

HONORS BIOLOGY: COURSE DIRECTIVES

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Scan to visit
Mr. Mohn's Biology Home Turf

Page	Password
Notes	

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Biology is the study of life. This field of study should not be new to you, for you have been studying life ever since your brain began processing information. Think back on everything you have ever known or observed. Your memories undoubtedly include a jumbled array of life forms: insects, flowers, furry creatures, trees, and humans to name a few. By observing and asking questions about the world around you, you have built up a store of knowledge about the living world. This course is an opportunity for you to extend your thoughts about life to more organized levels of understanding.

The Honors Biology course is an introductory science course with the purpose of presenting the empirical methods of science with reference to particular topics in the biological sciences. Contrary to being solely a body of knowledge, science is a process that involves maintaining and expanding ones current knowledge base, conducting authentic research, and reporting and sharing that acquired knowledge with others. Honors Biology requires that students demonstrate these process skills.

Honors Biology will include the study of basic chemistry, cell structures, cell processes, genetics, evolution, classification, ecology, and the nature of science. Coursework will be enhanced by laboratory activities.

STUDENT DESCRIPTION:

There is a commitment within the mind of the Honors Biology student to develop his/her skills beyond the expectations of the biology curriculum. A biology student who is of honors caliber must distinguish him/herself from other students by consistently demonstrating the following attributes within the classroom and in the community at large:

- high motivation and desire for intellectual growth
- exceptionally high quality and quantity of work
- optimistic and responsible citizen
- organized self-manager and team worker

GOALS: All students will...

- acquire a general and comprehensive knowledge base in the biological sciences.
- develop the reading skills, vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and study habits essential for independent progress in science.
- utilize various scientific techniques and technological skills in the study of science.
- apply scientific principles in decision-making regarding your personal well-being, your future, and the future of society.
- understand the nature and limitations of scientific knowledge.

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING THESE GOALS:

1. There are so many topics in biology that an introductory course cannot begin to address them all. Therefore, you should study the topics we discuss in class and take good notes. ***Use the textbook as a tool for understanding, not as your sole source of information.***
2. Practice using what you have learned by always thinking of an answer to every question in class. Be prepared to share your answer. ***Don't wait until you are called on to start thinking.***
3. You are expected to follow any and all directions that are given by the instructor. In many instances, this will be ***for your own safety and for the safety of others.***
4. Ask for help when you do not understand. ***Be aggressively inquisitive.***

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES:

1. **RULES:** The most important rule is to do what is right and treat each other with respect. Every class member is expected to display respect, responsibility, self-control, and effort.
2. **REQUIRED SUPPLIES:** You will need a **3-ring binder**, **loose-leaf paper**, and **safety goggles** for use in the laboratory. Goggles may be purchased from the school for \$5.00 or you may bring your own. For convenience, you will be asked to store your goggles in the classroom.
3. **FOOD/DRINK:** For the health and safety of our classroom animals, food (including candy, mints, etc.) will not be permitted in class. Drinks will be permitted, but you must clean up your own spills.
4. **LEAVING THE ROOM:** Plan on remaining in the classroom the entire time allotted for our class. If you absolutely **must** leave the room, you **must** have Mr. Mohn sign a pass.
5. **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:** Respect is the key to having a harmonious classroom environment. Everyone is expected to listen when someone else has the floor. Sending text messages, doing homework for another class, wearing headphones, and/or talking during instructional time is not acceptable. Any other student behaviors that negatively impact student learning will not be tolerated. Students who act in such a manner will be warned and/or temporarily removed from the learning environment.
6. **TARDIES:** If you are tardy, come in quietly, show Mr. Mohn your “Tardy Tracker” slip, and join the class. It is your responsibility to stop by after class to explain any extenuating circumstances.
7. **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Cheating is understood by all to be unacceptable. All instances of cheating will be dealt with according to the Student/Parent Handbook. The type of cheating that occurs most often is plagiarism. This involves using another person’s work or ideas without giving them credit. Any student who willingly provides his or her answers is also guilty of cheating. Written assignments with identical or very similar wording are signs of cheating. It is acceptable to discuss answers on written assignments, but each student’s answers must be original.
8. **CLASSROOM COMPUTERS:** The computers in the classroom are to be used for academic purposes only. This means no games, personal email, personal social media, chat rooms, or instant messaging at any time. To ensure accountability, you will be assigned a specific computer to use. Log on to the computers only when you have Mr. Mohn’s permission to do so. Also, please ask for permission before you print anything. Failure to follow these rules may result in loss of computer privileges.
9. **ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, handheld games, etc.) are not to be used during instructional time. Your life does not consist in the abundance of your possessions (or obsessions).
10. **EXAMS:** We will have a written exam at the end of each instructional unit. The exams may include multiple-choice, numeric response, and/or free response questions. Before each exam we will fill out a “Test Preparation Checklist” which will help you to prepare for the test.
11. **MAKE-UP EXAMS:** Make-up exams will take place before and after school in the science ARC or after school on Tuesdays in Room 301. Failure to attend a make-up exam will result in a zero on the exam.
12. **LATE WORK:** All assignments will have set due dates. However, late work will be accepted for full credit up until the assignment is handed back in class. After this, no late work will be accepted. Keep in mind that this time period will vary from one assignment to the next.
13. **MAKE-UP WORK:** You will have two days to complete make-up work for every excused absence. It is your responsibility to check with Mr. Mohn or the course website as to what was missed and what needs to be made-up. You are also required to make-up lab activities that are missed because of excused absences. To be sure that the necessary materials are available, make-up times should be cleared with Mr. Mohn.
14. **WRITTEN WORK:** All written work must be done neatly and thoroughly. In all written work, complete sentences should be used whenever ideas need to be conveyed.
15. **BIOLOGY NOTEBOOK:** Throughout the year you will use your Biology notebook to record observations, take notes from readings, lectures, and class discussions, and reflect on what you have learned. You are also expected to keep all handouts and graded assignments in your notebook.
16. **EXTRA CREDIT:** Mr. Mohn does not give extra credit assignments. However, you may redo any assignment or lab if you feel the original grade does not adequately reflect what you know. Simply print out a copy of the assignment from the course website and complete it as though it was the original. The new score will be used instead of the original one. Redone assignments must be completed by the end of the 9-weeks grading period during which they were assigned. Please be aware that copying someone else’s assignment and handing it in as a redo is cheating and will earn you a zero on the assignment.
17. **ONE-ON-ONE HELP:** Mr. Mohn is available for help both before and after school. He can usually be found in his office next to room 301.

GRADING PROCEDURES:

Student grades will be earned and calculated on a cumulative basis, with the mid-quarter and quarter grades representing your “work in progress.”

All grading will be based on the district standard of 90%=A, 80%=B, 70%=C, 60%=D.

Your semester grade will be calculated as follows: 80% for cumulative grade, 20% for semester final exam.

Cumulative grades will be weighted using the following categories:

ASSESSMENTS (50%): Quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions and will occur periodically throughout the instructional unit. Quizzes will be administered using the Classroom Performance System (CPS). The Unit Exams will consist of multiple-choice, numeric response, and free-response questions. The objective portion of the Unit Exams will be administered on the classroom computers using the ExamView Player software. On occasion, a culminating project may replace an exam at the end of the unit.

SCIENCE & ENGINEERING PRACTICES (40%): The Blue Valley Biology Curriculum standards are based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) which include eight practices of science and engineering that are essential for all Biology students to learn. These practices will be implemented through various written assignments, hands-on activities, and laboratory investigations that will be assigned throughout the semester. The eight practices are listed below:

1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering)
2. Developing and using models
3. Planning and carrying out investigations
4. Analyzing and interpreting data
5. Using mathematics and computational thinking
6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
7. Engaging in argument from evidence
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

CLASS WORK (10%): Students will be required to complete additional required material including vocabulary checklists, online reflections, worksheets, online activities, etc., as determined by the instructor.

I am very interested in your personal and academic success. If there is anything I can do to help you achieve your goals, please let me know. My door is always open. ☺