

Biology Course Syllabus

Webutuck High School 2023-2024

Contact Information

Instructors: Ms Fridstrom

Mr. McKeever

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Remind Class Codes:

Period 3 Biology: text @msfbio3 to the number 81010

Period 4 Biology: text @msfbio4 to the number 81010

Period 5 Biology: text @msfbio5 to the number 81010

Period 7 Biology: text @msfbio7 to the number 81010

Office Hours: Thursdays, 2:15 - 3:15 pm in H12 and by appointment

Course Objectives

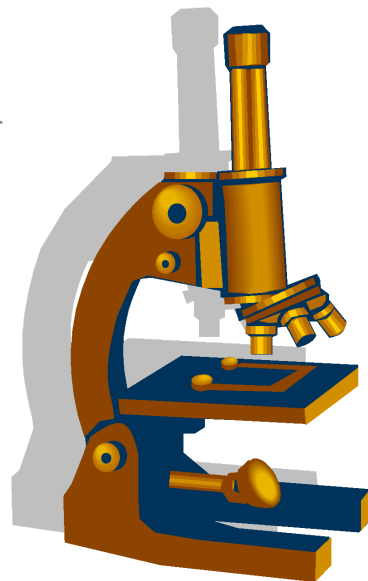
- To learn about living systems.
- To prepare to take the New York State Living Environment Examination.
- To develop or enhance a system of organization and self-discipline.
- To develop or enhance good study techniques.
- To develop and enhance safe laboratory techniques.

Required Materials

- A well rested student, prepared to participate :)
- Your school issued Chromebook, charged and ready to go
- Headphones or earbuds (only to be used for instructional purposes with teacher permission)
- Pens with blue or black ink
- Pencils
- 3-ring binder to store paper handouts (separate for Biology only)
- a small amount of looseleaf (or a single subject notebook if preferred) for taking notes
- 2 pocket folder (for Biology only) to transport papers in progress home and back

Course Topics

- Scientific Inquiry
- Organization and Patterns in Life
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Energy, Matter and Organization
- Genetics and Evolution
- Reproduction, Growth and Development
- Dynamic Equilibrium
- Human Influences on the Environment



Evaluation Policy: Marking Period grades will be weighted as follows:

- Labs and Projects - 30%
- Assessments - 30%
- Classwork and Independent work - 30%
- Participation - 10%

This course culminates in a Regents exam. There is also a midterm exam administered halfway through the year to check your progress on the content we have covered so far. Student scores on the midterm and final will each count as 10% of the overall course grade respectively. As performance on these exams total 20% of your final course grade it is important to utilize the study guides, practice assignments, and extra help sessions provided in advance of these exams to prepare.

Also be aware that **if you are taking Biology in 8th grade, you must maintain an 85% course average.** If your course average is below 85% at any progress or marking period, you will have 5 weeks to improve your grade before you are rescheduled to transfer to your grade level science course.

Labs and Major Projects- 30%

The use of scientific inquiry to develop explanations of natural phenomena is critical to understanding science concepts. Therefore as a prerequisite for admission to the Regents examination in the Living Environment, students must have successfully completed 1200 minutes of laboratory experience with satisfactory written reports for each laboratory investigation (from *Living Environment Core Curriculum*).

Be aware you likely have a different instructor for your Biology lab section than you do for Biology lecture. **The work you complete in your lab section will be incorporated into your overall course grade (you do not receive a separate grade for lab).**

Labs earning a grade below 65% are not satisfactory, will not count toward the Regents lab requirement, and must be redone to achieve a passing grade. **Late labs are subject to a penalty of 10 % per day.** Students who have not met the NYS mandated lab minutes requirement a minimum of 1 week prior to the exam will be ineligible to sit for the Regents Exam.

Safety in the Lab

As we will be working with delicate glassware, heat, and chemicals, safety in the lab is paramount. We will review specifics in a separate lab contract and during your lab section. However, be clear that **unsafe behavior of any kind will result in being asked to leave the lab area immediately, a zero grade for the lab, and a referral to administration.** It will not matter if you were “*just playing around*” or “*wasn’t being serious*”, there is no playing in the lab and you need to take lab safety seriously.

Additionally be aware that as this is a shared lab space, at times there may be equipment or experiments in progress in the lab area from other classes. You are not to touch any materials that do not pertain to your assigned lab.

Some guidelines to keep you out of trouble in the lab:

- Stay at your designated lab station unless you are obtaining needed materials. Do not walk away leaving experiments unattended or getting in the way of another lab groups' work area.
- Use safety equipment as required and keep it on the whole time. If the lab requires goggles they should be on your eyes, not being worn as a headband or neck decoration.
- Appropriate footwear is required to work in the lab area ; no open toed shoes allowed.
- Follow any lab directions provided. Do not mix substances together to “*see what happens*”. If you are truly curious, check with your teacher if these substances can be safely combined to explore (if there is additional time after you have completed the assigned lab). Only do so if given prior OK.
- Never toss or throw anything to or at anyone.
- Don't touch any equipment or materials in the lab area that is not part of your lab activity without prior permission.
- If there is a problem with your equipment or you are unclear on lab directions, ask your teacher for clarification before proceeding.
- Clean up your lab area thoroughly. Leaving a mess may make the lab area unsafe for the next student and will affect your lab grade.

Assessments - 30%

Tests will be announced and are based upon material covered in lectures, as well as content explored in your lab investigations. If you know in advance that exams are a challenge for you, please ask for help with studying or preparing BEFORE the exam (not after you receive a failing grade). I am more than willing to work with students during after school sessions or by appointment to help you succeed in this class. There are also major projects over the course of the semester which will count as an assessment. These could include either individual or group projects. Please follow all rubrics regarding scoring for these major projects.

Periodic quizzes will assess your understanding of science content. These may be announced or unannounced and will provide valuable feedback on what content or skills you need to re-learn before the unit exam. At times quizzes may be open notes, so it is important to bring materials to class daily and keep any handouts organized.

Classwork and Independent work - 30%

An important part of learning includes independent practice; this is especially true for courses that terminate in a Regents exam. Late work may or may not be accepted at the teacher's discretion depending upon the assignment. Late classwork and homework assignments that are accepted for partial credit will lose 25% credit immediately unless a student was absent. Review your Google Classroom “To Do” list daily and utilize Remind to keep up to date on assignments.

Class Participation - 10%

How you conduct yourself in class and contribute to the learning environment can impact your grade either positively or negatively.

Activities that affect your participation grade positively	Activities that affect your participation grade negatively
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● arriving to class on time● arriving with all materials and prepared to work● completing the Do Now at the beginning of class without prompting● being actively engaged in the lab experiments and learning activities● verbally participating in class discussions● taking notes during lecture● asking questions when you don't understand● helping a classmate who is struggling● being respectful to peers and instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● arriving late to class● arriving unprepared● ignoring the Do Now● allowing peers to do all the work during labs or group activities● being off task● failing to take notes during lecture● failing to ask for help when needed● side conversations during lecture or teacher instructions● being disrespectful to peers or instructor● using cell phone in class

Please be sure to include activities in the left column and avoid activities in the right column. For a more detailed view of how participation will be scored view the [participation rubric](#) posted on my teacher page.

Expectations

- **Do your best!**
- **Be prompt.**
- **Come to class physically and mentally prepared to work.**
- **Be tolerant and courteous of your classmates and teacher.**
- **Follow all safety rules.**

Make-up Policy

You are responsible for any work assigned when you miss class due to an absence, whether excused or unexcused. It is your responsibility to reach out to your instructor when you miss class within 24 hours to schedule a makeup session. If you miss school on the day an assessment is given, you will be expected to complete it when you return to class unless you have made prior arrangements with your teacher.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to complete their own work on independent assignments, including conclusions on written labs. While working in lab groups I expect that group members often will have the same data and similar observations. However lab **analysis questions should be done individually and should be in your own words.** You may come to similar conclusions but **copying answers to analysis questions from your lab partner word for word is considered plagiarism and will not be accepted.**

Instances of plagiarism, cheating, or copying will result in all students involved receiving a zero on the assignment.

For more information about plagiarism please view the [Webutuck High School plagiarism policy](#) posted on my teacher page.

Declaration:

I have read and understand the information provided in the preceding syllabus for Biology. I am aware of the course expectations, grading policy, and make-up policy for missed work. If there are any questions or concerns I will contact the instructor to discuss and resolve the issue

Student Name (Please print): _____

Student Signature _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Please print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date:** _____

Relationship to student: _____

Please include current contact information below:

Email address: _____ **check if preferred method** ☐

Current Phone: _____ **check if preferred method** ☐

What is the best time of day to try and reach you? _____

Is there another adult you are comfortable for me to talk to regarding this student if you are unavailable? _____ **if yes, include info below:**

Name	contact info	relationship to student
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