

BISC 002

Genetics, Ecology, and Evolution

Sample Syllabus

Description

This course combines Genetics, Human Genetics, Evolution and Ecology. It is an introductory course for non-science majors, and it is hoped that you will develop a basic understanding of genetic and biological terms and their importance to our technologically advanced society. Evolution is a central theme of biology and it helps us to understand the process of life that is ongoing all across our globe. The interactions among members of that global community provide the backdrop for understanding the ecology of our planet and our place in that community. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Assignments

All students are expected to complete the weekly quizzes on time. These will be available for at least one week so budget your time accordingly. You are not able to take all of your tests at one time and be done. This course is paced so you can progress through at a reasonable speed.

Each week there will be at least one lesson for you to study. Each lesson will have one quiz, one homework assignment, and textbook assignment (LearnSmart modules, Labs, etc.). Be aware that some weeks there may be more than one lesson, thus more than one quiz and homework/textbook assignments. Each of these have specific due dates listed on the folder in which you find them.

You may complete the homework and textbook assignments early as they will be available from the start of the semester. However, each quiz has a definite shelf life. Quizzes are meant to activate on a Saturday and deactivate on the following Sunday. That means you have more than a week to complete it. At no other time will you be able to view or complete quizzes, it is impossible to open up the quiz for a single person. The only exception to this is an instance of the quiz being improperly configured. If I short the class on time due an incorrect setting I will open up the quiz

for additional time and everyone will have an opportunity to then complete it. However, that has been a rare event (but if it happens, notify the instructor). Pay attention to due dates, each assignment has one listed with the folder for that week.

The quizzes are set to overlap so you can manage your schedule if you happen to be away from a computer for an entire weekend. If you know that will happen then either get things out of the way very early or make it a point to finish the following weekend. Missing an assignment should never happen if you manage your time properly. You will be entirely responsible for your time and scheduling.

The weekly quizzes will be timed so it will not be possible to look up the answers to these questions at your leisure. The expectation is that you will study the content, gain some level of mastery of the terminology and take the tests to see how well you know everything. You are not to have access to sources of information when you take these tests, they are not open book.

The homework assignments may be completed ahead of schedule but not after the due date. Being late a day or two will result in a late penalty. Homework turned in after that will result in a zero. Homework assignments should not be copied from any other source, cited correctly or not. Many assignments will have you finding information from sources including the internet, however, a cut and paste job does not equal effort. Googling information is not considered an academic achievement.

Everything you write is expected to be your own work, not something you find and copy from the internet. It's perfectly clear when students have plagiarized a paragraph from a web page. It only takes 30 minutes to find a few web sites about a topic and then write up a summary of what you find. Don't risk University sanctions and an F for a homework assignment that should take less than an hour. See the statement on academic integrity for further information.

Late Assignments / Technical Difficulties

Since you have seven days in which to submit homework, and take a quiz, I will not accept illness or technical difficulties as an excuse to make up missed work. The only exception to this would be an extended hospitalization stay. All quizzes and homework message boards are

available at the beginning of of the course. The due dates listed with each assignment are the last days that a quiz or homework assignment is available. To avoid missing deadlines, submit your work early and avoid waiting until the last evening at 11:55 pm to submit your homework or take a quiz. Your internet dropping out at the last possible minute to submit work is not a reasonable cause for being unable to complete work in a timely manner. Do not turn in work at the last possible minute. No scores will be dropped. Work cannot be turned in for a higher grade once a grade is assigned. There will be no opportunities to turn in extra work for extra credit. Be prepared to do the necessary work to reach your goals for a final grade.

Submitting Your Work

All course work will be submitted to your instructor through Canvas. To do this, you will need to:

- Click on the Modules button in the menu bar at the left of this page.
- Choose the folder for the week we are currently in.
- Click on the homework assignment for the week.
- Type your answer into the text box
- Click "submit assignment"
- At the appropriate time click on the quiz for that week and complete it within the time specified or it will automatically submit whether you are finished or not.

Grading

The Grading Scale can be found in the Getting Started section of Canvas. All grades can be found in Canvas by going to the Grades button on the left hand side.

Each lesson has a quiz that will vary in length between 10 and 20 points each. Some will be longer than others depending on the amount of material covered in a particular lesson.

Each quiz question is worth 1 point out of the total. Every question is worth exactly the same as any other question; only the length of the quiz each week will vary. Do not think in terms of percentage points here, this will be a point system based on total points.

Students will work on these assignments as an individual and will be responsible for completing them on time. Late assignments will have a deduction, assignments more than a couple of days late will not be accepted. Once we reach the end of the course it will not be possible to go back and complete work that is outdated by weeks or even months. Keep up on assignments to gain maximum points.

Grades are based on a combination of quizzes where each question is worth one point and various homework assignments worth a handful of points. All students are expected to complete the weekly quizzes on time. These will be available for at least one week so budget your time accordingly. You are not able to take all your tests at one time and be done. This course is paced so you can progress through at a reasonable speed. Each homework assignment has a specific number of points associated with it.

Any questions concerning a particular quiz or homework assignment must be resolved immediately. You cannot wait till the end of the semester to correct any problems. Due to time constraints, it will be impossible to review all assignments on the last day in the hope of finding one or two points to meet a grade cutoff. You should ask that all grading issues be resolved as they occur during the semester. No exams will be dropped; no extra credit will be accepted. It's impossible to evaluate hundreds of book reports or shoebox dioramas.

Deferred Grades

Students who are unable to complete the course because of illness or emergency may be granted a deferred grade which will allow the student to complete the course within the first six weeks of the following semester.

When a request for a deferred grade is supported by the instructor, the instructor indicates this approval by recording the deferred grade symbol (DF) for the student. The expiration date for the deferred grade is automatically recorded as the end of the sixth week of the next semester. Spring semester approvals expire during the fall semester unless the student enrolls during summer session. Therefore, course requirements must be completed and a grade must be submitted by the end of six weeks into the student's next semester for which he or she is registered.

Any deferred grade that is not replaced by the deadline will automatically become an F.

Note that deferred grades are limited to those students who can verify and document a valid reason for not being able to complete the last few assignments, not for gaining extra time to complete missing work from earlier in the semester. Students are expected to have completed at least 75% of the course assignments to be eligible for a deferment. For more information see DF grade.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment by all members of the University community not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others.

Accommodating Disabilities

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. The [Student Disability Resources \(SDR\) website](#) provides contact information for every Penn State campus . For further information, please visit [Student Disability Resources website](#).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [See documentation guidelines](#) . If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations,

your campus disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

- [Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park \(CAPS\)](#): 814-863-0395
- [Counseling and Psychological Services at Commonwealth Campuses](#)
- Penn State Crisis Line (Available 24 hrs, 7 days a week): 877-229-6400
- Crisis Text Line (Available 24 hrs, 7 days a week): Text LIONS to 741741

Educational Equity / Report Bias

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the [Report Bias website](#).