



South Miami Senior High School
Miami, Florida 33155
School Telephone: (305) 666-5871

Instructor: Marie DaCunha
Email: mdacunha@dadeschools.net
Room: 515

Course Description

Biology is the study of living organisms, their origins, how they survive, reproduce, change over time, and interact with each other and their environments.

In this introductory course, students will learn about a variety of topics in the life sciences, all of which are based on centuries of scientific thought and research. It is an exciting time to live in and think about the nature of life. The entire human genome has been revealed, there are beginning signs for possible past lives in other worlds. Yet, new decisions need to be made by the public, and you (the student) need to be prepared to make those decisions in order to improve the quality of life, and to preserve the environment. For you to be able to make well informed judgments on these issues, you should have a basic knowledge of biology. We will cover the following 10 topics: The Nature of Life, Ecology, Cells, Genetics, Evolution, Microorganisms, Plants, Invertebrates, Chordates, and the Human Body.

Textbook

Biology, Miller Levine, Prentice Hall

Teaching Methodology

I use a variety of teaching strategies (differentiated instruction) to address students' individual needs and provide various materials and grouping patterns that accommodate individual learning differences. Some examples are cooperative learning, audio-visual materials, virtual explorations, printed materials at different reading levels, critical thinking strategies, and hands-on lab discoveries. I plan to equip the student with the necessary tools to be successful not only in this course but also with the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test.

Required Materials – Due by Monday, August 31, 2009 or Tuesday, September 1, 2009

All materials must be brought to class every day throughout the school year.

Required materials are:

1. Pens: Black and Red (both)
2. Pencils with erasers: #2
3. *1 package of 100 index cards
4. 1 ream of paper (package of 500 sheets of white copy paper)
5. *2 Composition Books (one for lab reports and one for home learning, notes and class assignments)
6. 1 laminated portfolio folder (three prongs with two pockets)
7. Access to the internet and a word processor (home, school, public library, work, friends, etc.)

* Additional composition books and index cards maybe required during the school year.

Lab Fee – Due date is TBA (to be announced)

There is a \$7.00 lab fee to partially cover the expendable laboratory supplies that are used by the students during hands-on explorations of various topics throughout the course. All students must pay this lab fee to participate in labs.

Attendance and Participation

You are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions and assignments. You should complete assigned reading and exercises before the date they are due, and you are expected to participate fully in labs, and other exercises, whether they be individual or team-based. See student handbook for school attendance policy.

Class Work

Class Work is given daily and since not all students learn the same way, the strategies will vary. Class work is student centered, and will complement the students various learning styles; but this will require the student to read sections of the textbook on their own. All students are required to complete the class work assignments.

Laboratory Exercises

The student will participate in labs and demonstrations every week. Laboratory experimentation and exploration are a large part of this course. It is vital that the students follow all laboratory procedures and safety rules/guidelines. Failure to comply with behavior expectations can result in removal from the lab activities. A safety contract will be sent home and filled out by the student and the parent/guardian. These documents will be kept on file and are needed before a student can participate in any labs. Each student is expected to participate cooperatively in their laboratory groups and each student will receive a grade for their contribution to the lab. Lab reports will be neatly written in the lab composition book.

Quizzes

Quizzes and mini-assessments will be given often and they will cover material from class, reading and homework assignments. The assessments are to ensure that the student understands the material covered in class and from the assignments. Some quizzes, the students will be grouped in pairs and will work on the quizzes cooperatively; this peer learning strategy helps the student gain greater understanding of concepts. Other quizzes, the students will work independently and be responsible to turn in their own work.

Tests

Chapter and Unit tests will be given after completion of each major topic. They will be announced about a week ahead and will include all material covered in class as well as reading and homework assignments. The test will range from multiple choice to essay questions. The Test day is usually on Thursday or Friday (Wednesday exceptions can occur).

Home Learning Assignments

Home Learning Assignments will be given for each class session (2-3 times per week) and will include reading and/or written assignments. All home learning assignments will be covered on quizzes and tests, so it is important to complete the assignments. Also, the student will be required to keep their written assignments in their composition book (dated and in chronological order) This composition book will be collected and graded once every nine weeks for completeness and neatness and will be part of their home learning grade.

Current Event Abstracts

Students will be expected to read a science journal & magazine article each nine weeks and to write an abstract of each article. Students may use scientific journals or magazines such as --- *Scientific American* or *National Geographic* (science articles only). Articles may not be older than one year from the date the article was written.

Projects

Students will be doing four projects during the year. The topic, criteria and due date will be announced at least a month in advance.

Grading

Projects	25% of the grade	Grading Scale
Tests/Quizzes	30% of the grade	90 – 100% = A
Class work	15% of the grade	80 – 89 % = B
Home Learning/Abstracts	15% of the grade	70 – 79 % = C
Lab reports	15% of the grade	60 – 69 % = D
		Below 60% = F

There will be no extra credit work or bonus points given to raise the grade.

Science Department Class Rules

1. When entering the class, the student must first spit out any candy, gum or food in the trash receptacle. Then immediately be seated in his/her assigned seat whether or not the tardy bell has rung. NO FOOD, CANDY OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED IN CLASS.
2. RESTROOM PASSES FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY. They may not be used for getting snacks, water, visits to other classes/students, or trips to the office. If you have a medical problem which requires immediate use of the bathrooms, a signed letter is required from your physician.

3. Once you are seated in your assigned seat, you are to automatically begin writing down the homework assignment and then answering the "BIO-UP" BELLRINGER assignment. Home learning assignments are due at the beginning of class and will not be accepted once class has started.
4. Each time a student is tardy to class he/she will receive a penalty (following Miami-Dade County Public School procedure).
5. You must observe all safety rules or you will lose the right to participate in the lab and will receive an "F" for the activity.
6. No one is permitted around the teacher's desk, in the cabinets, or out of their seats (even to throw away trash). You must remain seated at all times.
7. One must raise their hand for permission to ask a question concerning subject material only. Courtesy requires that you do not talk while someone is speaking in class. RESPECT THE INSTRUCTOR AND CLASSMATES.
8. NO CELL PHONES, CD PLAYERS, OR IPODS ARE ALLOWED OUT WHILE IN CLASS, EVEN IF THEY ARE TURNED OFF. If any of these devices are out, the teacher will confiscate the device, complete the appropriate form and send it to the office; to be retrieved by the student's parents.
9. STUDENTS MUST FOLLOW THE SCHOOL'S DRESS CODE INCLUDING IDS. Enforcement of school policy will be followed regarding any violation of the dress code.
10. Class is dismissed when the teacher dismisses you. The bell is an indicator to the teacher, not the student that the class has ended. There will be no lining-up at the door before the bell rings. If one or more student(s) are out of their assigned seats before the bell rings, the teacher will detain the entire class.
11. ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS MUST BE SUBMITTED ON THE DAY THEY ARE DUE..
12. If you are absent, you are responsible for making up all the work that you missed. Make-up for missed tests are always administered Tuesdays, after school (Excused Absences Only). There is no make-up for missed quizzes or labs. When requesting make-up for homework missed, please see the teacher after class. When submitting make-up work, it is imperative that the student give it personally to the teacher after class. Don't just lay it on the teacher's desk.
13. No one is allowed to lay their heads on the desks or lab tables.
14. Students must leave their desks clean and orderly. Students are not to write on the desks, chairs or books. Classroom set of books will be assigned to student's desk and will be checked periodically by the teacher for any graffiti or abuse (including torn pages). When students are leaving the classroom they may throw away any trash at that time.

Please cut along the line and return the bottom signed portion to the instructor

Required Signatures

Student: My teacher discussed all the features of the Class Syllabus and Science Department Rules and I am fully aware of what is expected of me to be successful in class. I will always bring to class my composition book, pencils, pens, and assignments. I realize that the key to my success in the class is for me to be responsible to attend class daily, to arrive to class on time, to study and do my assignments, and to participate in all class activities for the duration of the class.

Student name & signature _____ Date _____

Parents/Guardians: My child shared the information that was outlined in the Class Syllabus, and Science Department Rules. I realize that my child's academic success is the result of both School and Family Involvement. I will monitor my child's assignments, will assist him/her in both attending school regularly, in following the school's dress code and electronic device policies, in arriving to class on time and being prepared for learning. I understand that I will need to purchase some school supplies to assist my child in being successful in the class and pay the \$7.00 lab fee. I will also keep abreast of my child's academic progress thru interim reports, report cards, and parent-teacher communication.

Parent signature _____ Date _____