



Honors Biology

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome back to school! I believe science is a way to look deeper into the world, find out what is really there, make connections about how everything coherently works together, and understand that the vast majority of science has yet to be discovered. This year I have planned a lot of lessons that I hope you will find exciting to enhance your learning process. For every unit there will be lectures, laboratory experiments, assignments, quizzes, projects, exams and sometimes research so that a presentation can be made to the class.

I am taking this opportunity to explain several things about the course and grading policy. Please take note that I am asking both you and your parent/guardian to initial this letter confirming receipt and understanding of the document. If you have any questions or concerns about any area in the educational development, please come and speak to me personally – my door is always open. Also, at any time, please feel free to e-mail me as I will generally be able to answer your questions that same day in this case.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Megan Witte
mwitte@sacschool.org

General Course Description:

This course includes laboratory work, projects, and a thorough understanding of scientific inquiry. Course content encompasses interrelationships of living things, levels of biological organization, cellular biology, biochemistry, genetics, and evolution. Students should be prepared to conduct projects and write a formal lab report. Instruction centers around inquiry-based learning that is incorporated into class activities. Learning activities include teacher-lead instruction, group work, student seatwork, and lab exercises. Students can expect to start each day with a bell ringer assignment followed by learning activities and/or lecture. Classes are structured to utilize every minute for learning and assessing understanding. Higher-level thinking will be incorporated into each lesson as well as use of technology when applicable to increase student achievement. Students are expected to participate in all activities and actively engage and ask questions during teacher-led lecture. Students are also expected to review and study the content covered in class outside of school daily.

Class Expectations

- Students are expected to **be present** and active members of the classroom each and every day.
- Students are expected to come to class **prepared** with all necessary materials and completed assignments to learn and participate in all lectures and activities.
- Students are expected to **be respectful** of the teacher, the classroom, and their peers.

Class Discipline

Students who are not acting present, coming prepared, and being respectful will earn one of the following consequences:

- Warning in class
- Removal from class activity AND parent contact
- Teacher/Student conference during or after class AND parent contact
- After school detention AND parent contact
- Written referral and removal from class AND parent contact
- Any student caught cheating on ANY assignment will receive a zero and referred to the disciplinary administrator

Textbook: *Modern Biology*

Each student will have access to a textbook to be checked out for use as a supplementary resource as needed. The books were new in 2016 and are in excellent condition. Students will sign textbooks in and out when they need them. The sign out sheet will be used to determine any fines incurred if books are returned damaged after use.

Supplies:

Lined paper

1 ½ or 2 inch 3-ring binder

Tab dividers for each unit

Colored Pencils

Highlighters

Project supplies when required

Student's Initial _____

Parent's/Guardian Initial: _____

Overview of the Units:

- BIOLOGY BASICS -
 - Scientific Method
 - Technological Design
 - Macromolecules
- CELLS -
 - Organelles
 - Transport
 - Mitosis
 - Cancer
- ENERGY FLOW -
 - Enzymes
 - ATP
 - Trophic Pyramids
 - Photosynthesis
 - Cellular Respiration
- GENETICS –
 - DNA Structure
 - Replication
 - Protein Synthesis
 - Meiosis
- HEREDITY -
 - Mendelian & Complex patterns of inheritance
 - Mutations
 - Genetic disorders
 - Pedigrees
 - Genetic Engineering/Technology
- EVOLUTION –
 - Principles of Natural Selections
 - Patterns & Evidence
 - Phylogeny
- ECOLOGY –
 - Characteristics and Organization of Life
 - Geochemical cycles
 - Population growth patterns
 - Human impact
 - Succession
 - Organism relationships

Assessment and Grading Plan

We will cover seven units over the course of the year. Each unit consists of 1-4 major assessments. The amount of minor assessments varies per unit. Students will have a daily open-note quiz each day that will add up to a weekly minor grade. All unit tests are cumulative and include both multiple choice and open response questions. **Note: Assignments checked for completion will not be accepted late. Assignments collected and graded for accuracy will be accepted late with a penalty of 5% off every day late up to 5 days. Projects will NOT be accepted late.**

***Under absolutely NO circumstances will late work be accepted after the completion of the unit the work is from, unless the student had an excused absence in which case they receive only 5 days to turn in the work.*

Minor Assessments - 40%

- **Classwork/Informal labs:** Each unit includes activities and practice to help master the content. These assignments range from 15-100 points, depending on the length and depth of the material.
- **Daily quizzes:** At the start of each day the students will complete a small quiz over content covered during the previous class period. Students who were absent the previous class period will not be expected to complete the Prime Time the day they return if it is over content they missed. Their grade on each day's quiz will be added up for one weekly Prime Time grade of 25 points at the end of each week.
- **Study guides:** Students will be required to make study guides for each test to help them review the material each day and prepare for the unit tests. Study guides will be made using the first sheet of each packet and answering the objectives and defining the vocabulary for each concept. Every concept study guide is worth 10 points. Students who earn an A grade on two tests in a row are exempt from completing study guides if they continue to maintain A's on the unit tests.

Major Assessments – 60%

<u>1st Semester</u>	<u>2nd Semester</u>
Unit 1: Biology Basics <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sanitizer/Soap Lab Report (100 pts)- Unit 1 Test: Concepts 1-3 (100 pts)	Unit 5: Heredity <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Punnett Square Quiz (25 pts)- Complex Inheritance Patterns Quiz (25 pts)- Unit 5 Test: Concepts 1-4 (100 pts)- Genetic Disorders Project (100 pts)
Unit 2: Cells <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Organelle Quiz (25 pts)- Organelle Project (50 pts)- Unit 2 Test: Concepts 1-3 (100 pts)	Unit 6: Evolution <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unit 6 Test: Concepts 1-4 (100 pts)
Unit 3: Energy Flow <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unit 3 Test #1: Concepts 1-2 (100 pts)- Unit 3 Test #2: Concepts 3-5 (100 pts)	Unit 7: Ecology <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Geochemical Cycles Quiz (25 pts)- Unit 7 Test #1: Concepts 1-3 (100 pts)- Unit 7 Test #2: Concepts 4-6 (100 pts)- Human Impact Project (100 pts)
Unit 4: Genetics <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unit 4 Test: Concepts 1-2 (100 pts)- Meiosis Quiz (25 pts)- Children's Book Project (100 pts)	

The final grade is calculated according to the following percent values:

1st semester grade = 50% of final grade (40% Q1, 40% Q2, 20% Midterm Exam)

2nd semester grade = 50 % of final grade (40% Q3, 40% Q4, 20% Final Exam)

Grading Percentages:

98 – 100 = A+	87 – 89 = B+	77 – 79 = C+	67 – 69 = D+	0 – 59 = F
93 – 97 = A	83 – 86 = B	73 – 76 = C	63 – 66 = D	
90 – 92 = A-	80 – 82 = B-	70 – 72 = C-	60 – 62 = D-	

Upgrades:

Upgrades may be allowed for the question portion of tests (not essay). If you choose to upgrade, you must sit for a re-take at a pre-arranged time with the teacher. **The final score of your test will be determined by the average.** No test may be taken more than twice (the original and one re-take) and retakes are generally scheduled one week after the original exam.

Extra Credit:

Provided to boost your Major or Minor portion of your grade as pre-determined by the teacher. These activities have been designed to incorporate the concepts being taught and provide the student with additional reinforcements to learn the material at hand and present the concepts in a different way. **A student may choose to do as many enhancement activities as they wish.** There are at least 300 extra points that can be earned each unit, sometimes more.

Student's Initial _____ Parent's/Guardian Initial: _____

Expectations of the Student:

- Rules as stated in the student handbook will be adhered to.
- Mobile phones and iPods are not allowed in the classroom. They may remain in your backpack or cell phones may be placed in a designated area for the duration of the class period if you feel the need to carry them in your pocket. They will be immediately confiscated and turned into the main office per handbook requirements if: a.) they ring during class, b.) they are discovered in the classroom outside of the designated area.
- Personal laptop computers may be used in the classroom only if permission is granted.
- Tardiness and absenteeism will be minimal; and only when it is necessary. It is hard to learn when one is not present.
 - o Students will be marked tardy if they are not in their seat when the bell rings for the start of class. Be aware of the handbook rules regarding tardiness and detentions.
 - o PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING ACCORDING TO THE PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK:
 - “More than 10 absences (excused/unexcused) during a semester from any class/classes will result in the **failure to receive credit for the class/classes missed.** In case of a medical condition/extended illness, a written document by a physician must be provided upon returning to school. The doctor’s note must contain all the dates of absence(s) and the return to school date to be considered.

Student's Initial _____ Parent's/Guardian Initial: _____

- **All work is the responsibility of the student no matter if you attend class or not. All assignments and notes are your responsibility and you must be up to date and on task.**

- Respect, care, integrity and honesty will be displayed at all times. This includes:
 - o Personally, students will be respectful and honest with each other as well as the teacher
 - o Care will be taken with the equipment and property within the lab and classroom, equipment will always be returned to its original place, tables/area will be left clean, and all chairs will be pushed in.
 - o All work will be that of the individual; **any instance of dishonesty, cheating, intent to cheat and sharing of work will receive a zero REGARDLESS OF THE ASSIGNMENT. This grade (0) will be given to both parties of work in question.** The following steps will be taken if such an incident is perceived to happen:
 - In skyward a comment will be filed – “academic integrity violation”
 - Parents will be notified of the instance by the student and teacher
 - Mrs. Witte will file a discipline referral with the school.
 - It is my personal philosophy that when a student’s academic integrity is questionable and has been noted I am no longer able to write a letter of recommendation for that student for any reason in the future.

Student’s Initial _____ **Parent’s/Guardian Initial:** _____

Communication:

I will regularly post reminders, announcements, lecture notes, and assignments for students and parents to access on Edmodo. If you ever want to know something, check Edmodo first! Students and parents are also encouraged to contact me via email. I will also send out a weekly schedule each Friday through Skyward e-mail to let parents/guardians and students know what to expect the next week. I will respond to all emails within 24 hours during the school week, and can respond in much more detail and speed than if you attempt to call. Students are also strongly encouraged to stop by before school between 7 – 7:30 or after school between 3 – 3:30 if they ever need help!

Email: mwitte@sacschools.org

Class Website: https://edmodo.com/public/biology/group_id/20036769 Code: yc2ji4

Student’s Name: _____ Student’s Initial _____
(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian’s Name: _____
(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian’s signature: _____

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(Please Print)

Parent/Guardian’s signature: _____

****Please make sure your email is up to date at the main office. I communicate through Skyward’s e-mail system throughout the year.*****

