

Principles of Biology

BIOL 120L

GENERAL INFORMATION & SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Biological principles common to plants and animals. Topics include scientific investigation, genetics, evolution and ecology. Not for credit toward Biology major or minor. Not open to those who successfully completed BIOL 110, BIOL 115 or BIOL 201. University Core 7, when combined with BIOL 120.

TEXTBOOK REQUIRED: Investigating Life Science Laboratory Manual, Fifth Edition

By: Healey, Ghent, Gasparich, Kosewicz, Scully & Trauth-Nare; Academx Publishing, only available in the campus bookstore

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION: Check the main menu of the Blackboard site for lab – **NOTE – you will have a Blackboard site for BIOL120L (lab) and a separate site for BIOL120 (lecture).**

LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the end of the course, the student will be able to

- Compile organized, legible laboratory manual pages.
- Create and analyze graphical representations of data from conducted experiments.
- Demonstrate competence in discriminating between scientific and nonscientific information.
- Follow scientific protocols, such as one for extracting DNA from cheek cell samples.
- Safely use scientific laboratory equipment, such as electrophoresis equipment to separate fragments of DNA samples.
- Classify organisms by characteristics to show evolutionary relationships.
- Identify key concepts in biology and relate them to contemporary issues.
- Discuss ecological issues relevant to contemporary society such as deforestation and human population growth.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

MASKS: Clear expectations have been shared with the University community about the wearing of masks. Face coverings over the nose and mouth are required while you are indoors at all times. There are no exceptions. Students not wearing a mask will be given a warning and asked to wear one, or will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. Students who have additional incidents with the mask expectation after a first warning will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Civility Education for failure to comply with a directive of the University officials. (Office of Provost and Academic Senate Chair)

Food and drinks are not permitted in lab for safety reasons.

This is a LABORATORY course and attendance will be recorded each week but does not earn you points. Attendance in lab is critical for success in this course. You must complete the weekly labs as well as an independent research project.

ABSENCES: All absences are *initially recorded as unexcused*. For absences to be reclassified as *excused*, it is the student's responsibility to: 1) notify the lab instructor **by email within 24 hours** of the absence **AND** 2) provide documentation for any absences to the lab instructor **within 24 hours** of the absence. If these procedures aren't followed, the absence may be considered unexcused. Each absence will be

considered for status of excused on an individual basis by either the lab instructor or in conjunction with the course coordinator.

- If you have a **documented excused** absence, then you will be given the opportunity to complete a makeup assignment for the missed lab activity. Makeup assignments must be completed individually and submitted by the deadline set by your instructor. Some makeup assignments may require materials from the lab. It is your responsibility to pick up the materials (as directed by your instructor) in order to complete the assignment on time. The late work policy applies to makeup assignments. Since BIOL120L is a **hands on** laboratory course, no more than 3 makeup assignments will be accepted.
- If you have an **unexcused** absence, you are not eligible to earn points for that lab week. You will earn a zero for all missed in class activities.

*****If you anticipate having to miss labs because of athletic commitments or for other foreseeable reasons, please see the instructor immediately, or change to a section with times that better fit your schedule. Students that have protracted medical problems or other legitimate extended absences should discuss their individual situations with the instructor as these situations arise.*****

LEAVING EARLY: If you leave early, you may be considered absent or the number points that you can earn may be reduced (as determined by your instructor).

LATENESS is not acceptable. Arrive on time. Lab begins right away and lasts the entire session. **One point will be deducted for each consecutive 5min period that a student is late (up to the maximum 5 points).** That is, if you are 5 min late to lab, you lose 1 point. If you are 20 minutes late, you lose 4 points. *In the case of documented lateness, again, it is the student's responsibility to provide any documentation for consideration, within the allotted timeframe, as described above for absences.* Late points will be returned upon receipt of documents by the lab instructor, if lateness is reclassified as excused. **Any student that arrives more than 30 minutes after the start of the lab session will not be permitted to participate in that lab regardless of lateness status, as this is a safety issue.**

LATE WORK: All in lab activities are due at the end of the lab period and must be submitted before leaving the lab room. All outside of lab activities should be submitted in Blackboard and are due on the dates and times specified in the schedule. Any work that is turned in after the due date and time established by your instructor is considered late and will lose points at the rate of **2 points per calendar day, starting with the first day.** Due dates and times may be communicated in class, via Blackboard, via email, or in the course schedule. This policy applies to ALL assignments completed for this course, including: in lab activities, the independent project and makeup assignments.

MATERIALS NEEDED FOR LAB: You must bring the LAB manual to each lab session. **2 points will be deducted from lab assignments completed without a lab manual.**

CLASS BEHAVIOR: Free discussion, inquiry, and expression is encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of cellular phones or other electronic devices; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line." **Cellular phones should not be used during lab without the instructor's approval.** Classroom behavior which is determined to be inappropriate and cannot be resolved by the student and the faculty member may be referred for administrative or disciplinary review and the student will be barred from attending class.

OUTSIDE OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS: Some assignments will be completed individually, outside of class. All outside of class assignments will be submitted on Blackboard. There will be submission links for each assignment on Blackboard. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the correct document is submitted in the correct format on Blackboard prior to the deadline. All outside of class assignments must be submitted as a Word Document (.docx) or a PDF (.pdf). Other formats will not be accepted. **If an incorrect document, blank document, or document that is the wrong format is turned in, then you will lose 2 points on the assignment upon submission of the correct document.** *If you have a legitimate reason that you cannot complete an outside of class assignment by the deadline, then you must email your instructor and provide the appropriate documentation **within 24 hours** of the deadline to have a request for an extension considered. If these procedures are not followed or the reason is not legitimate, then the assignment will be due at the original due date/time and the late work policy above will apply.*

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS: Students will need to be able to access their TU email and Blackboard regularly throughout the semester. Students will also be required to use Microsoft Excel to complete data analysis and graphing during the semester. Students can download Microsoft Excel for free from Towson University. Directions will be provided on Blackboard.

EMAIL: When you email your instructor please treat the email as a formal letter (ex: Dear Professor, Thank you, your full name). Do not treat emails like a text message. Please **include "BIOL 120L" and your section number** in the subject line of the email. Emails sent outside of normal business hours may not be answered until the following business day. If you wait until right before an assignment deadline to ask questions you may not receive an answer prior to the deadline.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Any form of cheating (including plagiarism on laboratory assignments and reports) will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to discuss lab assignments, but all answers should be written independently. Cheating and plagiarism are defined in the Student Academic Integrity Policy and should be reviewed by each student. The consequences of violating this policy may result in the assignment of zero points for an assignment or a failing grade for the course at the discretion of the instructor. (<https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/documents/policies/03-01-00-student-academic-integrity-policy.pdf>)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY: This course is in compliance with Towson University policies for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services (DSS), 7720 York Road, Suite 232, 410-704-2638 (Voice) or 410-704- 4423 (TDD). Students who suspect that they have a disability but do not have documentation are encouraged to contact DSS for advice on how to obtain appropriate evaluation. A memo from DSS authorizing your accommodation is needed before any accommodation can be made.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT: Towson University values diversity and fosters a climate that is grounded in respect and inclusion, enriches the educational experience of students, supports positive classroom and workplace environments, promotes excellence, and cultivates the intellectual and personal growth of the entire university community. Should you feel that you are experiencing a negative environment related to diversity issues or cultural sensitivity, we encourage you to contact the Department's Assistant Chair, [Dr. Colleen Winters cwinters@towson.edu]. For more information go to <https://www.towson.edu/fcsm/departments/biology/diversity.html>

COURSE REPEAT POLICY: Students may not repeat a course more than once without prior permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

GRADING: TU uses +/- grading,
See chart to the right for letter grade ranges.

Points Available:

Syllabus and scientific process Blackboard quiz (10 points)
12 in lab activities (10 points each) - The lowest score will be dropped before your final grade is calculated.

Independent project (45 points total) – Background Research (6 points), Proposal (4 points), Progress Checks (2 x 5 points each), Final Report (25 points)

Total Points Possible = 175 (165 after your low score is dropped)

	%		%
A	92- 100	C+	76 – 78.9
A-	89 – 91.9	C	70 – 75.9
B+	86 – 88.9	D+	66 – 69.9
B	82 – 85.9	D	60 – 65.9
B-	79 – 81.9	F	<60

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- *All lab grades are recorded in the Blackboard Grade Center, contact your instructor if you have questions*
- *The schedule and/or the total number of points for the course may change (ex: closings due to inclement weather)*

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- attend every lab
- arrive on time and don't leave early
- answer all parts of each question
- use evidence (data/numbers) to support your answers
- ask for help (in lab or by email)
- check your email and BlackBoard regularly