

Valdosta State University
Department of Biology, College of Arts and Sciences
BIOL 1100 Section D: Freshman Seminar
Syllabus, Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. Cy L. Mott

Office: Bailey Science Center 1212

Office Hours: Monday 2:00 – 4:00 P. M., Tuesday 3:30 – 4:30 P. M. or by appointment

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Note: Please DO NOT send messages through BlazeVIEW, as they are not automatically forwarded to my VSU email account. Using the email address above will result in the most prompt response.

Course Time and Location: (Bailey Science Center #1024): Th 11:00 – 11:50 A. M.

Pre-/Corequisites: BIOL 1100 is required as a co-requisite for all incoming freshmen biology majors before or during enrollment in BIOL 1107.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn the following:

- 1) Biology major requirements, general advising, strategies for success, and related career paths from biological research to professional programs;
- 2) The basics of the scientific method and scientific writing.

These learning outcomes correspond to the biology educational outcome #1 and the VSU General Educational Outcomes #3, #5, #7 and #8.

Required Course Materials: None

Assessments: Course Grade

Attendance	50 %	90 – 100 % = A
Scientific Writing	20 %	80 – 89.9 % = B
Career Plan	10 %	70 – 79.9 % = C
Career Slide	10 %	60 – 69.9 % = D
Scientific Method Quiz	<u>10 %</u>	< 59.9 % = F
Total	100 %	

Attendance:

Attendance in this course is absolutely required. Each student is responsible for all material missed regardless of the reason for absences. Note the University policy regarding attendance:

1) Students missing 20% of lecture time will receive an automatic failing grade for the course. 2) Students who do not regularly attend lecture, as determined by taking class role, by the proof roll date may be automatically dropped from the class. (3) Students who neither drop nor attend class by the midterm date will receive an automatic F for the course.

Students missing > 20% of lecture time on a given day will be counted as absent that day.

Privacy Act (FERPA): The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits the public posting of grades by social security number or in any manner personally identifiable to the individual student. No grades can be given by email or over the telephone, as positive identification cannot be made by this manner.

Disruptive behavior: No disruptive behavior of any kind will be tolerated in this course. Students should restrict talking and discussion to pertinent questions related to course material and these questions should be directed toward the instructor. Entering a classroom late or early is discouraged. Any student disrupting lectures will be required to leave the classroom. Use of cellular telephones, pagers, or any similar remote communication device is prohibited during class time.

Biology Tutoring/SSC: The following statement was copied from the SSC Website: "The Student Success Center (SSC) at Valdosta State University is located in Langdale Residence Hall above the Tech Shop and is available to all students. The SSC provides free peer tutoring in core curriculum courses, including biology, chemistry, math, writing, and foreign languages. The SSC also provides free professional academic advising and on-campus job information in one location. Call 333-7570 to make an appointment, or visit the website: www.valdosta.edu/ssc."

Students with Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in room Farber Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (voice) and 219-1348 (tty).

Student Conduct:

- 1) Children, friends, or pets are not allowed in class.
- 2) **No active cell phones, iPods, or other electronic/multimedia devices in lecture** without instructor approval. This rule is in effect at the time class starts, and all electronic devices, if present, should be placed in bags or otherwise out of site. If usage of such items persists, students will be asked to leave. If a student refuses to leave or cannot be convinced to leave by his/her classmates, the instructor will ultimately leave the classroom, and all students will be assigned an absence for the day. Repeat offenders may be dropped from the class by the instructor.
- 3) Each homework assignment will have a set number of days during which it can be completed, and students will always be made aware of the "completion window". Online assignments will never be "reopened" once the completion window has closed, regardless of any reason students may provide for failing to complete an assignment. In addition, no student will be provided early access to online assignments.
- 4) Students that wish to bring laptop computers to class should seat themselves so as to eliminate distractions to classmates; if students are using such equipment in a distracting manner (i.e. checking email, web-surfing, listening to music, etc.) laptops will be banned from the classroom for all students.
- 5) Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated; this includes plagiarism, cheat sheets, electronic devices, etc. There will be no first warning, and I will recommend the maximum penalty for the first violation, up to and including **expulsion from the university**. As students, you are also responsible for policing each other. Consequently, anyone aiding a "cheater" or not reporting observed cases of cheating to the instructor will be considered an accomplice and subject to similar penalties as those actually cheating.

I maintain office hours for students needing to discuss course material, and these hours will always be available unless students are otherwise notified in advance. Office hours are meant to address specific questions students may have, not to re-teach lecture material in the case of student absence. If students cannot attend these scheduled office hours, they may make an appointment for an alternate time. However, if a student schedules an appointment outside of scheduled office hours and does not arrive, that student will lose the opportunity to schedule appointments outside of established office hours in the future.

NEVER, EVER, EVER, EVER EMAIL ME TO ASK WHAT YOU MISSED IN LECTURE IF YOU ARE ABSENT; IT IS YOUR JOB TO CONSULT WITH CLASSMATES AND DETERMINE WHAT YOU MISSED!!!

Notes/Study Tips:

- a) Remember when sending an email that your professor's name is not "Hey"; an email should begin with Dear Dr. (insert name), then continue with your message written in actual English words (not text language), and conclude with terms such as "Sincerely", "Thanks in advance", etc. Realize that many older people (i.e. your professors) are not biologically linked to their phones in the ways observed in younger generations...please allow up to three (3) business days before sending a follow-up email if you haven't received response.
- b) There is a documented positive relationship between how often you attend class and your grade...why pay thousands of dollars a semester to not take advantage of someone that you are paying to educate you?
- c) Educators recommend studying 2-3 hours per week for each credit hour, which means you should be studying 8-12 a week for this class, not counting the time spent in class. Without fail, the number one thing students say when describing why they did not achieve the academic goal they had set for themselves: "I should have studied more!"
- d) Don't simply write down the things that the instructor writes down; believe it or not, they may be saying something important even when they don't write it down! If you are not sure if it's important, write it down anyways, just to be sure. If your instructor talks too fast, ask (don't tell) him/her to slow down...this is your very expensive education, so get what you need out of it.
- e) The phrase "***I don't know***" is the most powerful phrase in the sciences, because it allows us to push past the boundaries of current knowledge. Students are often embarrassed to admit they don't know something, but not knowing is what has allowed the world's greatest scientists to uncover new things. Odds are, if you don't know, half of the class does not know either...
- f) When students say "I can multi-task while studying", what they really mean is "I enjoy doing twice as much work for half of the result". If you eliminate distractions (TV, music, crowds, etc.) your increased focus will allow you to absorb the information much faster and more completely, allowing you time for more enjoyable activities (unless studying is your most enjoyable activity).
- g) **BIOLOGY IS HARD!** Few students ever list something in the sciences as an "easy major", so the earlier you realize the difficulty of the field, the less likely you will be to panic, become unorganized, or, most often, blame the instructor for being "too tough".
- h) The phrase "*D for Degree*" no longer applies, as approximately 120,000 students a year are graduating with a biology degree, to such extent that just having the degree is no longer the easy way into getting a job. Due to the overabundance of degree-holders,

those with lower GPAs will only have those jobs available to them that better students did not want (DON'T salt your food during an interview before you taste it)...

- i) Most students view higher education as the way to get a job...but you have a job right now as a student, and you should get into the habit of practicing good workplace ethics now: be on time, be prepared, and take responsibility for yourself (because no one else will!)

TENTATIVE Schedule: Subject to change

Week	Topic	Date
1	Introduction to the Department/College/VSU	15-Aug
2	Student Success Center Seminar	22-Aug
3	Biology Exam, Assessment Plans	29-Aug
4	Library Tour	5-Sep
5-6	Scientific Writing	12, 19-Sep
7	BlazeVIEW, eCore Seminar	26-Sep
8	Advising, BA/BS worksheet, tracks	3-Oct
9-11	Careers in Biology/Slide Presentations	10, 17, 24-Oct
12	Discussion, 4 and 10 year plan	31-Oct
13	Scientific Method and the Enterprise of Science	7-Nov
14	VSU Clubs, SIFE, BBB, AED	14-Nov
15	Directed Study, Lab Research, Study Abroad	21-Nov