

BIOL 3000: Frontier in Biology

Spring 2015

LECTURE: Biology 3000
PLACE: Science Building, Room 104
TIME: W 7:00pm - 9:50pm

TEXTBOOK: *None Needed. Online access to materials shall be provided as needed.*

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Kamal Dulai
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Office: Naraghi 251
Office Hours: T & R 11:20 am to 12:20 pm

All cell phones, pagers, or automatic watch alarms should be turned off before entering the classroom to prevent disruption.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Frontiers in Biology is structured to advance the basic knowledge of important and current hot topics in biology.

By the end of the course, the student should:

- Understand the key concepts of select biological systems
- Understand the biology behind current social and political topics
- Enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills and the ability to effectively communicate and work with others.

COURSE GOALS

This class is designed for seniors, hence the 3000 level certification. At this level students are required to assimilate information and make informed decisions. Topics of current interest in biology shall be chosen by the instructor. The aim is to educate each student with enough knowledge so as to conduct an informed discussion on the topic. Students shall be expected to comprehend the information presented and quickly form an opinion, so as to answer questions immediately following each lecture.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Frontiers in Biology is primarily a basic biology lecture course presented as one 3 hour class each week. The purpose shall be to discuss and understand select topics of interest in Biology. Videos & Demonstrations will be used to illustrate particular principles, as applicable. The course content is modular in structure. Each topic shall be presented as a module.

The three hours shall be divided as follows;

First hour: presentation of material in the form of a lecture. Students should take notes and ask questions as necessary. Duration ½ hour to 1 hour

Break: 7 minutes

Second hour: Video or other multimedia presentation when possible. Students should take notes during and ask questions following the presentation. Duration @ 1 hour

Break: 7 minutes

Third hour: Students break off into small groups and each group shall answer 5 questions on the subject matter. 20 minutes to 60 minutes

It is also recommended that students retain and consult their syllabus, visit the supporting web site (Blackboard), and read recommended materials. Each exam shall be comprehensive in that it will encompass material covered up until that point from the commencement of the course. Questions shall appear in the form of any of the following: multiple-choice, best answer, short and/or long answers. Discussion forums are a compulsory module. All students must post two meaningful commentaries each week. More details follow...

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Please carefully familiarize yourself with the policies below. It is assumed that you have read and understood them.

Course Scoring:

Assignment	Point Allocation	Total Points
Midterm Exam	200 points x 1	200
Final Exam	400 points x 1	400
Negative Opinion Paper A	100 points	100
Negative Opinion Paper B	200 points	200
Class Discussion Boards	20 points x 14	280
Participation	20 points	20
	Total	1200
	<i>Attendance <u>Bonus</u> for coming to >80% of classes on time</i>	50

Letter Grades:

The final distribution of grades in BIOL 3000 is given below. Sorry, no exceptions shall be made!

Course Point Score	Letter Grade	Course Point Score	Letter Grade
88.00% to 100.00%	A	68.00% to 70.99%	C
85.00% to 87.99%	A-	65.00% to 67.99%	C-
81.00% to 84.99%	B+	61.00% to 64.99%	D+
78.00% to 80.99%	B	58.00% to 60.99%	D
75.00% to 77.99%	B-	55.00% to 57.99%	D-

Information on grade appeals, incompletes, etc. can be found in the *CSUS Student Catalog* available from the Registrar.

Mid-term Assessments:

As indicated in the syllabus, a single 100 minute midterm exam will be given during the indicated period. This test shall consist of a combination of multiple choice, mix and match, fill-in and short answer questions based upon the lecture, multimedia and group discussions thus far in the semester. A sample exam shall be posted prior to the mid-term and final exam.

Final Assessment:

A two hour *cumulative* final exam will be given during finals week. The final may consist of 100 MCQ questions. **BEWARE:** You may be asked specific questions on material covered by **any** previous exams, and all lectures. **BEWARE: Note the time for the final may be different from the regular lecture times.**

Regrade policy:

Regrade requests will only be accepted within one week (7 days) from the date a scored assessment is returned. For each question requiring attention, you must submit a written explanation describing why you believe your response should be reevaluated. Please know we reserve the right to regrade your entire assessment. As a result, your score could either increase or decrease.

BEWARE: A random sample of all assessments will be photocopied after initial grading. If a comparison of the photocopy to the exam submitted for regarding indicates any alteration, the case will be forwarded to the Registrar.

Negative Position Papers:

Students will be required to write and submit **two** negative position papers on topics chosen from a list to be published by the Instructor. The student is required to adopt a position opposite to his/her **personal** views on the topic when writing this work. All work must be original and will be submitted via Blackboard through **Turn-It-In** – which checks against a global database of writings.

Rules:

1. **Must submit by deadline.** (– enforced with a penalty of 100% of the grade)
2. **Minimum and maximum word limits.** Word limits shall be specified this semester at a later date for each paper (– enforced with a penalty of 50% of the grade)
3. **The cited content of these papers must not exceed 10% of the total word count.** (– enforced with a penalty of 50% of the grade)
4. **You must submit using Turn-It-In.** (– enforced with a penalty of 100% of the grade)
5. **Must be your work.** (– enforced with a penalty of 100% of the grade)

Discussion Forum Participation:

All students are required to submit **two** independent comments per topic using the Blackboard Discussion module. Submitting less than two per topic shall result in a score of zero points for that assignment. These modules shall have a deadline of 7 days from the day of their posting. No time extensions shall be permitted.

Discussion Participation:

Live classroom participation is strongly encouraged. Participation entails asking and answering questions, taking with peers and the instructor. The instructor will award up to 20 points for this activity at the conclusion of the semester. If you are not sure how well you are performing, please ask at any time.

Course Materials and Handouts:

No text book is required. Additional material shall be provided by online access.

Copies of the lecture PowerPoint's will also be available in Acrobat format (.pdf files) at the BIOL 3000 Blackboard site after the lecture has taken place.

Missed Exams:

Make-up exams will *not* be offered for any assessments. Students who miss the midterm or final will receive a zero for the entire test unless they provide documentation for one of two acceptable excuses:

- Incapacitating illness or accident--requires a note from student's physician (not a family member) or from Health Services.
- Death or serious illness of an immediate family member—requires proper documentation.

Students with a documented excuse will receive a provisional grade on the midterm based on the average of the student's other assessment grades. Students who miss the final assessment will receive a grade of "F" for the course unless an acceptable excuse is provided (see bulleted points above) and the student was achieving a passing grade (C- or better) in all course work up until the final exam. Such students can arrange with the instructor for a process to remove the incomplete from their records. Students who have a documented reason, such as a religious observance or an academic or professional activity (e.g. graduate school interview – although an appointment at 6 pm might raise some questions) may request to take a midterm exam *before* the scheduled exam time. Students taking an assessment early may not discuss any aspect of the assessment with other students in the class; to do so is a serious breach of academic integrity (see below). Students seeking to reschedule an assessment should contact the instructor as early as possible, ideally during the first two weeks of the semester.

Group and independent assignments in BIOL 3000:

Some activities in BIOL 3000 involve group work and we encourage you to discuss any of the materials in the text, lectures, labs or computer exercises with the instructors and other students, *but the work you submit must be your own for all of the following:*

- Individual question submissions
- Negative Position Papers
- Midterm and final assessments

That is, each student must generate their **own** answers *written in their own words* to all written questions. At the first instance of copied answers on assignments, no credit will be given *to all students with duplicate answers* and the assignments will be forwarded to the Registrar. Subsequent copied assignments could lead to dismissal from course or university (see section on Academic Integrity below).

Academic integrity:

Academic integrity is the foundation of an academic community and without it none of the educational or research goals of the university can be achieved. All members of the university community are responsible for its academic integrity. Existing policies forbid cheating on examinations, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. The current policies for CSU Stanislaus are described in the *student handbook*.

Examples of academic dishonesty include:

- receiving or providing unauthorized assistance on examinations
- using unauthorized materials during an examination
- plagiarism – using materials from sources without citations
- altering an exam and submitting it for re-grading
- fabricating data or references
- using false excuses to obtain extensions of time or to skip coursework

The ultimate success of a code of academic conduct depends largely on the degree to which the students fulfill their responsibilities supporting academic integrity.

These responsibilities include:

- Be honest at all times.
- Act fairly toward others. For example, do not disrupt or seek an unfair advantage over others by cheating, or by talking or allowing eyes to wander during exams.
- Take group as well as individual responsibility for honorable behavior. Collectively, as well as individually, make every effort to prevent and avoid academic misconduct, and report acts of misconduct that you witness.
- Do not submit the same work in more than one class. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, all work submitted to fulfill course requirements must be work done by the student specifically for that course. This means that work submitted for one course cannot be used to satisfy requirements of another course unless the student obtains permission from the instructor.
 - Unless permitted by the instructor, do not work with others on graded coursework, including in class and take-home tests, papers, or homework assignments. When an instructor specifically informs students that they may collaborate on work required for a course, the extent of the collaboration must not exceed the limits set by the instructor.
- Know what plagiarism is and take steps to avoid it. When using the words or ideas of another, even if paraphrased in your own words, you must cite your source. Students who are confused about whether a particular act constitutes plagiarism should consult the instructor who gave the assignment.
- Know the rules – ignorance is no defense. Those who violate campus rules regarding academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary sanctions, including suspension and dismissal.

Flexibility Clause:

Circumstances may arise during the course which may prevent the instructor from fulfilling each and every component of this syllabus. Therefore, the syllabus should be viewed as a guide and is subject to change. Students will be notified prior to any changes, if possible.

Welcome & Great Learning!

Timetable of Lectures

No.	Date		Lecture	
1	W	28	Jan	Introductions & Expectations. Topic: Population - out of control!
2	W	4	Feb	HIV & AIDS
3	W	11	Feb	Cancer – why?
4	W	18	Feb	Killer Diseases – Ebola and Friends!
5	W	25	Feb	Nutrition – The basics.
6	W	4	Mar	Nutrition 2 - The latest twists!
7	W	11	Mar	Designer babies – the power of stem cells.
-	W	18	Mar	MID-TERM EXAMINATION
8	W	25	Mar	Darwin – was he a quack?
9	W	1	Apr	Life & Death - What killed the T-Rex and will it kill us too?
-	W	8	Apr	Spring Break – No lecture this week.
10	W	15	Apr	Global Warming – prove it!
11	W	22	Apr	Genetics – Crime and Punishment.
12	W	29	Apr	Epigenetics – the powerful implications
13	W	6	May	Human Evolution – where did we come from?
14	W	13	May	Quick Fire Topics – In the news!
<i>Fin</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>EXAM FINAL 7 pm (Same place same time)</i>