

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROFESSOR INFORMATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

Have you ever wondered what makes something alive? Why is something alive and then it isn't alive anymore? Some non-living things are made of the same chemical elements as living things, yet some are alive and some aren't, what determines that?

In this course, you will learn the themes that unify the main fields in biology. We will study what living organisms are made of, how they function, obtain energy, pass on and express their genetic material, and ultimately study the process of evolution.

The most important thing to do well in this course is your very own motivation to study and do the hard work. If you feel like you are working hard on this course and you are still not seeing good results, please come and talk to us. Sometimes, a simple change of studying strategy makes all the difference. I want you to do well, but if you suffer in silence, what can we do? I'm here to help you, so keep in touch.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change. Please check the on-line syllabus often for possible modifications and changes to exam dates.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Knowledge objectives: After the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Relate the structure and composition of living things to how they function
- Explain how living things use and obtain energy
- Apply the principles of genetics to make predictions about inheritance
- Identify the principles of molecular biology that determine physiology
- Apply biological concepts to make predictions about biological processes
- Explain the diversity of living forms in terms of evolutionary theory

Human dimension objectives: After the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Use evidence to propose and evaluate arguments
- Be able to manage time appropriately
- Be a better team member and team leader
- Develop a strong work and personal ethic
- Recognize that you can learn anything that you set yourself to
- Become a lifetime learner

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

This is a hybrid course in which most of the instructional materials and activities are delivered through Blackboard, and/or other internet-based media. Our class meets on campus **once a week** for 75-minute sessions. You should expect to spend between 6-10 hours outside of class working on this course. Before class, you are expected to watch the lectures and other videos, read the assigned chapters and answer the questions provided each week. Every week to class, you must bring the answers to **all those questions** handwritten in your notebook, one answer per page (so you have space to add more notes during class). These online resources will help you familiarize with the concepts and terms, and overall prepare you to apply those concepts in class. In class, you will work with a team reviewing the answers to the questions and solving application problems using the concepts you learned online. After practicing the application of the concepts with the group, you will take an individual quiz online.

The resources in this course are designed to help you learn, understand and apply the concepts in a more realistic way. When you go into your adult life outside of college and get a job in your field, which of the following do you think you will be more likely to do as your everyday job: A) sit passively in a large room, nod for an hour long session at a time and then take a multiple choice test, or B) work with a team to find solutions to a problem, apply the knowledge you've learned elsewhere, consider other points of view, achieve consensus within a group. I hope you've chosen B, if you know of a job that will pay you to do A, please let me know!

In this course you will practice the skills you need to succeed in college while under close supervision from the instructor, Learning Assistants, and your peers. Moreover, this hybrid course will help you develop the interpersonal skills that employers seek. In today's competitive world, employers are looking for more than academic credentials. When working with others, not only you learn how to work with others but you also learn the content better!

EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COURSE

This is a hybrid course, meaning that a large portion of the course work will be conducted online. You are expected to engage actively in your learning.

What I expect from you:

- Watch online lectures and videos **before** coming to class. Ideally also read the assigned chapters
- Answers to **all** the weekly questions handwritten on your notebook on your **own** (one answer per page)
- Have an open attitude and have trust in the process
- Be respectful of others and respect yourselves (i.e. be honest about your work, don't rob yourself from a learning opportunity).

What I promise you in return:

- Everything will be fine, no matter how intimidating it may seem, you will make it!
- You will have opportunities to learn and recover from your mistakes.
- My main focus is your success, not just in this course but also in your future courses and career.
- I'm here to help you, if things aren't working the way you expected, come talk to me, there is always a better way.

BEFORE CLASS PREPARATION

Every week, before you come to class you should acquire the background knowledge you will need to effectively contribute to your team. The online lectures and videos will help you get an overview of the topics and start to visualize the concepts. Once you've watched the videos, the textbook will be less intimidating. Feel free to go back and forth between videos and text, every person learns different and you should explore which way works best for you. Although we provide a substantial list of resources, you may also find other useful videos that fit your learning style better. If you find a good video, please share it on the course's discussion board.

WEEKLY HOMEWORK QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you understand the concepts in a deeper way. This is the best preparation for the exams. You should answer these questions **on your own** in order to get the learning gains from this exercise. You won't learn if you have someone else answer these questions for you. Who does the work, does the learning. The video lectures and the chapter readings will help you answer those questions. However, the answers to the questions are not straight from the book, rather they require you to apply the concepts you learned and use them to analyze and answer the question.

Every week you will see a list of about six (~6) questions. You **must answer all six (6 or as many as posted that week) questions** before coming to class. Bring the answers written on your notebook, one question per page, so you can add more notes during class. At the beginning of every class, we will check that you brought the answers to the questions. **If you are absent or do not show the answers on your notebook within 5 minutes of the start of class, you will receive a zero (0) in ALL the activities/quizzes/assessments of that day.**

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS

Team assignments give you a unique opportunity to apply and connect the concepts you just learned online, get feedback from your peers, learning assistants and instructor, prepare for the tests, and keep you up to speed with the objectives of this course. This course will test your ability to use the concepts in new scenarios and connect them to other concepts in this course and even outside this course. This is a completely different approach from what you have done in high school. We designed these team activities to encourage you to think critically, and give you considerable practice on the type of reasoning used in science. We enthusiastically want to encourage you to make the most out of these exercises by fully engaging in the activities. Come well prepared so you can make the most out of them.

After class, reflect on what you've learned. If there is anything you don't fully understand after the group activity, you can ask during class, or post your question on the discussion board, or ask your team. Do not leave class with unanswered questions, you will regret it during the exam.

Since teamwork cannot be replicated, there are no make-ups. However, we will drop one lowest grade. Team activities also represent the bulk of your grade, so don't miss any!

IN-CLASS INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENTS

Pop quiz: Every class, either at the beginning or the end, there will be a 1-minute paper pop quiz. You will answer the quiz with a short paragraph.

Multiple choice individual assessment: Before working on each team assignment, you will answer the worksheet on your own. You must score at least one (1) point in this individual assessment in order to get credit for the team's grade. If you get a zero in the individual assessment you will also receive a zero for the team grade, regardless of what your team scored. Any additional points on the individual assessment will count as extra credit. Students will receive up to a total of 25 points extra credit towards an exam for answering the questions correctly, which will then be added to one of their exam grades.

ONLINE QUIZZES

These quizzes will help you and us, assess your understanding of the material and familiarize yourself with the type of questions you are expected to answer in the exams. Team assignments are a great preparation for the quizzes.

There will be a quiz after each module (10 total). We'll drop the lowest grade out of the 10 quizzes. Each quiz is available from Saturday **until Friday by 5:00pm**. You can take each quiz twice and only the highest attempt will count towards your grade. Each time you will get a different set of questions.

Right after you take the quiz, you will be able to see your score. However, you will be able to see the questions and the correct answers only after the availability period has ended.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Attendance in this course is mandatory. A large percentage of your grade comes from in class activities (see grading policies below). **If you come to class but do not bring the homework questions, it will count as an absence.** However, we understand that things happen, and for this reason at the end of the semester we will drop the lowest module. That means that one (1) absence (or one day of not bringing the homework) will be forgiven. If you never missed class, then your lowest grade will be dropped, which will bring your average higher. If you know that you will miss a class, please contact the instructor at least one week in advance to see if a make-up can be accommodated. Any medical emergencies must be properly documented in order to get a grade exempt.

COURSE COMMUNICATION

Please use the discussion boards to ask questions about deadlines, assignments, grading policies, etc.

Please limit the use of email to urgent private issues. Using discussion forums to ask and answer questions benefits you and your fellow students: students will often answer questions for you faster than we will, and many students may be having the same question and benefit from the public answers. The instructor will list common questions into a FAQ section. Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

EXAMS

The purpose of the exams is to prompt you to study, review and ultimately showcase how much you have learned in this course. The best resources to review for the exams are the learning objectives for each chapter and the in-class activities.

There will be a total of 5 on-campus exams in this course (four unit exams and one comprehensive final). Each exam will have between 30-60 multiple-choice questions. See the dates in the calendar below.

On the day of the exam:

- Bring TWO sharpened pencils with erasers and your STUDENT ID
- All other materials will have to be placed at the front or back of the class, so it is best not to carry anything to the room on exam day. You will be asked to remove your hats. Please turn off all cell phones.
- We will check your student ID before you are allowed to turn-in your exam and leave. You must sign your exam.
- When you are finished, you must return ALL materials given to you during the test whether filled-out or not. No one can leave unless they have returned the exam.
- You will be provided with a scantron. Please be careful when filling it out, as errors will affect grade.
- Students will not be allowed to use the restroom during the exam. No talking. Cheating will be dealt with seriously and severely.
- If you do not bubble in your last name first, then your first name along with your panther ID and form number on your scantron on the day of your exam, you will lose 10 points on the exam!!

You can bring a note-sheet to each of the exams. Here are the requirements for that note-sheet:

- Only one page (1) letter size (8.5' x 11')
- Notes on only one side, leave the back blank.
- Name and panther ID written on the top right corner of the page
- Handwritten, no photocopies, no printouts.
- You MUST turn in this page along with the exam.

Arriving Late: If you arrive to an exam more than 5 minutes late, or after the first person finishes the test (whichever comes first) you will NOT be allowed to take the exam.

Exam Viewing: After the exam, you can email your instructor to set up an appointment to view your exam. We do not allow students to keep their exams. Students who would like to raise any questions concerning the nature of any particular question on an exam can do so in the written form explaining why you feel the question is ambiguous or incorrect.

Make-Ups: If you miss an exam you will need to provide the instructor with a VALID document no later than one week from the missed exam. Once the document is approved, you will be able to count the final exam grade as both: the final exam and your missed exam.

Examples of acceptable excuses: documented medical emergencies, death of members of immediate family, and jury duty. All of these must be accompanied by a valid and verifiable written letter signed by a professional or some other type of irrefutable and documental proof. Examples of unacceptable excuses: common cold, family problems, transportation problems, etc.

Students who simply do not show up for the exam will NOT be allowed to take a makeup exam.

WE DO NOT DROP ANY EXAM SCORES!

FINAL EXAM IS MANDATORY, INCLUDING THOSE WHO DO PLTL

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As practicing professionals in the sciences and medical fields you have a civic responsibility to maintain the highest standards of ethics and integrity. In your professional future you may be trusted with somebody else's life or you will be asked to make decisions that can affect millions of people.

Expectations: We expect you to comply with "Student Handbook" and pledge that you will not represent other's work as your own neither will you provide your aid in other's work for them to represent it as their own. Formal and informal procedures can be found under the section "Academic Misconduct" in the "Conduct & Policies" chapter. Breaking this honor code will result in an "F" for this course and a petition will be sent to Academic Affairs.

Conduct: We expect all students to follow the [university's policies](#) for online and in person classes. It is important to have respect towards the instructors and fellow classmates. Inconsiderate, disrespectful, dishonest, or disruptive behavior, as the instructor or your fellow classmates perceive it, or as is described in the Student Handbook, is unacceptable for adults in this course.

Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism occurs when you represent somebody else's work and opinion as your own. Plagiarism includes not providing appropriate citations and not paraphrasing content from other sources. To avoid plagiarism, we ask you to always use your own words and phrasing when completing assignments and even when taking notes. We are very strict about plagiarism, not only because it is unethical but also because you can only learn a concept when you can explain it using your own words. Plagiarism is a serious offence to the University Code of Conduct and it will not be tolerated in this course. If plagiarism is detected in any assignment, the group or individual student will not receive any credit for that assignment, the student responsible may be subject to an Academic Misconduct investigation.

Early Alert: In an effort to help you succeed in your academic courses, FIU utilizes an Early Alert system. Instructors are now able to notify students' academic advisors if there are concerns about class performance. If an alert is submitted, your academic advisor will send you a message via your Student Dashboard (accessed via your MYFIU page) to discuss ways to improve your performance. Please respond to any communication you receive from your academic advisor about an early alert. Our goal with this program is to help you to be successful by identifying any issues as early on as possible and working to address them.

Contest a grade: if you have a correction or question about your grade you MUST submit it within a week of the grade being posted on Blackboard.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

Please visit our [ADA Compliance](#) webpage for information about accessibility involving the tools used in this course.

Please visit [Blackboard's Commitment to Accessibility](#) webpage for more information.

For additional assistance please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

RESOURCES NEEDED

100-SHEET RULED NOTEBOOK - REQUIRED



You will use this to answer the weekly questions and bring your answers to class.

Write each answer on one page. Use the remaining space in the page to add more notes during class. Each week will have about 6 questions, using 6 pages per week. Additionally, for each exam you will answer the learning objectives for every module on your notebook, requiring additional pages.

We recommend you buy the lined kind so it is easier to write clearly.

TEXTBOOK - REQUIRED



Biology

Peter Raven, George Johnson, Kenneth Mason, Jonathan Losos, Susan Singer

McGraw-Hill, 11th edition, 2016
 ISBN-10: 1259188132
 ISBN-13: 9781259188138

Older editions: 9th, 10th and 11th edition are also acceptable.

WHERE TO BUY

McGraw Hill Website	MMC Bookstore
<p>Package Includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GB I Lab Manual 2. GB II Lab Manual 3. Raven Biology 10th edition textbook 4. E-book of 10th edition textbook 5. Connect/Learn Smart <p>Buy from: MGH Total Package Price: \$167.00</p>	<p>Package Includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Raven Biology 10th edition textbook 2. Connect/Learn Smart 3. Ebook <p>*The MMC bookstore also has textbooks for rent which are 50% off the regular price but may not include access to LearnSmart. Price: \$230</p>
<p>Ebook with Connect & Learn Smart</p> <p>This gives you access to the Ebook for the entire Raven Biology 10th edition AND access to Connect/Learn Smart</p> <p>Buy from: MGH Ebook package Price: \$70</p>	<p>You may have to buy separate access to LearnSmart if you buy a used textbook.</p>

GRADING

Letter Grade	Range
A	Above 90
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	< 61

All grades are on a 10-point scale (NO pluses/minuses or incompletes).

NOTE: 30% of the grade is determined by in-class activities. If you do not attend class, the highest grade you could earn in this course is a D.

WITH PLTL	Number of Items	Weight
Weekly homework on notebook (1% each)	10	10%
Online Quizzes (1.1% each)	9	10%
In-class 1-min papers (0.6% each)	9	5%
Group Assignments (2.2% each)	9	20%
Exams (8% each)	5	40%
PLTL		15%
Total		100%

PLTL is a required workshop for this course. However, you can opt-out and your exams will count more, following this grading scale:

WITHOUT PLTL	Number of Items	Weight
Weekly homework on notebook (0.8% each)	12	10%
Online Quizzes (1.1% each)	9	10%
In-class 1-min papers (0.6% each)	9	5%
Group Assignments (2.2% each)	9	25%
Exams (10% each)	5	50%
Total		100%

Extra Credit:

- Pass and TLC: 5% added to one exam grade for each extra credit completed (total of 10% possible). You can take PASS A or PASS B, but not both. Only one PASS section will count as extra credit.
- In-class individual assessments. You can add up to 25 pts to one exam. You will receive 0.25 pts extra credit for every correct answer.

Any request for grade changes or revisions needs to be submitted within a week of that grade being posted. No request will be accepted a week after the grade was posted.