



Syllabus

Biology, 2007-2008

Dr. Privitera

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Office hours: Mon 11:30 am – 12:15 pm

Tues 12:30 – 1:15 pm

Required Supplies:

1. **Text, CD, & Learning Log workbook:** Biology, Exploring Life, Campbell *et al.*, 2004, Prentice Hall
2. **Composition book** – college-ruled, devoted exclusively to Biology
3. **1.5” 3-ringed binder with 3 tabbed dividers** - devoted exclusively to Biology; label the dividers as: Assignments, Labs, Tests & Quizzes

Course Description:

The major themes in our study of biology will be cells, DNA/heredity, evolution, plant and animal diversity, and ecology. The course will engage students in active learning as they explore biological concepts through investigative laboratory studies, group projects, and interactive online activities. Access to the internet at home is recommended for optimal learning.

SEMESTER 1 TOPICS

UNIT 1: Scientific Method & basic properties of living organisms (wks 1-2)

UNIT 2: Cells (wks 3 - 6)

UNIT 3: Genetic code (wks 7 - 10)

UNIT 4: Heredity (weeks 11 - 14)

UNIT 5: Biotechnology (wks 15 – 17)

SEMESTER 2 TOPICS

UNIT 6: Evolution & Speciation (weeks 19 – 21)

UNIT 7: Invertebrate evolution & diversity (weeks 22 – 25)

UNIT 8: Plants & Photosynthesis (weeks 26 – 28)

UNIT 9: Vertebrate evolution & diversity (wks 29 – 30)

UNIT 10: Ecology and Animal Behavior (weeks 31 – 36)

Grading System:

Quarter 1, 2, 3, 4: (see following page for more detailed explanations)

Tests	50%
Quizzes	20%
Labs & Projects	15%
Assignments	10%
Citizenship	5%

Semester 1 Grade Calculation:

1. 42.5% of Q1
2. 42.5% of Q2
3. 15% Cumulative Semester Final Exam

Semester 2 Grade Calculation:

1. 42.5% of Q3
2. 42.5% of Q4
3. 15% Cumulative Semester Final Exam

Year End Final Grade:

1. 50% Semester 1 Grade
2. 50% Semester 2 Grade

Biology Grading Policies:**1. Tests (50%)**

Full-period (45-50 min.) tests will be given at the end of each unit to assess each student's understanding of the concepts and will consist of a combination of multiple-choice, true-false, and short-answer questions.

2. Quizzes (20%)

A 5-10 minute vocabulary quiz will usually be given weekly. Longer quizzes (15-20 min) that assess conceptual understanding will also usually be given weekly. Some of these will be unannounced ("pop") quizzes, which will be open-notes, closed-book format. Announced quizzes will be closed-notes, closed-book format.

2. Labs and Projects (15%)

Laboratory investigations are generally held during double-block periods, and grades will be based on a combination of pre-lab questions and quizzes, lab technique and clean-up, and answers to post-lab questions. If a group's table is not clean upon departure, all students in that group will lose points on their lab. If you miss a lab due to an excused absence, arrangements for scheduling a make-up lab must be made with Dr. Privitera **on the day you return to school**. It will not always be possible to make-up a missed lab. In that case, sample data may be provided by Dr. Privitera.

There will also be one research project (involving paired or group work) per quarter. Students will be given a rubric prior to the initiation of the project and will be expected to utilize internet and library resources in addition to their textbook.

3. Assignments (10%)

Homework will consist primarily of chapter review questions and online activities. Each student will be given an access code to on-line activities available on the www.biology.com website. Access to these activities can also be achieved by using the CD that accompanies your text (which is usually much faster than online access and may be essential when internet access is unavailable). This resource allows you to interactively explore the same concepts discussed during class. Your success in this class will also be partly determined by how well you participate in in-class group activities and independent class work.

All assignments, labs, tests and quizzes should be kept neatly organized in a binder that is dedicated exclusively to biology. Organization and completeness of your biology binder will be graded at least once per quarter.

Policy on Late assignments: All assignments are **due at the beginning of class**. Late assignments **will NOT be accepted** for grading, with two exceptions: 1) Student with an excused absence will be given two extra days for each day of absence. 2) All students are provided with one

“late homework” card per quarter. This does not exempt you from doing the assignment – it only postpones the due date for up to 2 days.

4. Citizenship (Responsibility and Conduct) (5%)

Students who arrive to class on time, and are prepared with their biology binder, biology notebook, pen or pencil, Biology CD, and charged laptop will earn two “citizenship” points for the day. Students will lose one or both points if they subsequently fail to follow the **Classroom Policies** as stated below. Students who fail to follow the class rules will be immediately informed of the loss of points. A parent or guardian will be notified after the loss of more than two points in a week’. A conference with the student and parent or guardian may be necessary if a student continues to lose points on a regular basis.

Quizzes and tests must be made up within 2 days of any absence, although this could change depending on the duration/type of the absence. **It is your responsibility to schedule a time with me for the make-up. Please see me on the day you return to school to schedule a time for your make-up.**

Semester Exams: These exams are taken during the exam periods at the end of each semester. Semester exams will be cumulative and account for 15% of your semester grade. If you are absent on the day of your exam, there will be a make-up exam day at the end of the week.

Classroom Policies

All students are expected to abide by the 4 Tribes Agreements:

- 1) Attentive Listening
- 2) Mutual Respect
- 3) No Put Downs
- 4) Right to Pass/Right to Participate

Failure to abide by the policies listed below will result in the loss of citizenship points, which may negatively affect your grade. It is your *privilege*, not your right, to be in class. If you continually disrupt the teacher’s ability to teach or your classmates’ ability to learn, you will lose your privilege to be in class.

1. Be on time

- You will be considered tardy if you are not ***in your assigned seat*** when the bell rings.

2. Be prepared for class

You are expected to bring your biology binder, biology composition book, pen or pencil (sharpened), charged laptop computer, and Biology CD-ROM ***to every class***. Students who forget any of these items in their locker or at home risk losing a citizenship point. Textbooks are not required in class and may be kept at home, since there is an electronic version of the text on the CD-ROM. Learning Logbooks may be stored on a shelf in the classroom.

3. Classroom Etiquette

If you want to ask a question, please raise your hand and wait to be called on. Do not blurt out questions or comments without permission to speak. Initiating or engaging in side conversations with classmates during instructional time is not only *disrespectful* to the teacher but *disruptive* to the learning environment and will result in the immediate loss of a citizenship point. Other types of classroom disruptions include (but are not limited to) sharpening of pencils during tests or instructional time, sending print commands to the classroom printer during tests or instructional time, and ringing cell phones. Each infraction of this type will result in the loss of a citizenship

point. Cell phones are permitted before school, after school, and during the lunch period. Repeated cell phone distractions during class time will also result in the confiscation of the phone for the remainder of the day. The phone may be picked up the following day from the Vice Principal, Mr. Funasaki.

4. Computer Usage

Laptops should be turned off during class unless you are specifically asked to turn them on. At least once or twice per week, you will be using your computers to complete online or CD-ROM activities. Students who abuse this privilege by engaging in inappropriate computer usage (e.g., web surfing, e-mailing, IM, or working on assignments from other classes) will lose a citizenship point AND their laptop will be confiscated for at least one full day, or up to one full week, depending on the circumstances. The laptop may subsequently be picked up from the Tech Dept. (Note: if the infraction occurs on a Friday, this may mean loss of the computer for the entire weekend). Any further instances of inappropriate computer usage will result in the loss of all computer privileges during class for the remainder of the semester.

5. Staying “On Task”

Students are expected to pay attention and focus on biology. Using class time to work on assignments for other classes, write letters, read novels, etc., will result in the loss of a citizenship point. Sleeping in class and resting your head on your desk are also considered “off task”. If you are having trouble focusing, please let me know and I will do my best to help.

6. Gum/Eating in Class

Eating is not allowed in any of the science labs – it is not only a violation of the classroom rules but also a violation of Federal OSHA policy regarding food safety standards.

Additional Classroom Rules:

- 1) You may leave the classroom for a three-minute “bathroom break” twice per quarter. Simply sign out the green hall pass by writing your name in the logbook, along with the pass number, time out, and time of return.
- 2) **Do not ask for missed work at the beginning of class.** Please see me either during the lunch break or after school.
- 3) Do not put any trash in the sinks or drawers. You will be assigned CLEANING DUTY and it is very gross! Also, do not pour any chemicals down the sink. Dispose of all chemicals as instructed by your teacher.

*8 Tips for How to Succeed in Biology

- 1) **Read the assigned pages before class.** Outline each chapter with subheadings, key words and key concepts. In doing so, you will be able to listen more effectively in class and will be able to ask questions about any reading material that you did not understand.
- 2) **Take effective notes in class.** If you do poorly on an exam, compare your notes with someone who did well. Are you getting all of the necessary information during class time? If not, take appropriate steps to change the way you take notes. See me for help.
- 3) **Participate in class by asking questions.** Active involvement facilitates learning! It will make the topic more interesting and will also help you to remember the material.
- 4) **Review all notes as soon as possible after class** (preferably during a study hall, or that evening at the latest) to reinforce what you have learned, correcting errors in your notes and filling in details that you recall but didn’t have time to write down. If something is unclear, consult the textbook for clarification or make an appointment to meet with me as soon as possible.

- 5) **If you are not part of a study group, consider joining or starting one.** Educational research shows that students who study together are, on average, more successful than those who study alone. At the very least, I encourage you to exchange phone numbers with one or two classmates so that you can discuss homework questions and study for your tests together. This should supplement, not replace, independent study time.
- 6) **If you know you are going to be absent, get the work ahead of time.**
- 7) **Don't wait until the last minute to study for exams.** Even though you may have been reading and studying the material all along, it is far too much information to review in just one night. And it really helps to be well rested for the exam, something that cannot be achieved in a late-night "cram session".
- 8) Perhaps most importantly, **do not wait until it is too late to get help!** If you are having difficulty understanding something, or if you are falling behind, please see me as soon as possible so that we can arrange for some extra help sessions during lunch or after school.