

Honors Biology Expectations
Fall Semester 2007-2008
Philip Gerard

MAJOR COURSE GOALS

A deep study of living things involves exploring particular “territories” – cells, tissues, organs, organisms, populations, and communities – each with their own language and “culture.” This requires learning both a great deal of vocabulary and underlying physical, chemical, evolutionary, and ecological concepts. It’s my hope that students will be able to make use of these concepts to explore and understand life beyond the details and areas we investigate in our class. Biology is the study of life and the living world is amazing! (When you think of it, many of the things we think or learn about are associated with life – and there fore are associated with Biology: food, language, relationships, history, psychology, disease/health, society, family, sex, sleep, art, sports, war, and so on). Our primary goal is for students to develop a deeper sense of wonder and understanding of the living world while learning the basics of biological science.

Generic Science Skills to practice and develop:

- 1- Developing questions and designing scientifically valid experiments
- 2- Analyzing research and data to determine validity and value
- 3- Use of scientific measurement and laboratory tools
- 4- Representing and analyzing data
- 5- Refining our ability to clearly present written, oral, and graphic information

-INFORMATION ABOUT BEING A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT IN THIS CLASS-

Enjoyment and learning in this course will require steady, careful attention to the readings, assignments, discussions, and lectures. Be involved in class discussions and activities. Help foster an environment that is cheerful while being focused on learning. Be considerate and help maintain an environment that is safe for inquiry and learning (in other words don’t scoff or be sarcastic about other student’s work or comments).

NOTEBOOKS

You will need a notebook and you will need to take notes during class. Date each new set of entries. Your notebooks will be collected weekly. You are expected to take notes every day.

READINGS

Readings from the textbook and other sources will be regularly assigned. For effective class discussions it is essential that these are read on time.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments will include responses to readings, research presentations, design of experiments, carrying out experiments, and lab reports. Major assignments may involve researching topics of particular interest to you and then presenting/teaching to the class about your research. Students may miss one assignment. Any late assignments must be turned in by the following class in order to receive credit.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS

Students are expected to attend every Biology class and be on time. Absence due to illness (or for other reasons) of more than 9 classes will result in loss of credit as the course is based on laboratory experiences, discussions and interactive lectures or presentations. If you miss classes, for any reason, you are responsible for borrowing and copying class notes from a classmate.

Because of the difficulties associated with setting up many of the laboratory experiences, you might not be able to make up a lab if you miss it. In that case, get all notes, handouts, etc. from a classmate. Have them thoroughly explain what took place and what you are expected to do. Then ask Phil to review the lab with you.

ASSESSMENTS

We will have regular quizzes and 4 longer assessments during the semester. Students may miss one quiz each semester. Students must score at least 80% on their assessments or will need to retake their assessments until they receive an 80%. Retakes will be offered during lunch on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday. You are responsible for scheduling your retakes with me.

REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE CREDIT

- 1- Notebooks - More than 3 missed entries will result in no credit for the course.**
- 2- Assignments – Miss more than 1 minor assignment during the semester and you will not receive credit. If assignments are late, they must be in by next class or counted as a missed assignment. No missed major assignments.**
- 3- Assessments – Miss more than 1 quiz and you will not receive credit. Students must score at least 80% on their assessments or will need to retake the assessments until they receive 80% or better.**
- 4- Attendance – Miss 9 classes: no credit, Miss 2 labs: no credit.**