

BSC 2009 – Biology for Non-Majors (online)

UF Sections 1B86, 1C00, 1C05, 1C13, 1C21, 1C22, 14DD, 14DF, 14D2, 14EF, 14EG, 14EH, 14E0, 14FG, 14FH

UFO Sections 11GB, 1432, 1434, 1435

Syllabus for Spring 2014

I. Course Objectives and Meetings

This course addresses core concepts in biology, including the Cell, Genetics, Evolution, Biodiversity, Ecology, and Conservation/Sustainability. For non-majors. 3 credits.

First day of classes: 06 January 2014

Last day of classes: 02 May 2014

Final Exam: None

II. Instructors

Course Instructor:

Dr. Nicole Gerlach

Department of Biology

Office: 520 Carr Hall

Office Hours: by appointment

E-mail: ngerlach@ufl.edu

Teaching Assistants:

Nicole Botteri

Sections: TBA

Department of Biology

Office: 620 Carr Hall

Office Hours: TBA

E-mail: nbotteri@ufl.edu

Tania Chavarria

Sections: TBA

Department of Biology

Office: 318 Carr Hall

Office Hours: TBA

E-mail: taniachavarria79@ufl.edu

Jake Ferguson

Sections: TBA

Department of Biology

Office: 318 Carr Hall

Office Hours: TBA

E-mail: troutinthemilk@ufl.edu

Brian Harfe

Sections: TBA

Department of Molecular Genetics

Office: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

E-mail: bharfe@ufl.edu

III. Expectations

Each student is solely responsible for reading and following the instructions, guidelines and schedules in this syllabus and on the course webpage. Not having read the information in this syllabus, on the webpage, or in course announcements will not constitute an excuse for missing deadlines, assignments,

or other assessments. Please set your preferences in Canvas so that you receive notifications of course announcements and other information.

IV. Course Resources

A. Textbook

Biology for a Changing World, 1e by Shuster, Vigna, Sinha, and Tontonoz. Sinauer Associates and W.H. Freeman (publisher), 2011.

Textbook publisher web site: <http://courses.bfwpub.com/sabiology.php>

An electronic version of the textbook is included with BioPortal access (see below). A hard-copy version of the textbook is not necessary for the course.

B. BioPortal: Online Resources and Electronic Textbook

BioPortal is an online assignments and tutorial system from the textbook publisher that will be used for required readings, interactive activities, and quizzes. BioPortal is required for this course and includes the electronic version of the textbook. Go to <http://courses.bfwpub.com/sabiology.php> to register and purchase access to BioPortal OR you can purchase an access card at the UF Bookstore. When setting up your account, **you must use your Gatorlink (ufl.edu) e-mail address, which will be your username.** Using an e-mail address other than your UFL e-mail address will result in you receiving NO credit for all assignments administrated through BioPortal.

For help with *BioPortal*, contact *BioPortal* Technical Support: 1-800-936-6899 (phone) or techsupport@bfwpub.com (e-mail).

BioPortal grades will be transferred to the Canvas gradebook at the end of the term, but will also be viewable at any time on the BioPortal website.

C. Course Website (Canvas)

All class material - including the syllabus, lectures, assignments, discussions, quizzes, and gradebook – that is not part of the BioPortal system will be posted on the course Canvas website (<https://ufl.instructure.com>). For help with Canvas, call the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357, or visit the e-Learning support website: <http://help.instructure.com/>.

V. E-mail Communication and Questions

All e-mail correspondence to course instructors must **originate from your ufl.edu account, have your full name in the body of the e-mail, and contain "BSC 2009" in the subject line.** E-mails not meeting these requirements may not be recognized by our e-mail filters, and thus may not be answered.

All e-mail communication should be directed to the TA for your section FIRST, and to Dr. Gerlach only if the TA is unable to resolve the issue.

If there is a technical problem with accessing *BioPortal* or a particular assignment within *BioPortal*, you must contact *BioPortal* technical support FIRST. BioPortal tech support is the only one who can fix technical issues with the site. Then contact your TA at least 48 hours prior to the deadline, so appropriate steps can be taken to fix the issue and appropriate extensions can be given if necessary. (Thus, check early that you can access the assignments. You will not be granted an extension for technical problems, if you do not contact the instructor before the deadline.) As a student at UF, it is your responsibility to either maintain a reliable Internet connection or access computer resources on campus.

If you have questions about other aspects of the course, check the following sources first to see if it is already answered, **before** e-mailing your TA:

- Course Syllabus
- About Canvas / About BioPortal / Start Here pages
- Course Announcements (this is the primary means that your instructor has to communicate with you in a timely manner)
- Course Discussion FAQ
- Module-specific Question Boards

If you still cannot find the answer to your questions:

- If it is an issue with either the Canvas or the BioPortal website, contact the appropriate technical support or help desk.
- If it is a question that others might find useful to know the answer to as well, post it to the discussion board – either the Discussion Board for the particular unit for questions on course topics, or the general Discussion Board for questions about course mechanics.
- If it is a question specific to you (e.g. account or grade specific), e-mail your TA. Barring unusual circumstances, expect a reply with 24 hours. E-mails and Discussion Board posts are checked at least once per day, but sometimes not more than that.

VI. Assessments and Grading

A. Course Structure and Due Dates

This course is divided into fifteen one-week modules. Units open for work on the Monday of each week, and **all materials except your first discussion board post (see below) are due before the end of the day (11:55 pm) the following Sunday** (with one exception – the first unit has a little more time to accommodate registration and set-up, although the second unit follows the normal Monday – Sunday schedule). The due dates are listed on the last pages of the syllabus. There are no formal examinations and no final exam.

B. Late Work

Late work will be accepted up to 1 week past the due date. Work submitted up to 3 days late will receive a 50% deduction. Work submitted up to 1 week late will receive a 75% deduction. After 1 week you will receive a zero. BioPortal activities automatically close at the deadline; if you need these activities re-opened for late completion you must contact your TA.

C. Coursework

Each unit will consist of various materials to read/watch, activities to complete, and quizzes to take. All required activities and assignments for each unit (including those in BioPortal) will be listed on that module's page on Canvas. The various pieces that might be included in a unit are outlined below. The activities vary in how many points they are worth but each unit is worth ~85-100 pts overall.

1. BioPortal

- a. **Read the chapter(s).**
- b. **Interactive infographics.** There are typically 3-4 per chapter, worth 2 points each when completed.
- c. **Learning Curve:** These are adaptive quizzes, where the questions get harder or easier depending on how you do. You're not penalized for getting questions wrong, but you need to reach a certain level of question for each unit. Once you reach that level, you receive full credit (10 pts) for the unit. After that point, you can continue answering questions to review the material without affecting your score.
- d. Take the **Chapter quiz** over the reading; typically worth 18-30 pts.

2. Canvas

- a. Watch the **lecture videos**.
- b. **Discussion posts.** Some units have a discussion topic worth 10 points; 6 points for your initial post addressing the discussion prompt, which is due by 11:55 p.m. on Thursday, and 4 points for your reply to one (or more!) of your classmates' posts (due with the rest of the course materials at 11:55 p.m. on Sunday). Discussion board posts should be about a paragraph long (minimum 3-4 sentences) and should be composed of logically and syntactically valid sentences.
- c. **Activities.** These are activities that will ask you to read something, watch something, do something, or write something related to the topic of the unit. There are two types of activities in this course, based on how you get credit for them.
 - i. The first type requires you submit your work (a short essay, a completed worksheet, etc.) by uploading it to the corresponding Assignment in Canvas.
 - ii. For the second type, instead of submitting your completed work, you will use it to answer questions about the activity on the corresponding quiz on the Quizzes page in Canvas.
 - iii. In some units there are worksheets linked from the Unit's page that don't have assessment questions or anything to submit, but material from these assignments will appear on the Lecture Quiz.
- d. **Lecture Quiz.** These quizzes cover material from the entire unit, with a focus on the lecture material.

Recommended Order: You can complete the various assignments for each unit in any order that you want, *as long as they are all complete by the due date of 11:55 p.m. on Sunday*. However, I would recommend reading the chapter, watching the lectures, and completing the infographics first; answering the discussion prompt, doing the learning curve quiz, and completing the assignments second; and completing the chapter quiz (on BioPortal) and the lecture quiz (on Canvas) last, once you are confident with the material.

D. Extra Credit

No mechanisms for extra credit are available.

E. Grading

Grades from assignments, discussions, and lecture quizzes will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester. Grades from BioPortal will be accessible throughout the course on the BioPortal gradebook, but will not be transferred to the Canvas gradebook until the end of the semester. Please take this into account when looking at the Canvas gradebook! It is the responsibility of the student to check their grades on Canvas and to let instructors know about discrepancies within one week of the grades being posted.

Minimum grade cutoffs are listed below. The scores for the course as a whole will not be curved (i.e. these grade cutoffs will not be lowered) except under extremely rare circumstances (i.e., unless we tell you otherwise these cutoffs will not be lowered, so do not ask). However, these cutoffs will not be raised; in other words, if you receive 93% of the possible points, you are guaranteed to earn an A grade. Final scores will NOT be rounded (i.e., 89.99% is not 90%).

| Point Range (%) | Letter Grade |
|-----------------|--------------|
| ≥ 93 | A |
| ≥ 90 | A– |
| ≥ 87 | B+ |
| ≥ 83 | B |
| ≥ 80 | B– |
| ≥ 77 | C+ |
| ≥ 73 | C |

| | |
|------|----|
| ≥ 70 | C– |
| ≥ 67 | D+ |
| ≥ 63 | D |
| ≥ 60 | D– |
| < 60 | E |

Note that the current UF policy for assigning grade points is available at the following undergraduate catalog web page: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

- F. **Incomplete("I"):** If a student has completed the majority of the course work and particular DOCUMENTED circumstances prevent completion of the course in the time allotted, the student may, with the agreement of the instructor, be assigned an "I" pending resolution of the grade. All incompletes MUST be resolved by the end of the following term or the student will receive a grade of "E" (failing).
- G. **Special Treatment**
Please do not request individual special treatment regarding grading at the end of the semester; **we do not adjust grades for individuals for any reason.** Plan to do well on all quizzes and other assignments from the beginning of the semester; if you are having difficulty in the class, please let your instructors know sooner rather than later.

VII. Academic Honesty

All students registered at the University of Florida have agreed to comply with the following statement:

"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."

In addition, on all work submitted for credit the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

If you have knowledge of any instances of academic dishonesty in this class, please notify the instructor or contact the Student Honor Court (392-1631) or Cheating Hotline (392-6999). For additional information on Academic Honesty, please refer to the University of Florida Academic Honesty Guidelines at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx#honesty>.

VIII. Attendance

Students are expected to complete all assigned work (quizzes, interactive, discussions, activities etc.) by the due date. Unavoidable circumstances (e.g. hospitalization or family emergencies) that prevent you from completing your work in a timely manner require you to obtain a letter from Dean of Students office (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/home/contact-us>) and submit it to your instructors as soon as possible. Otherwise, manage your time wisely and **work ahead** when you need to. We will not be sympathetic to "we didn't get back from (activity) when planned and I didn't have time" or "my computer crashed half an hour before the deadline and tech support wasn't open that late at night."

IX. Time Commitment

The UF College of Liberal Arts and Sciences assumes that each student will devote 3-4 hours per week per credit-hour to each course. Because BSC 2009 is 3 credits, each student should therefore expect to devote 9-12 hours per week to this course.

X. Drop/Add/Withdrawal

A student can drop/add during the drop add period with no penalty. After drop/add, a student who drops will receive a W until the date listed in the academic calendar. After that date, the student may be assigned an “E” (fail). **Note: it is the responsibility of the STUDENT to withdraw from a course, not the instructor. Failure to participate/complete the class is NOT a drop.**

XI. Course Policies

- A. **Computing requirements:** It is the responsibility of the student to maintain a functioning computing system and internet connection. Computing/internet connectivity issues will NOT be acceptable excuses for missed deadlines unless they are brought to the attention of the instructor at least 48 hours prior to the deadline and accompanied by the ticket number from technical support. See section IV, above, for Technical Support contact information.
- B. **Classroom behavior:** Behave with courtesy towards your fellow students and the instructor. This is particularly important in discussion sections where you are voicing opinions and commenting on the views of other individuals. Students who persist in being discourteous/rude will be blocked from participation (with subsequent loss of points).
- C. **Grammar:** Correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization and paragraphing should be used in any college level submission, including the discussion boards. We will take note of spelling and grammar and we will grade accordingly. U SHLD NT US TXT SPEAK LKE IDK OR BFF THX ALSO DNT USE CAPS. Ugh.

XII. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students who will require a classroom accommodation for a disability must contact the Dean of Students Office of Disability Resources, in Peabody 202 (phone: 352-392-1261). Please see the University of Florida Disability Resources website for more information at: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>. Note that the student should provide documentation of a requirement for accommodation **by the second week of classes**. No accommodations are available to students who lack this documentation, and accommodations are not retroactive. It is the policy of the University of Florida that the student, not the instructor, is responsible for arranging accommodations when needed. Once notification is complete, the Dean of Students Office of Disability Resources will work with the instructor to accommodate the student.

XIII. Counseling Center

College can be a very stressful time in a person’s life. If you find that you are having difficulty emotionally – for academic or non-academic reasons – there is substantial support available. Contact the Counseling and Wellness Center (3190 Radio Road, 392-1575, <http://www.counsel.ufl.edu/>) or the Dean of Students at 352-392-1261. Also see “[A Self Help Guide for Students](#)”.

XIV. Disclaimer

This syllabus represents the current plans and objectives; however, schedules, requirements, and assignments may change throughout the semester as the need arises. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

XV. Course Schedule

| Unit # | Open Date | Due Date (11:55 p.m.)* | Topic | Chapter |
|--------|------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Mon 06 Jan | Wed 15 Jan | The Process of Science | 1 |
| 2 | Mon 13 Jan | Sun 19 Jan | Cell Structure & Function | 3 |
| 3 | Mon 20 Jan | Sun 26 Jan | Energy Flow & Photosynthesis | 5 |
| 4 | Mon 27 Jan | Sun 02 Feb | DNA & Genetics | 7 |
| 5 | Mon 03 Feb | Sun 09 Feb | Inheritance | 11-12 |
| 6 | Mon 10 Feb | Sun 16 Feb | Natural Selection & Adaptation | 14 |
| 7 | Mon 17 Feb | Sun 23 Feb | Species & Speciation | 15 |
| 8 | Mon 24 Feb | Sun 02 Mar | Evidence for Evolution | 16 |
| | | | SPRING BREAK | |
| 9 | Mon 10 Mar | Sun 16 Mar | Human Evolution | 20 |
| 10 | Mon 17 Mar | Sun 23 Mar | Life on Earth | 17 |
| 11 | Mon 24 Mar | Sun 30 Mar | Prokaryotes | 18 |
| 12 | Mon 31 Mar | Sun 06 Apr | Eukaryotes | 19 |
| 13 | Mon 07 Apr | Sun 13 Apr | Population Ecology | 21 |
| 14 | Mon 14 Apr | Sun 20 Apr | Community Ecology | 22 |
| 15 | Mon 21 Apr | Sun 27 Apr | Ecosystem Ecology & Sustainability | 23-24 |

**Initial responses to the discussion posts are due on the Thursday prior to the rest of the material.