

PSL 310 — PHYSIOLOGY FOR PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

COURSE SYLLABUS — FALL 2025



Department of Physiology
College of Natural Science
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Welcome to PSL 310!

Please read this course syllabus carefully and thoroughly. You paid for this course, so think of this document as your "PSL 310 Owner's Manual."

Instructor Information

Professor: Dr. Martin D. Spranger, Ph.D., J.P.F. —he/him—

Teaching Portfolio: Click [here](#) for more info about myself and my teaching

Office Location: 2201-M Biomedical & Physical Sciences (BPS) - click [here](#) for map

Office Phone: (517) 884-5044 (preferably during office hours)

Office Hours: TBD

Email Address: mds@msu.edu (please do not email at mds@D2L.msu.edu)

Teaching Assistants (TAs) Information

TA: Helen O'Shaughnessy —she/her—

Responsibilities: Student Success Manager; TA Help Room; Discord Manager

Email Address: oshaug11@msu.edu (please do not email at oshaug11@D2L.msu.edu)

TA: Dalton Goodwin —he/him—

Responsibilities: TA Help Room; Top Hat Manager; Connect Manager

Email Address: goodw118@msu.edu (please do not email at goodw118@D2L.msu.edu)

TA: Paula Mireku —she/her—

Responsibilities: Lead SSHS

Email Address: mirekupa@msu.edu (please do not email at mirekupa@D2L.msu.edu)

Learning Assistants (LAs) Information

There will be several LAs working with me this semester. The LAs are former students that have excelled in one of my physiology courses and have a strong desire to pay-it-forward and help you make the most of your learning experience in this course. The LAs will be running Content Review Sessions (CRSSs) and Study Skills Help Sessions (SSHSSs). See [pg. 11](#) for details.

Tutor Information

It is my professional opinion that a tutor is not a necessary resource to succeed in this course. However, if you are committed to obtaining a tutor, please contact me and I will try to connect you with one. Please note tutors are typically for hire and that I will not be party to any contractual agreement between you and a tutor.

Student Information

There are 600 students in this course. While I will naturally make connections and establish relationships with many of you this semester, it will be unfortunately impossible for me to reach out and develop a rapport with each and every one of you. However, you can easily develop a rapport with me, as there is only one of me. So, stop me after lecture for a chat, ask questions during office hours, email me, and be active on Discord.

Importance of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Professionalism

MSU is committed to promoting/protecting freedom of speech and thus welcomes a full spectrum of experiences, viewpoints, and intellectual approaches because they enrich the conversation, even as they challenge us to think differently and grow. However, we believe that expressions and actions that demean individuals or groups compromise the environment for intellectual growth and undermine the social fabric on which the community is based. To encourage a productive learning experience for all, please practice professionalism, accountability, and transparency with myself and your fellow classmates. Indeed, I will hold myself to these standards.

I believe that every one of you belong here. You did not arrive here by mistake, but rather you were selected by MSU based on your qualifications, qualities, and talents. Therefore, each and every one of you has the capacity to earn a 4.0 in this course, and I will offer you a multitude of resources to help you realize this level of success.

Lines of Communication

- ✓ Always feel free to contact **your prof** with any questions you may have
- ✓ Important course announcements will be posted on **D2L*** (see [pg. 16](#))
- ✓ Contact your **TAs or LAs** for questions about content and/or study skills
- ✓ Communicate/collaborate with your peers by posting/answering questions on **Discord** (see [pg. 16](#)) **

* Announcements will be posted under "What's New?" and sent to your MSU email via your D2L account. Be sure your D2L email is set up to forward to your MSU email (click [here](#) for help with this).

** Questions about course content should first be posted on Discord. Posting on Discord will allow other students to benefit from your questions and the answers to those questions. Ideally, your colleagues will try to answer your questions as well. The TAs, LAs, and I will monitor the discussions on Discord and chime in as need be. The last time we will reliably check Discord before an exam will be the day before the exam at 5:00 pm (However, it is very likely we will be available beyond that deadline).

Course Information

Section/Credits: 001/4

Course Description: PSL 310 is an organ system based human physiology course that comprehensively and thoroughly covers the fundamental process underlying the normal functioning of the human body. Inasmuch as this course has been specifically designed for pre-health professionals, there will also be clinical applications integrated into all aspects of the course. Aside from discussing the systems of the human body by exploring their functionality at all levels of organization (e.g., molecular, cellular, tissue, and organ), the overlying theme of the course will be *systems integration*. We will begin by discussing how individual organ systems work as stand-alone, functional units. As the semester progresses, we will integrate our knowledge of these systems to develop a more holistic understanding of the organism level of organization (i.e., you).

Modality: In person

Location: B115 Wells Hall (click [here](#) for map)

Days/times: Tuesday & Thursday 12:40 - 2:30 PM (110 min)

Course Website: Our course website is hosted on D2L (www.d2l.msu.edu). See [pg. 16](#) for details.

Required Materials:

- 1) *Vander's Human Physiology (16e)*, by Eric P. Widmaier, et al. The e-book* is \$60 at the McGraw-Hill Connect website. Please click [here](#) if you prefer this option. You can also purchase the e-book* along with the loose-leaf text (ISBN: 9781266712722) at the bookstore (however, this is a more expensive option). See [pp. 9-10](#) and the **Connect Syllabus** on D2L for more information.
* Note: the e-book is required to complete SmartBook reading assignments.
- 2) Top Hat subscription (\$26 fee) (see [pp. 8-9](#) and the **Top Hat Syllabus** on D2L)
- 3) Technical Requirements: You are required to have (click [here](#) to see MSU policy on this):
 - a laptop computer (iPads/Chromebooks do not satisfy the requirement)
 - a high-speed, stable internet connection
 - a webcam, microphone, and speakers
 - Microsoft Office (Word and PowerPoint), or freeware equivalents

Recommended Resources:

- 1) Spranger's Lecture Videos - I record my in-person lectures and provide the videos to you on our D2L website after lecture
- 2) Supplemental Links - YouTube videos and other helpful links posted to D2L
- 3) [Khan Academy](#) - biology and physiology lessons and practice
- 4) [CrashCourse](#) - anatomy and physiology YouTube videos

Professor's Mission

My primary mission is to provide you a quality education—an education that you would expect to be offered at a prestigious university such as MSU. I will encourage you to develop strong study skills. I will constantly challenge you to think on a higher level. I will expect your best. And, most importantly, I hope to inspire and get you excited about human physiology and your career path! If you accept my challenge, I offer you a guarantee that is inherent in my design of this course. If you perform very well in this course, you will have also acquired the analytical thinking, reasoning, and study skills required to succeed at the highest level in the next phase of your academic studies. In other words, you will leave this class a legitimate academic—a student with all the tools necessary to achieve whatever academic goals you set your mind to. Moreover, by integrating clinical scenarios and emphasizing clear, precise explanations of physiological concepts, this course will enhance your ability to discuss complex ideas with colleagues, patients, and other healthcare professionals in clinical and professional settings. Please go all in and join me on this mission. Hopefully, you will find it to be a powerful and enlightening adventure!

Lecture Outline

Course Content	Unit	Lecture Topic	Chapter Readings	Unit Exam Dates
	Unit 1	Introduction to Physiology	1.1-1.6, 1.9, 2.3 (pp. 30-31), 14.16-14.18, 16.1 (pp. 579-580), 16.2, 17.22 (pp. 645-646), 18.2 (663-665)	Tuesday 09/16/25
		Cell Physiology	3.1-3.3, 3.8, 4.1-4.5, 5.1-5.2	
		Neurophysiology - Cells	6.1-6.3, 6.5-6.11, 6.13-6.14	
	Unit 2	Neurophysiology - PNS Afferent	6.2, 6.16-6.17, 7.1-7.9	Tuesday 10/07/25
		Neurophysiology - PNS Efferent	6.17-6.18, 10.1-10.2, 12.15	
	Unit 3	Muscle Physiology	9.1-9.3, 9.5-9.10, 10.4	Thursday 10/23/25
		Endocrine Physiology	11.1-11.3, 11.5-11.17, 11.19-11.22, 14.13, 16.2, 16.5	
	Unit 4	Cardiovascular Physiology	12.1 (pp. 367-368), 12.2-12.16, 12.21-12.24	Tuesday 11/18/25
		Hematology	12.1, 12.25-12.29, 18.6 (pp. 687-688)	
		Respiratory Physiology	13.1-13.3, 13.5-13.8, 13.10, 14.20	
	Unit 5	Gastrointestinal Physiology	15.1-15.8, 16.1-16.2	Thursday 12/11/25
		Renal Physiology	14.1-14.3, 14.6-14.9, 14.12, 14.15	
		Reproductive Physiology	17.4-17.9, 17.12-17.15, 17.17, 17.20 (pp. 637-638), 17.21, 17.23-17.24	

* First day - 08/26; Fall Break (no class) - 10/21; Holiday (no class) - 11/27;
Last day - 12/7

Learning Outcomes

If you perform well in this course, you will not only possess a solid understanding of human physiology, but you will also be fully capable of:

- 1) Explaining the molecular and cellular mechanisms that underlie the normal physiological processes of all human organ systems.
- 2) Understanding the pathology of disease states without formal coursework in pathophysiology. You will learn many disease states in this course, and with your strong command of normal physiology, you will have the capacity to evaluate diseases and propose mechanistic bases for the pathology. Moreover, with your understanding of molecular and cellular mechanisms, you will be able to scientifically rationalize the drug therapies employed to treat these conditions.
- 3) Confidently communicating, both written and verbally, with proper terminology and pronunciation, all aspects of normal human physiology with your peers, your physician, your pharmacist, and your future professors.
- 4) Employing the study skills and work ethic you developed in this course to perform well in all your courses throughout your entire academic career, including professional school.

Course Examinations

There will be 5 unit exams as scheduled in the **Lecture Outline** (see [pg. 5](#)). Each exam will be worth 60 points and consist of 60 multiple-choice and true/false type questions. The exams are not cumulative in the strict sense of the word. However, important concepts from previous exams, that tie into concepts in subsequent lectures, will naturally find their way into subsequent exams. I will emphasize these important concepts during lecture throughout the semester - so stay tuned! You will have 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete the Unit (1-4) Exams. You will have 2 hours to complete the Unit 5 Exam (per MSU policy). The Unit 5 Exam is the Final Exam but is not a cumulative exam.

Exam Replacement Policy: Need help recovering from a poor exam performance? Here's what I will do: I will replace the lowest score of your first 4 exams with the average score of all 5 of your exams (if the low score of 1-4 < AVG of 1-5). You must take all exams and complete the course in its entirety to qualify for this policy. So, this policy is literally designed to help you recover from a low exam score due to lack of preparation, a bad day, or an extenuating circumstance, for example.

Exam Logistics: The default exam modality for this course is online, remote. Your exam will be administered to you on D2L utilizing D2L Respondus LockDown Browser

+ Monitor. Therefore, you will need to download Respondus LockDown Browser on your computer and use your webcam and microphone during the exams. Please see the **D2L Respondus LockDown Browser** document on D2L for details, technical requirements, and additional exam logistics.

You must take your exam on or nearby (within ~10 minutes) MSU main campus (exceptions may be made for extenuating circumstances) so you can come take your exam in person (B115 Wells Hall) if you experience technical difficulties that cannot be resolved by the MSU IT Service Desk. Some students find that webcams cause them undue anxiety. Therefore, I want to acknowledge this and be flexible. If you have a legitimate issue with webcam-based examinations, then I will consider allowing you to take your exams in person (B115 Wells Hall). This option does not apply for students that just prefer to take their exams in person. While your in-person exam will still be administered to you online via D2L utilizing LockDown Browser, you will not be required to use your webcam in addition. You will have to request this accommodation in advance for the entire semester.

As with typical in-person exams, you are to take your exams on your own, without help from any notes, books, electronic devices, internet sources, or other human beings (see [pg. 14](#) for MSU's **Academic Integrity Policy**). Please note that if I suspect academic misconduct, your privilege to take exams remotely may be revoked at my discretion, and you will be required to take the remainder of your exams in person (B115 Wells Hall). Moreover, if I am convinced that you have engaged in academic misconduct on an exam then 1) you will receive a zero for that exam and 2) I will file an Academic Dishonesty Report (ADR) with the University as per MSU policy.

All students are required to start their exams at the same time (12:40 PM). From that time, you will have until 2:10 PM (90 minutes) to finish an exam. If you begin an exam at a later time than 12:40 PM, you will still only have until 2:10 PM to complete it. I am aware that an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., technology issue) may prevent you from starting an exam at precisely 12:40 PM; therefore, I provide a 20-minute buffer period to start an exam. Importantly, on your end, it will appear as your exams "end" at 1:00 PM. Rest assured, however, that exams will not end at 1:00 PM, rather your "access to the exams end" at 1:00 PM. That is, if you try to start an exam after 1:00 PM, you will not have access to it and will get a zero.

To be fair, no questions can be asked/answered during in-person or remote exams. If you have questions and/or want to see the mistakes you made, please see your TAs (not LAs) in their CRS or SSHS for review. You can review an exam only up until the start of the next exam. The Final Exam will not be available for review.

Unit Exam Dates/Times: See the Lecture Outline ([pg. 5](#))

Final Exam Date/Time: Thursday, December 11 (12:45 PM – 2:45 PM)

Final Exam Conflict Policy: Per University policy, no student is required to take 3 final exams on the same calendar day or take 2 final exams scheduled at the same time. If a final exam conflict is the result of one of your courses having a common final, your course with the common final is responsible for scheduling you an alternate final exam. If you have a final exam scheduling issue, please contact your college representative in the Office of Student Affairs for assistance. For details, click [here](#). Any potential Final Exam concern must be resolved by **09/02/25**.

Make-Up Exam Policy: No make-up exams will be offered except for University excused absences (i.e., not a cold, mild fever, headache, planned vacation, or work conflict, etc.) such as a health emergency causing hospitalization or the unfortunate death of an immediate family member (see the University's **Grief Absence Policy**, [pg. 15](#)). To be considered for a make-up exam, you must provide (in advance—if possible) documentation of a health emergency by a physician on their letterhead. Should you become unable to attend class for an extended period due to a serious health or personal issue, please contact the Office of Student Affairs in your college for guidance. Please follow up with me to discuss potential accommodation.

Top Hat (Quiz, Participation, and Attendance Points)

Top Hat (TH) is a classroom response system that I will employ to help keep you engaged during lecture. **Quiz (Q), Participation (P), and Attendance (A) Points** offered via TH will be worth a combined 12.5% (50/400) of your overall course grade (Q - 40% of the 12.5%; P - 40% of the 12.5%; A - 20% of the 12.5%). I will post the numerical (running total) points you earn for Q, P, and A on D2L following each examination period. The above percentages will be calculated at the end of the semester. See the **Top Hat Syllabus** and the **How to Calculate Your Grade** document on D2L for further TH grading details.

- ☞ **Quizzes** will be assigned remotely via TH. There will be one Q per topic. Qs will be assigned a few days after a topic is completed and be open for 48 hours. Regular attendance and studying will be required to perform well on the Qs. As with exams, Qs are expected to be completed on your own, without help from any notes, book, electronic devices, internet sources, or other human beings.
 - * Each Q question will be worth 1.0 point for correctness.
 - * Qs will start and end on various days, but will always be due at 11:59 PM.
 - * In case of an unexcused circumstance, I will automatically drop one quiz.

- ☞ **Participation** questions will consist of material from the current lecture. Several of these questions will be asked during each lecture. These will be multiple-choice and true/false type questions designed to probe your mind, help guide your thought process, and get you engaged in lecture. Being in class and participating is all that is required to get full credit.
 - * Each P question will be worth 1.0 point for participation.
- ☞ **Attendance** will generally be taken at the beginning of lecture. However, I reserve the right to take A at any time during lecture.
 - * For each instance I take A, you will receive 1.0 point.
 - * In addition, if you miss A on any given day, you will not receive any P points offered for that day (see the **Top Hat Syllabus** for details).
 - * In case of unforeseen circumstances, I will automatically drop two attendances, which will include any participation points given that day.

No make-up opportunities will be offered—under any circumstances—for Q, P, or A points. Please do not contact me with an excuse for why you missed a quiz or an opportunity for participation or attendance points. Keep in mind that I automatically drop your lowest quiz score and excuse two absences (these automatic drops will be done at the end of the semester). For TH technical details see [pg. 17](#), and for more information see the **Top Hat Syllabus** on D2L.

Connect

Connect is a reading/learning management platform provided by your textbook publisher (McGraw-Hill). I will be employing two Connect resources this semester — **SmartBook (SB)** and **Virtual Labs (VLs)**. SB is a digital version of your textbook that personalizes content to your unique needs. What does reading the textbook have to offer you? In my professional opinion, reading the textbook offers two invaluable things: 1) it provides you another perspective of the information covered in lecture and 2) it helps fill in the gaps of my lectures so that you can develop a more complete picture of the organ systems discussed. VL is a repository of simulations with conceptual, practical, and clinical applications. Each topic of this course (see the **Lecture Outline**, [pg. 5](#)), will have a corresponding SB reading assignment, and several VL assignments, to be completed after lecture. These resources are in place to help you better understand and apply the physiological concepts covered during lecture for each topic. SB assignments are worth 12.5% (50/400) of your overall course grade. While I urge you to do the VL assignments, you will not be penalized for not doing them. The VL assignments are for Extra Credit (EC). VL assignments will be another means (along with my exam replacement policy)

by which you can boost your overall course grade. There will be 50 VL assignments worth a total of 10 EC points (0.2 pts/assignment). Whatever number of points you earn from VLs will be added to your overall course point total at the end of the semester. For Connect technical details see [pg. 17](#), and for more information see the **Connect Syllabus** on D2L.

Course Grading

400 points are available to be earned this semester: Exams = 300; Top Hat = 50; SmartBook = 50. I may or may not adjust individual exam scores. I will not adjust final course grades. Course grades will be determined from total point accumulation at the end of the semester. To calculate your grade at any point during the semester, see the **How to Calculate Your Grade** document on D2L and the tables below:

Grading Table		Grading Scale	
Unit Exam	Points	% Ranges	Grade
1	/60	90-100	4.0
2	/60	85-89.99	3.5
3	/60	80-84.99	3.0
4	/60	75-79.99	2.5
5 (Final)	/60	70-74.99	2.0
Top Hat	/50	65-69.99	1.5
SmartBook	/50	60-64.99	1.0
Course Total	/400	≤ 59.99	0.0
Virtual Labs*	/10		

* Virtual Labs EC points are not part of the 400-point course total.

Grading Procedures: Exam scores and TH, Connect, and EC points will be posted to the D2L gradebook 24-48 hours after each exam. I only use the D2L Gradebook to post your assessment grades for your record. All grade calculations will only be performed on my personal computer. Please disregard any D2L gradebook calculations. The exam replacement policy, and any approved attendance and/or quiz drops during the semester, will be calculated at the end of the semester. This will be done on my personal computer, so you will not see these adjustments in the D2L Gradebook. That said, you can accurately calculate your grade at any point during the semester with all of the information that I provide you on D2L.

Disputes/Challenges

Once your grades for any assessment (e.g., quiz, exam) are posted in the D2L Gradebook, you will have one week from that day to question/challenge them. Failure to challenge within this period indicates your willingness to accept your grades as posted in the D2L Gradebook. Disputes posed outside of this timeframe will not be considered for any potential grade adjustment.

Content Review Sessions (CRSs)

CRSs are a place for content review. Several LAs will hold bi-weekly CRSs via a combination of in-person and online (Zoom) sessions. Your TA Helen will announce details about these sessions on D2L, and a spreadsheet of the dates/times/modalities will be posted on D2L within the first week of class. CRSs are optional but encouraged.

Study Skills Help Sessions (SSHs)

SSHs are a place to learn and develop effective study skills for this course. While studying *hard* is important, so too is studying *smart*. In this class, you will have to do *both* to earn a 4.0. Your TA Paula will run the Lead SSH. Several LAs will hold additional, bi-weekly SSHs via a combination of in-person and online (Zoom) sessions. Your TA Helen will announce details about these sessions on D2L, and a spreadsheet of the dates/times/modalities will be posted on D2L within the first week of class. SSHs are optional but very strongly encouraged.

TA Help Room

I am fully aware that this course is challenging and that some students struggle with its demands. That being said, please know that I am invested in the success of each and every student in my course. Along with all of the aforementioned resources that I offer for student success, I also have a TA, Helen, that will serve as our Student Success Manager this semester. Your TAs, Helen and Dalton, will run a TA Help Room (a spreadsheet of the dates/times will be posted on D2L) specifically designed to help any student that is struggling in the course – for any reason! While CRSs/SSHs are focused on content review and study habits, respectively, the TA Help Room is open for broader help with the course. This could include help with how to approach the course, time management, creating a study schedule, balancing your course load, content review, and study habits as well. Helen and Dalton are very approachable, and the TA Help Room is a judgement-free zone!

Quiz and Exam Review Sessions

Quiz Sessions are in-person sessions to review material from the course by practicing exam-style questions. Your TA Dalton will host these sessions and announce their dates/times on D2L. Exam Review Sessions will be hosted by all three of your TAs and held over Zoom. Exam Review Sessions are Q&A style and will be recorded and posted to D2L. Your TA Helen will announce the dates/times for Exam Review Sessions on D2L.

Honors Option

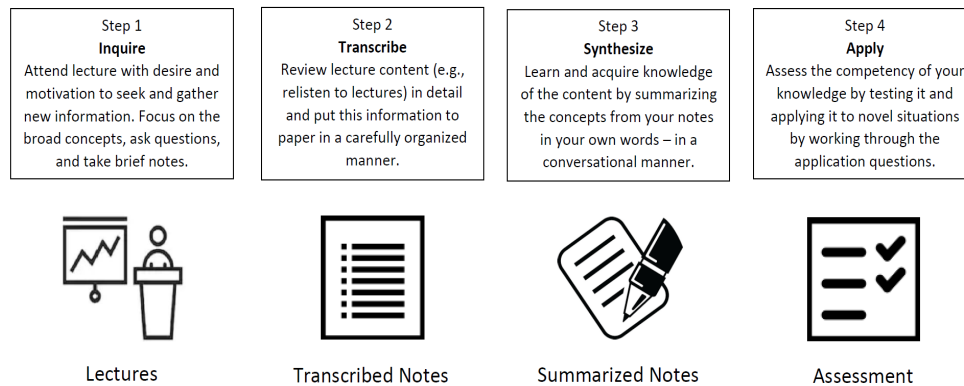
I offer an Honors Option. To be eligible, you must be enrolled in the Honors College. Rules for what final course GPA you must earn for final approval of an Honors Project vary by college/department. It is your responsibility to be aware of these rules. The Honors Project for this course is to create (with cited literature) and deliver (to myself, the TAs/LAs, and your peers) a 10-15-min PowerPoint presentation about a specific physiological process or disease. See the **Honors Project Syllabus** for more details. Click [here](#) to learn more about the Honors College and an Honors Option.

Prof's Advice for a 4.0

- 1) Want it!
- 2) Read the **How To Approach This Class** and the **From Former Students to Future Students: How to Succeed in PSL 310** documents posted on D2L.
- 3) Be willing to make sacrifices and dedicate the amount of time to this class that it requires.
- 4) Attend SSHSs/CRSs/TA Help Room, participate, and ask questions. That is, get engaged!
- 5) Be proactive. If you need help, contact me ASAP and/or attend the TA Help Room. No, I do not bite. I am big softy :-). I want you to succeed (think of me as your personal cheerleader), and I am confident that my team and I can help you do just that!
- 6) Endlessly cramming and trying to memorize my PPT lecture slides will not likely result in a grade higher than a 2.0 in this course. Physiology is about function, and therefore you need to understand (rather than memorize, like in anatomy) the concepts and processes of the human body. So, you want to spend a lot of time working at understanding physiology (i.e., studying *hard*), but you also

want to make sure you are employing effective study skills for this type of learning (i.e., studying *smart*).

- 7) I have posted a **Study Skills Video** on D2L that demonstrates effective study skills that I developed over the years (below are the 4 steps presented in the video). I recommend diligently and consistently employing this study methodology (or some legitimate variation thereof).



- 8) To make sure you are studying properly for this course, be sure to attend an **SSHS** right at the beginning of semester. There is no time to waste! The TAs/LAs will guide you in employing my study skills or help you develop your own variation. It is important to keep attending the same SSHS session until such time that the TA/LA and you are both confident that you are on the right track for success. This typically takes about 2-4 meetings.
- 9) Once you have finished studying a particular topic (i.e., you have written out your notes in your own words and of your own mind) test and apply your knowledge by doing the **Application Questions** posted on D2L. These questions are a perfect self-assessment for how well you understand the information, and therefore how effective your study skills are. Last, you can work on the **Practice Exam Questions (PEQs)**.
- 10) In summary, here are the 3 most important things that you can do to earn a 4.0 in this course: 1) do the **study skills** (or some legitimate variation thereof) diligently and consistently, 2) go to an **SSHS** to get your notes vetted to make sure you are studying properly, and 3) do the **AQs**.
- 11) There is actually one more thing that can really help you do well in this course: Try to enjoy it!

General Policies

- ✓ Please do not chit-chat (unless it is about physiology!) while I am lecturing. This is disrespectful to me and your fellow classmates. If I can hear you, so can other students around you. If someone around you is chronically disturbing you, please let me know.
- ✓ I will utilize all the class time allotted for this semester. If you know you are going to arrive late or leave early, please sit in the back of the lecture hall. Whenever you enter or exit the lecture hall, please use the back doors.
- ✓ When emailing me, please address me, write without utilizing texting acronyms and shorthand, use spellcheck, and always sign with your name. This is a matter of professionalism, and these simple efforts go a long way, regardless of who the recipient of your email is.
- ✓ I will consider writing a letter of recommendation for any student that: 1) earns a 4.0 in my course, 2) develops a personal rapport with me, 3) demonstrates strong personal characteristics, and 4) demonstrates competency (via assessments) in all units and topics of the course. Unfortunately, due to the volume of letters that I write a year, I restrict the letters I write for admissions to professional programs only, not for scholarships, employment, etc.

Academic Integrity Policy

All MSU students are held to the standard set by MSU's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades (click [here](#) for details). You are expected to complete all assessments in this course without assistance from any resource other than your brain. If I am convinced that you have engaged in academic misconduct on an exam, then 1) you will get a zero for that exam (under this circumstance, this zero cannot be replaced via my exam replacement policy) and 2) I will, per MSU policy, file an Academic Dishonest Report (ADR) with the University for academic misconduct. Please honor and strictly adhere to The Spartan Code of Honor:

"As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do."

Add/Drop Policy

Students may add courses in the Student Information System (SIS) up until the open add end date (5th day of class). This date is displayed in the SIS Class Search. Students may drop courses in the SIS up until the Last Day to Drop with no grade reported. This date is displayed in the SIS Class Search (middle of the semester). After the open add end date, students must process adds by obtaining approval from the authorizing officers (Instructor, Assistant Dean, Department Chair). Drops after the middle of the term of instruction must be processed by the Assistant/Associate Dean's office of the student's college. Click [here](#) for details.

Grief Absence Policy

MSU is committed to ensuring that the bereavement process of a student who loses a family member during a semester does not put the student at an academic disadvantage in their classes. Students should contact the Office of Student Affairs in their college and file a Grief Absence Request Form (click [here](#) for details) no later than one week after knowledge of the circumstance. After submission of this form, the college representative and the student will determine the expected period of absence. Once I am informed of the grief absence request by the college, I will work with the student to make the appropriate accommodation.

Special Considerations for Individuals with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability, contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) and meet with a specialist to request special accommodation before classes start (click [here](#) for details). Once verified by RCPD, send me an email with your Accommodation Letter attached so I can provide you your necessary accommodation.

Mental Wellness

If you ever feel that you need someone to talk to, I am always here for you! However, if you feel that you need professional help, then please contact your primary physician. MSU also offers free Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) (Click [here](#) for more information). CAPS mission is to connect students with the most appropriate and available care and services that optimize their health, well-being, and success.

D2L Information

Our course website is hosted on D2L (click [here](#)). Once there, you can log in using your MSU NetID and password. After logging in, you will see a link to our specific D2L course. If you do not see this link, search for our course, and then pin it to your main page. If all else fails, check with the Office of the Registrar to make sure that you are officially enrolled in the course and D2L. Please note that I do not have the administrative clearance to enroll students in my D2L course. The Office of the Registrar controls your enrollment in the course and D2L. All course materials (e.g., course syllabus, PowerPoint lecture slides, lecture video recordings, etc.) will be posted on D2L. For D2L technical assistance, see [pg. 17](#).

Discord Information

I created a Discord server for this course. This is a discussion platform where you can ask questions of your peers and, more importantly, answer questions posted by your peers. The TAs/LAs and I will monitor and help foster the discussion on Discord. If you join (it is optional) the PSL 310 Discord server (click [here](#) to join), you must use your actual name, and not a pseudonym. When asking questions, provide some of your own understanding about the concept so that someone can help you precisely where you are stuck. Feel free to share study tips, notes, cool websites you have found, etc. with your classmates here as well. However, do not post any screenshots of course material here, such as quiz questions you may need help with. Please do not privately message myself or the TAs/LAs on Discord. Our Discord server is solely for human physiology discussion to aid in your learning experience in PSL 310. Please be professional and respectful when on Discord. Failure to do so may result in your removal from the platform at my discretion.

Intellectual Property Policy

All course materials presented to students are the copyrighted property of the course instructor and MSU. Students are prohibited from sharing this information outside of this course learning community. Any student violating this policy may face academic disciplinary sanctions.

Disclaimer

This course syllabus is subject to modification at the discretion of the instructor without prior notice to the student. That said, I will make every effort to discuss any change with you before making it. Lecture topics and/or lecture times may be changed to accommodate class progress. Students must keep regular attendance and regularly check our D2L course to take note of any potential changes. Any issue not covered within this course syllabus, and disputes that cannot be resolved following the policies/guidelines presented in this document, will be resolved in accordance with MSU policies.

Technical Assistance

D2L or Zoom:

- ✓ Call the MSU IT Service Desk (517-432-6200)

Top Hat:

- ✓ Call Top Hat Support (1-888-663-5491)
- ✓ Live chat with Top Hat Support (click [here](#))

Connect:

- ✓ Call @ 1-800-331-5094
- ✓ Live chat with Connect Support (click [here](#))

FAQs

Q1. How do I succeed in this course?

- A1. Watch the Study Skills Video posted on D2L and develop a solid study strategy that involves some variation of the following: 1) watch all lecture videos, 2) take detailed notes on the PPT slides while watching the lectures, 3) after each lecture, make sense of your notes (i.e., learn), 4) rewrite your notes in your own words in a conversational manner, 5) go to an SSHS and see if you are on the right track with your study process (i.e., get your notes vetted), 6) stay on track and

do not fall behind, and 7) do not wait for the second exam to do all of the above.

Q2. What information will be covered on the exams?

A2. I will source information presented during lecture (i.e., whatever is on my PPT slides and whatever I additionally discuss during class - including Top Hat questions) and what is covered in the SmartBook reading assignments.

Q3. Is the Final Exam a cumulative exam?

A3. No. The Final Exam is just the Unit 5 Exam.

Q4. Can I drop my lowest exam score?

A4. No. However, I will automatically replace the lowest score of your first 4 exams with the average score of all 5 of your exams IF you take all 5 exams.

Q5. Will I be able to review my exam?

A5. Yes. If you have questions and/or want to see the mistakes you made, please see your TAs (not LAs) in their CRS or SSHS for review. You can review an exam only up until the start of the next exam. The Final Exam will not be available for review.

Q6. Can I make-up an exam if I miss it?

A6. In rare circumstances. Make-up exams are only offered for University excused absences such as hospitalization or the unfortunate death of an immediate family member.

Q7. What do I do if I get an email that I am not properly enrolled in Top Hat?

A7. Follow these instructions to correct this: When registering, TH asks for your "student ID." Please enter your net ID, not your PID. Your net ID is merely your MSU email minus the "@msu.edu." For example, my MSU email is mds@msu.edu. Therefore, my net ID is mds. Therefore, my TH "student ID" is mds.

Q8. If I end up with an 89.99% in the course at the end of the semester, will my grade be rounded-up to a 90%?

A8. No. I may or may not adjust individual exam scores, but I will not adjust overall course scores.

Q9. Can I do a project/paper to improve my grade?

A9. No. Sorry.

Q10. How soon will my exam scores be posted?

A10. Within 24-48 hours.

Q11. Do I have to print out the PPT lecture slides?

A11. No. However, I encourage that you print them out and bring them to lecture, or annotate on them on your computer, to ease the note-taking process.

Q12. Does anyone ever get a 4.0 in this course?

A12. Yes, plenty. Approximately 25-30% of PSL 310 students earn 4.0s.

Q13. If I miss a class, will I also be excused for the Top Hat attendance and participation points that I missed?

A13. I will automatically excuse two absences, which will include any participation points given that day. Beyond that, no make-up opportunities will be offered, under any circumstances, for quiz, participation, or attendance points.

Q14. Do you bite?

A14. No. I am just a big softy ;-).