes** by the first date listed for that assignment in your schedule. **Failure to participate in peer review will result in a deduction of 50% on that assignment.** You will be placed in a review group of 3 to 4 students within the next two days of the due date. You will then have the remaining of the week to review your peer's writing. Depending on the number of students in your section, you will usually have two or three documents to peer review. Reviews must be completed in Eli Review by 11:59 PM the following class period. Following peer review, you will be required to revise and resubmit the assignment two weeks after the original (draft) document was submitted. The final, revised version of the file submitted to D2L for this required deadline is the one that will be graded.

When considering the feedback you obtained for revision, you will need to assess whether this feedback is valuable. Keep in mind that your peers are not experts in writing, so you must consider whether the advice is in alignment with the rubric. Many students find it useful to create a "Revision Plan" in Eli Review. You may mark the feedback you plan to use and write ideas for yourself. This is in an effort to encourage all students to improve their writing.

- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Each student is **REQUIRED** to complete ALL reviews by the due date. Remember that your peers need their feedback in order to improve and resubmit their own manuscript. If a student fails to complete all of the reviews for TWO assignments out of the three, their final grade in the course will be reduced by 5%. For example, if their final calculated grade in the course was an 85%, it will be dropped to 80% for missing those 2 reviews. If a student fails to complete all of the reviews, their final grade in the course will be reduced by 10% (ex. if they would have earned an 85%, they will instead receive a 75%). Individuals who do not submit effortful peer reviews (e.g., by failing to catch obvious errors or simply commenting "great job" rather than providing specific advice) or miss peer reviews for 1 or more assignments will be subject to a 15% grade penalty per affected review. **EVERYONE MUST COMMIT TO THE PEER REVIEW PROCESS AND HAVE THE TIME AND FOCUS TO COMPLETE THEIR PEER REVIEWS ON TIME. IT IS UNFAIR TO OTHERS TO SPEND TIME REVIEWING YOUR DOCUMENT AND NOT RECEIVE AN EFFORTFUL REVIEW IN RETURN!** 😊

Participation and absences

Class starts promptly at the designated time. Students are required to be on time for all lab sessions. Arriving late is disruptive and tardiness exceeding 10 minutes will result in a loss of credit for that lab worksheet. **Students are expected to attend their lab session each week.** Please contact your primary instructor via email before any absences. Unexcused absences will result in a zero for all laboratory sessions and assignments missed.

Important note: Each missed class/worksheet will result in a zero on the lab assignments that day and a 5% reduction of your final grade in the course. Having more than two (2) absences will result in a zero for the course.

Late work

Assignments must be turned in on time to receive credit. Make it a habit to double-check that you submitted the correct document to D2L prior to the deadline. Missed homework will receive an automatic zero once the deadline is reached.

The exception to this policy is that each student is granted **one one-week extension to be used only for one of your manuscript homework:**

- May only be used once, for one Manuscript assignment (literature review, Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion)
- You are required to send your assistant instructor an email telling them you want to use your extension.
- Keep in mind that submitting a late first draft means that you will lose the opportunity to participate in peer review. Your professor will discuss an alternative way for you to participate.

Penalty Chart

Grade Item Action	Grade consequences
Quizzes	
1. No quiz submitted	1. 0 grade on quiz AND no lab entry
2. Late quiz submitted	2. 0 grade on quiz AND can attend lab
Manuscripts	
Eli Review:	
1. Assignment for peer review not submitted to Eli Review (cannot participate in peer review) or missing all reviews.	1. -50% deducted from that assignment grade
2. Each late, incomplete, or non-effortful review	2. -15% deducted from that assignment grade for each impacted review
3. Failure to complete all reviews for two writing assignments	3. -5% off final grade in the course
4. Failure to complete all reviews for three or more writing assignments	4. -10% off final grade in the course
Missing components of manuscript:	
5. Failure to complete Literature Review, Introduction, Methods, Results, and/or Discussion	5. 0 grade for each assignment not completed AND -5% off final grade in the course for each assignment not completed
Lab attendance	
1. Unexcused absence	1. 0 grade for worksheet and skills assessment for that lab AND -5% off final grade in the course for each absence
2. Tardiness exceeding 10 minutes	2. 0 grade for worksheet for that lab day BUT will be allowed to attend lab

Contesting grades

Students are expected to review their feedback for quizzes, worksheets, and homework assignments on D2L before bringing their concerns to the instructional team. Honestly self-assess whether you perhaps misunderstood or overlooked something, and if that mistake led to the deduction. You are encouraged to contact members of the teaching team to help clarify misunderstandings of the material. If a genuine grading error has been made (such as a missed score for part of the rubric), it would be appropriate to email or attend Zoom office hours with your assistant instructor to discuss your concern. However, we will not re-grade individual elements of the assignment.

Generative AI use

Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot) can be helpful for supporting your learning- but only when used appropriately and responsibly. This course emphasizes building your own critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and research and writing skills. Assignments are designed with that goal in mind.

Assignments

The use of generative AI is **RESTRICTED** for this course. You may not use generative AI to complete or draft graded assignments (including quizzes, in-class work, homework, manuscript homework or Honors assignments). These activities are meant to help you independently practice applying course concepts.

AI may be used to support your learning, but not to complete assignments for you. You are expected to: Attempt problems on your own first.

- Use AI to clarify or check your understanding, not to copy answers.
- Critically evaluate AI responses.
- Reflect on what you still need to figure out yourself, even after using AI.
- Disclose any AI use at the end of the assignment, including which tool you used and how you used it. Each homework template contains a disclosure section, which you are required to fill out accurately. The disclosure will not impact your grade. Remember that the work you submit should be yours, and the ideas you share should be original to you. Vague responses will result in not receiving full credit on the assignment.

Appropriate Uses of AI for this Course

- You may use AI to support your studying and deepen your understanding, including:
- Asking for explanations of difficult concepts or alternative ways to understand course topics.
- Generating practice questions to test your knowledge.
- Brainstorming strategies for approaching problems.
- Analyzing why an assignment answer might be right or wrong after turning it in (and verifying with our course materials).

Inappropriate Uses of AI in This Course

- Using AI to write or complete graded assignments.
- Copying AI responses into quizzes, exams, in-class assignments, or reflections.
- Relying on AI as your primary or only source of information.
- Failing to disclose AI use when required.
- Work that appears to be AI-generated without meaningful student engagement will not receive credit and may be reported for academic dishonesty.

Remember: Using AI responsibly means using it to support your thinking, not replace it. Refer to MSU's MSU guidance about the use of generative AI: [Guidelines and Policies on Generative AI Use at MSU](#)

Inclusivity

This course will be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and affirms people of all gender expressions and identities. The instructors were provided with a class roster with your name as you provided it to MSU. However, if you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the roster, please let your course instructor know. You are also invited to share your pronouns.

Professional conduct and appropriate netiquette

Be professional in your communications. Interact with your fellow classmates and instructor as you would in your professional life. Use appropriate language and grammar. Be clear and concise. Have opinions but be respectful of disagreement. Be cautious with humor or sarcasm. It is not that we want to create a dull environment devoid of fun, but it is quite easy for these tones to be lost in text. If you want to make jokes or be sarcastic, indicate your intent with emoticons or a sarcasm tag "/s". Please be kind and respectful.

Living organisms

Living crayfish and *Drosophila* (fruit flies) are used in our class so that you may observe nervous system activity. Sheep brains and plastinated human and animal brains will also be shown during our study of neuroanatomy. Please let your course instructor know during the first week of class if you have personal objections to handling these specimens.

University policies

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD): Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

Mental Health Statement: College students often experience issues that may interfere with academic success such as academic stress, sleep problems, juggling responsibilities, life events, relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, or depression. If you or a friend is struggling, we strongly encourage you to seek support. Helpful, effective resources are available on campus, and most are free of charge.

Meet with your academic advisor if you are struggling in multiple classes, unsure whether you are making the most of your time at MSU, or unsure what academic resources are available at MSU.

Visit <https://caps.msu.edu> for online health assessments, hours, and additional information.

Drop by Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) main location for a same day mental health screening. (3rd floor of Olin Health Center at 463 E. Circle Drive)

Call CAPS at 517-355-8270 any time, day or night.

24-Hour MSU Sexual Assault Crisis Line 517-372-6666 or visit <https://go.msu.edu/SAP>

Religious Observances: Courses offered by the MSU School of Social Work adhere to the MSU Religious Observance Policy: <https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.aspx?Section=112#s548> as presented below:

It has always been the policy of the University to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith.

The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent, to make arrangements in advance with their instructors. It is also the responsibility of those faculty who wish to be absent, to make arrangements in advance with their chairpersons, who shall assume the responsibility for covering their classes. Students who miss class, assignments, or exams to observe a religious holiday must be accommodated in ways that include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Professors and instructors should make every effort to avoid scheduling exams and oral presentations during the major holidays of religions on campus (Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, etc.). If a professor has scheduled such an exam or oral presentation, exams must be reasonably rescheduled without academic penalty.

(2) Absences may not be counted as a missed class in any course in which attendance is a measure of academic performance. Some instructors attempt to cover all reasons for student absences from required academic events such as quizzes or exams with a blanket policy, e.g., allowing the student to drop one grade or two quizzes without penalty, or allowing a certain number of "unexcused" absences during a semester. This kind of policy should not be applied to religious observances, as this penalizes religions with more holidays that require absences than others.

(3) Reasonable extensions of time must be given, without academic penalty, for missed assignments; students must be allowed to schedule presentations around such absences. Make-up work should be appropriate and not more difficult than the original assignment.

(4) It is the responsibility of those students who need to be absent to inform their instructor at least two weeks before the holiday, make arrangements in advance with their instructors, and to catch up on any material discussed and assignments given during that class period. Accommodations must never fundamentally alter an essential requirement of the course or academic program.

As Michigan State University has become increasingly multicultural, the incidence of conflicts between mandatory academic requirements and religious observances has increased. In the absence of a simple and dignified way to determine the validity of individual claims, the claim of a religious conflict should be accepted at face value. Be aware that some degrees of observance may have a more extensive period of observance. Instructors may expect a reasonable limit to the number of requests by any one student. Some instructors attempt to cover all reasons for student absences from required academic events such as quizzes or exams with a blanket policy, e.g., allowing the student to drop one grade or two quizzes without penalty. If this is meant to extend to religious observances, the instructor should state this clearly at the beginning of the term. If instructors require make-up exams, they retain the right to determine the content of the exams and the conditions of administration, giving due consideration to equitable treatment.

Limits to Confidentiality: Assignments and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential, pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, you should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues based on external legal obligations or that relate to the health and safety of MSU community members and others.

University policy requires that I report the following information to other University offices if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared.

Grief Absence Policy: Students who experience the loss of a family member or experience emotional distress due to a similar incident should refer to the University Grief Absence Policy:

<https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/GriefAbsence.aspx>

Student Athletes Policy: https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/student_athlete_relationships.html

MSU ADA Compliance Website: https://webaccess.msu.edu/Policy_and_Guidelines/web-accessibility-policy.html

Academic Integrity

Spartan Code of Honor: <https://spartanexperiences.msu.edu/about/handbook/spartan-code-of-honor-academic-pledge/index.html>

Academic Honesty: Article 2.III.B.2 of the [Student Rights and Responsibilities \(SRR\)](#) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](#) and/or the MSU website (www.msu.edu)).

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)

Consequences of Academic Misconduct for Instructors and Students: If your instructor believes you have committed an act of academic misconduct, s/he may give you a penalty grade, which is defined as any grade based on a charge of academic misconduct. A penalty grade may include, but is not limited to, a failing grade on an assignment or in the course. That's up to each instructor. When this occurs, the [Integrity of Scholarship and Grades](#) policy (ISG) requires your instructor to report the academic misconduct to your dean through an electronic Academic Dishonesty Report. The form, which will end up in your student folder, also asks if your instructor wants to request an academic disciplinary hearing to impose sanctions in addition to the penalty grade. Additional sanctions include probation, suspension from your program or the University for a designated time. Your dean may also call for this hearing independent of your instructor. Deans usually call for disciplinary hearings for repeat offenders or in cases involving egregious acts of academic misconduct. The ISG policy requires first-time offenders to complete an Academic Integrity Education Program, which is administered by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education or the Dean of The Graduate School.

Plagiarism Will Not be Tolerated. It is defined below by the University (and may be viewed at <https://ombud.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/Plagiarism-What-is-it.pdf>)

This message serves to clarify my position on plagiarism and set clear expectations and consequences for all work in this course. I have a zero-tolerance policy toward plagiarism. Academic honesty means using your own words to communicate an idea. Therefore, changing a few words of another's text and/or rearranging words from another source constitutes plagiarism. If you paraphrase material, you must still cite and reference the source. (To paraphrase means to restate a text or passage in other words, often to clarify meaning. Paraphrasing is a restatement of an idea, not rearrangement of specific words.) If you copy material exactly, you must use quotation marks and then cite and reference the source. One sentence, two sentences, a paragraph, or an entire paper – copying constitutes plagiarism/cheating. Those papers will automatically receive a 0.0 and the student will be recommended for academic review.

Letters of Recommendation

The course instructor will consider providing letters of recommendation for professional and graduate schools, internships, and jobs to those students who exhibit respect for instructors, demonstrate enthusiasm and integrity, regularly exceed expectations on assignments, and have a 3.0 or greater overall GPA. An email request for a letter of recommendation should be made at least one month in advance of the deadline. Your resume, your transcript, your personal statement, an explanation about how your performance in NEU311L demonstrated leadership and potential to succeed in the career path of your choosing, and a list of schools, their due dates, methods of submission along with the emails from schools detailing any online submission procedures, must be provided at least two weeks prior to the due date of the first submission. Please also state the semester you took the class and the section you were enrolled in.