Instructor Information

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Office - Life Sciences South 260
208-885-4095
Tentative Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 11am-noon; or by appointment (scheduled via email or VandalStar)

I will communicate with you by university-sponsored email. Please be sure to check your email account often, and ensure that my email address is not blocked.

CLASS TIME/LOCATION:

Lecture: MWF, 10:30-11:20am; JEB 104

Lab: Labs are conducted on a weekly basis, with different time slots for each section. Look up your section number’s schedule (Biol114-xx) in your VandalWeb schedule or on the UI Class Schedule.

All lab sections meet in LSS 351. You may only attend the lab section for which you are registered*. You will receive contact information for your lab section’s TA instructor at the first lab meeting.

*Under extenuating circumstances, you might be allowed to switch sections for a given week. You must be approved in advance by Dr. Oswald for a switch. There are NO special make-up labs if you miss an entire week of school (but see the Excused Absence section for accommodations).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this course, you will be introduced to the evolution of life on Earth and the current diversity of organisms. Additionally, you will be exposed to current research in fields such as evolution, phylogenetics, organismal biology, and ecology. In lab, you will synthesize concepts learned in class while learning scientific techniques and skills.

Students often find the Biol114 material to be complex and somewhat difficult to learn. I thus typically use a variety of active learning techniques in class to assist students in learning the material. When you attend class, you can expect quiz-style questions, group and whole-class discussions, short videos, problem solving, and other activities on any given day.

COURSE MATERIALS

Course website: https://bblearn.uidaho.edu/webapps/login/
The course website will include a copy of the syllabus; lecture and lab materials; access to MasteringBiology; links to online quizzes, tutorials and supplementary material; and grades. This will also be my primary form of communication with you outside of class. Check the website often!

Required online material: Modified Mastering Biology for Freeman, Biological Science, 7th Ed (Pearson) – This package is automatically included in your UI fees with Inclusive Access (there is nothing to purchase separately from the bookstore). You will create an account for the labs within our course BbLearn site, and access the assignments there, too. Further information will be presented at the beginning of the semester. More purchasing/registration info is available on BbLearn/Help!. 
**Required textbook:** Freeman *et al.* 2020. *Biological Science*, 7th edition. Included as an e-book with your Inclusive Access for the above Mastering Biology. May also be purchased as a hard copy book separately through BbLearn, if you want one (or borrowed from a friend, or viewed on Reserve at the UI Library). More purchasing/registration info is available on BbLearn/Help!.

**Safety materials.** Like any other indoor space, masks/face coverings are required per UI policy. As UI’s COVID policy changes, we will update the safety requirements for the labs and you will be required to follow those policies even if they go beyond what is stated here in the syllabus.

**ASSESSMENT:**

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* I typically *DO NOT* curve individual exams or the course as a whole, so please don’t ask. *I round to the nearest whole % at the end of the semester (example: a total percentage of 89.5 would be rounded up to a 90, while an 89.4 would be rounded down to an 89).*

**Grade Reports**
Grades will be updated on a weekly basis in BbLearn/My Gradebook. You should check these grades periodically for any mistakes in entry and to check that your overall performance is on track.

For formal grade reporting, Early Warning Grade notifications (D/F/participation issues) use the VandalStar Progress Surveys system, while Midterm and Final grades are officially entered in VandalWeb.

**Exams**
There will be four ‘regular’ exams, plus one final exam, each worth the same amount of points. Your lowest exam score will be dropped at the end of the semester (only four will count towards your final grade). With the exception of Excused Absences (see self-titled section below), there are NO makeup exams *(that’s what the dropped exam is for)*!

Exams will cover material from lectures, assigned readings, assigned content on Mastering, and concepts covered in lab. The material we will cover builds upon itself. We will often refer back to concepts covered in previous lectures and units. For this reason, all exams are comprehensive, though the focus of each regular exam will be on the current unit. The final exam is comprehensive of the entire semester.

Scheduled exam dates (unless otherwise state, all exams are during regular class time):
- Exam 1 – Sept 17
- Exam 2 – Oct 15
- Exam 3 – Nov 8
- Exam 4 – Dec 3
- Final Exam – Dec 16 (10:15am-12:15pm)
**Mastering**

For every unit of the course, there will be weekly homework assignments posted to Mastering. These assignments are designed to reinforce the concepts that have been covered in lecture and lab. Homework will range from multiple-choice style questions to guided activities. Homework assignments will be available starting Fridays at 11:59PM, through the week’s material they cover, and are due the following Friday at 11:59pm. *Example* – the assignment covering week 2 lecture material opens on Sunday, Aug 29, at 11:59pm. You have the school week and the weekend to complete the assignment, and it is due Sun, Sept 5, by 11:59pm. On the Course Schedule, the Mastering column provides a reminder of these due dates (every Sunday unless it’s an exam week).

It is your responsibility to finish the homework before each closes. Keep in mind that computer/internet issues can arise, so it is in your best interest to plan ahead and complete them early. For Excused Absences that extend beyond the open period, refer to the Excused Absences section below. Late work will be docked **10%** for each 24 hour period after the due date/time.

**Lab Assignments**

Information packets relevant to each lab will be posted in BbLearn/Labs, organized in folders by week. Each week will have slightly different requirements. Generally, you will be asked to print off a packet to bring with you to lab that week, containing background information, the procedures for that lab, and Post-lab discussion questions to turn in. Double-sided printing is recommended.

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**Weekly points:** You will typically answer two pages worth of discussion questions about each week’s lab, turned in at the end of the lab period (the Post Labs). These questions will cover specific aspects of the week’s procedures, and allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the important concepts and skills covered. In addition, your behavior in lab will affect others in the room. **You will lose points** in a given week for incidences of the following: disruptive behavior, not contributing in group efforts (this includes copying from someone else’s packet/Post Lab), or failure to satisfactorily clean up your lab station. Deduction of lab participation points is at the discretion of your TA.

**Lab Exams:** During midterms and at the end of the semester, there will be a cumulative exam over the lab activities. You will be expected to answer questions related to the completed labs. These points contribute to the 200 total points of the lab in your overall grade (i.e. these exams are not part of the Lecture Exams and thus cannot be dropped).

**Lab Absences:** Attendance in lab is **mandatory.** Missing lab will result in a loss of all points associated with that lab, except for Excused Absence (see section below). **Failure to promptly communicate attendance issues with your TA will result in a 10% penalty on any makeup work for each day of non-communication.** There will be no in-person make-up labs after the week is finished (the space needs to be available for setting up the next lab).

**Late Assignments:** Unexcused late lab work will be docked **10%** for each 24 hour period after your normal lab. **Even for Excused Absences, failure to promptly communicate completion issues with your TA/Instructor will result in a 10% penalty on any makeup work for each day of non-communication.**

**Lab Safety:** Shoes must be closed-toed, and pants/skirts must be full length (no shorts or capris). Food and drink are never allowed in the lab. Any UI COVID PPE policies instituted throughout the semester will also be followed. Lab safety will be explained further in lab, and safety guidelines provided.

You should keep a physical folder and electronic file folder just for lab materials – i.e., your lab packets and notes taken during lab. If you keep everything organized throughout the semester, you will have a useful guidebook from which to study for exams or to refer to in the future. **Keep every item** for the entire
semester; this is useful for studying as well as insurance against work that somehow goes ‘missing’ or typos during grade entry.

Course Objectives:

The over-arching goal of Biol 114 is to prepare students for future coursework in biology-related sciences. Preparedness encompasses three general areas: 1) foundational knowledge & understanding of biology, 2) skill as a scientist, and 3) skill as a student.

By the end of the semester, a successful student will have:
- a foundational vocabulary and understanding of evolution & the tree of life, including the following core areas
  - How does evolution occur, and what evidence supports the theory of evolution?
  - How is the current tree of life organized, and what evidence supports it?
  - What are the major distinctions between lineages in the tree of life, and why is each lineage important?
  - How do ecological processes tie in with evolution?
- increased awareness of science as a process rather than simply a collection of facts to be memorized
- increased confidence in generating scientific hypotheses and interpreting scientific data
- increased ability to locate & communicate scientific information
- a better understanding of how he/she learns
- increased awareness of study habits helpful in science
- knowledge of the learning resources available to help them succeed

LEARNING OUTCOMES: In accordance with the University’s Learning Outcomes -

Learn & Integrate: Students will synthesize biological knowledge from lectures, homework, and labs to attain an understanding of evolution, biological diversity and ecology.

Think & Create: Students will synthesize and apply their knowledge of biological processes by forming hypotheses and conducting and designing hands-on laboratory experiments.

Communicate: Students will become conversant in the language used in biology, and will practice the language of biology during laboratories, small group activities, and written assignments.

Clarify Purpose & Perspective: Students will gain an understanding of the evolutionary context of living organisms (including humans), as well as the role(s) different organisms play in their environment.

Practice Citizenship: Students will attain basic biological knowledge, which will allow them to make informed contributions to discussions of issues that impact humans and the environment, for ex: biodiversity, conservation biology, climate change, evolution education, etc…

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Only students with major medical/family issues or written official university excuses will be allowed accommodation. Accommodation make take the form of make-up work or dropping an assignment from the student’s grade. Makeup work may differ from the original assignment. Final acceptance of accommodation is at the discretion of the instructor. Arrangements must be made at least one week prior to your absence in the case of known schedule conflicts (ex: participation in official university sporting events, course field trips, etc…). In the case of an emergency/non-scheduled absence (major medical/family issues), accommodation must be requested immediately following the absence (don’t expect to be granted make-up work if a month goes by between the emergency and your request). It is the student’s responsibility to document the extent of their issue and promptly make a written/emailed request for accommodation.
GRADE DISPUTES:

If you feel that an assignment has been graded incorrectly, you have one week after receiving the graded assignment to dispute your score. You must return the assignment to your instructor or TA, along with a written request for re-grading that includes a description of the dispute. Final grade assignment is at the discretion of the instructor or TA.

COMMUNICATION:

Spelling, grammar, punctuation, logic and legible handwriting are critical elements of communication. You may lose points on quizzes, exams and/or lab assignments for misspelling, poor grammar or syntax, improper punctuation, flawed logic or illegible handwriting.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Refer to Article II of the UI Student Code of Conduct (http://www.uidaho.edu/DOS/judicialaffairs/studentcodeofconduct/articleii). Plagiarism or academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. Offenses will lead to a zero on the assignment or an F in the class, letters to your Department Chair and College Dean, and a formal complaint filed with the Dean of Students. Be aware than even one incident of academic dishonesty may result in expulsion from the university.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

The following behaviors are rude to the instructor and fellow students, and are considered unacceptable behavior for class and lab: ringing cell phones, use of cell phones for talking or texting, web surfing, sleeping, reading extraneous material, chatting with neighbors, etc… The instructor or TA reserves the right to dismiss students from class (with appropriate grade deduction for missed assignments) that display any of these behaviors. Repeated violations may result in an F on that day’s quiz/exam/lab homework, an F in the course, and/or removal from the course.

University of Idaho Classroom Learning Civility Clause

In any environment in which people gather to learn, it is essential that all members feel as free and safe as possible in their participation. To this end, it is expected that everyone in this course will be treated with mutual respect and civility, with an understanding that all of us (students, instructors, professors, guests, and teaching assistants) will be respectful and civil to one another in discussion, in action, in teaching, and in learning. Should you feel our classroom interactions do not reflect an environment of civility and respect, you are encouraged to meet with your instructor during office hours to discuss your concern. Additional resources for expression of concern or requesting support include the Dean of Students office and staff (885-6757), the UI Counseling & Testing Center’s confidential services (885-6716), or the UI Office of Human Rights, Access & Inclusion (885-4285).

ACADEMIC SUPPORT; TUTORING & COLLEGE SUCCESS

TCS offers three distinct services dedicated to student success: tutoring, SI–PASS, and Academic Coaching. Vandal Tutoring provides drop-in style tutoring in person at the Library or online through uidaho.edu/tutoringonline at no cost to undergraduates. SI-PASS provides peer assisted study sessions for difficult courses. You can find the schedule of currently supported courses at uidaho.edu/si. Academic Coaching offers students an opportunity to work with a coach, one on one, to improve their academic skills such as: effective studying, test taking, time management, and note taking. Visit uidaho.edu/academic-coaching to schedule an appointment.
Center for Disability Access & Resources

Students with disabilities needing accommodations to fully participate in this class should contact Center for Disability Access and Resources (CDAR). All accommodations must be approved through CDAR prior to being implemented. To learn more about the accommodation process, visit CDAR's website at www.uidaho.edu/cdar or call 208-885-6307.

Please notify the instructor during Week One of classes if accommodations are required.

FIREARMS POLICY

"The University of Idaho bans firearms from its property with only limited exceptions. One exception applies to persons who hold a valid Idaho enhanced concealed carry license, provided those firearms remain concealed at all times. If an enhanced concealed carry license holder’s firearm is displayed, other than in necessary self-defense, it is a violation of University policy. Please contact local law enforcement (call 911) to report firearms on University property."