

BIOL 11

Introductory Biology I

Sample Syllabus

Description

You are a biological being, as are the foods that you eat. We use products from other organisms to make many of the clothes that we wear, build our homes, provide medicines, and give beauty to our lives. Therefore, developing an appreciation and understanding of the biological world is important to living in this world and becoming a responsible steward of its resources. Who hasn't watched a bird and wondered what it would be like to be able to fly? To see the world from a different perspective? This course will provide an introduction to fundamental biological topics (including cells, energy transduction, genetics, evolution, organismal structure/function, ecology) for non-majors in biology-related fields.

Objectives

By the time you complete this course, you should have learned about the following:

- The role of natural selection, which shapes organisms in response to their environment through differential reproduction.
- The mechanisms of inheritance, and how DNA encodes the genetic information for all living organisms.
- The chemical basis of life, the origin of life on Earth, the structure and function of the two basic types of cells, and how cells utilize energy.
- The fundamentals of plant biology, including plant structure, response, and reproduction.
- The basic organization of the animal body, with a focus on the digestive and reproductive systems.
- How organisms interact with each other and their environment, and how human activities have modified the environment for other organisms.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic
1	Course Orientation
2	Evolution and Ecology
3	The Chemistry of Life
4	Cells
5	Exam 1
6	Energy & Life
7	How Cells Divide
8	Exam 2
9	Foundations of Genetics
10	How Genes Work
11	Evolution and Natural Selection
12	Exam 3
13	Plant Biology
14	The Animal Body
15	Ecosystems
16	Exam 4

Discussion Forums

Throughout the 11 lessons in this course, you will be expected to participate in discussions on a weekly basis. There are 15 participation points available for each lesson, for a total of 165 points. The quality of your participation will determine how many points you earn. If you fully

answer the questions posted, in an original post with no quotes or copy and paste, then you will earn 7 pts. If you make 2 substantial replies to your classmates' posts, then you will earn 4 pts each (8 pts total) for a total of $7 + 8 = 15$ pts for each weekly discussion forum. No late submissions accepted. If you run into any difficulties, please email me asap.

Quizzes

Throughout the 11 lessons in this course, you will be expected to participate in multiple choice quizzes on a weekly basis. These short quizzes are to help you understand and apply the material being learned that week. You have one chance to take each untimed quiz before the weekly deadline. Upon submission of your completed quiz, it will be automatically graded, at 10 pts for each quiz.

Exams

Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times. You will have plenty of advance warning as to when the exams are to take place. Please see the calendar. Contact me if there is a problem. Only legitimate excuses shall warrant a makeup exam to be taken as soon as possible. Legitimate excuses can include, but are not limited to, illness, family emergencies, trips, get called into work. Sleeping through the alarm is NOT a legitimate excuse! Neither is 'my car broke down' (bring me your mechanic's bill) or 'my ISP wasn't working' ----the least you can do is be creative! Each open, multiple choice exam is worth 100 pts and automatically graded after submission. No proctors required---but Penn State's Academic Integrity policy is in effect. Upon submission of each exam, you are agreeing to abide by Penn State's Academic Integrity policy.

Grade Scale

Letter Grade	% Range	Points
A	92-100	621-675
A-	90-91.9	608-620

B+	88-89.9%	594-607
B	82-87.9%	554-593
B-	80-81.9	540-553
C+	78-79.9%	527-539
C	70-77.9%	473-526
D	60-69.9%	405-472
F	< 60%	< 405

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](#).