



BIOL 101: Principles of Biology

- Introduction
- Required Materials
- Assignments and Exams
- Grading
- Academic Policies
- Email
- Lessons

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to biology—the “science of life.” Understanding the living world around us is something most of us have been working toward throughout our lives. You are now about to embark on a more formal approach to the study of living organisms—their parts, their functions, and their interactions.

You may be studying biology because it is a fascinating subject that interests you, or because you want to prepare for a career that is dependent on an understanding of biology (health careers, physical education, environmental law, or many others), or it may just fulfill a curricular requirement. In any case, the course is designed to meet all those needs.

Although your purpose for taking this course may be quite different from that of other students, there are general course objectives that apply to all students. We hope that when you finish this course you will know the fundamental requirements faced by all living organisms and be able to describe how different organisms have become adapted to fulfill these requirements. In order to do this, you will need to know about all levels of organization—molecular, cellular, organismal, and, beyond the organism, ecological and evolutionary. Throughout, however, we will concentrate on the needs of organisms and how organisms meet those needs—how they are adapted to the environment and the lifestyle in which they meet the requirements of life.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

See course description for current information on required textbooks and materials.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

Assignments

Each lesson has assignments to be submitted after you have read and studied the material. These assignments will usually ask you to think about or analyze the material in a new way. Just restating material from the textbook is rarely helpful. Please think about the material and answer the questions in your own words and with sufficient detail for me to be able to see that you understand the material. The questions are designed to elicit your thinking rather than facts from the text. In general, answers for each free-response question should be from three-fourths of a page to two pages. Try to answer questions without reference to the text or notes, but feel free to consult them when needed.

Although you are welcome to use all materials available to you in learning the material, please do not consult outside sources (such as other people or the Internet) in generating your answers to the written assignments. Each answer should be your own analysis, not that of others. Your pledge on each assignment will signify that your work contains only your thoughts and conclusions. I want to assess what you have learned, not what you can find from another source.

Additionally, you should be aware that not only is it an honor code offense to use material from the Internet in your answers but also to post any answers to the Internet. See Academic Policies below.

Tests and Final Exam

There will be two tests and a final exam, which concentrate on factual information as well as your understanding of the concepts presented. The tests and the final exam are closed-book and should be completed at one sitting in three hours or less. You are required to sign the honor pledge in order to have your grade recorded. The final exam is cumulative; it covers the entire course.

The two tests will be taken on the MasteringBiology site, without supervision, but the final exam must be scheduled and supervised.

GRADING

Your grade will be determined in the following way:

- Homework assignments (30 percent)
- Tests (40 percent - 20 percent x 2)
- Final Exam (30 percent)

The grading scale will be a ten point scale: A=90–100, B=80–89, C=70–79, D=60–69, and below 60 percent is failing.

You must pass the final exam in order to receive credit for the course.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the acceptable use of online resources. Please consult the Acceptable Use Policy on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette, and privacy protection.

As part of this course, you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC-Chapel Hill Information Security Policies when participating in online classes.

When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill, such as Google or YouTube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC-Chapel Hill.

When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.

Honor Code

As a Self-paced Courses Online student, you are responsible for obeying and supporting an honor system that prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing in relation to the academic practices of constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. The honor system also requires you to refrain from conduct that significantly impairs the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community.

An especially serious Honor Code violation is plagiarism. The UNC-Chapel Hill Honor System has found that 90 percent of the cases brought to its attention involve plagiarism. Please read the items below and make sure you understand how to avoid plagiarism .

- Plagiarism Tutorial from UNC Libraries
- Plagiarism handout from the UNC-Chapel Hill Writing Center
- The UNC-Chapel Hill Honor System's explanation, What is Plagiarism?

Please see the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Honor System for more information, especially the section on Academic Dishonesty.

You are required to do your own work in all aspects of your course. You may seek help or tutoring to learn the material, but completing the course work is up to you alone. Copying and pasting material from the Internet (even from your textbook site) is plagiarism. Getting help on homework or tests from others, whether such help is purchased or free, is cheating.

E-MAIL

If you use a spam filter on your e-mail account, you are responsible for ensuring that it does not prevent you from receiving messages from me or the Friday Center staff.

Please check your e-mail software to see how it manages sent and saved messages. Some software automatically deletes messages one month after they have been sent; others only save messages if they are filed in folders; others save messages received but not those sent. You may need to send yourself a copy of your e-mailed assignment at the same time you send it to me, or you may need to print a copy of the e-mail message and any attachments to keep in your paper files. No matter how your system works, make sure you know how to save a copy of all work that you submit to me and that you save the copy for several months beyond the end of the course.

It is extremely important for you to save copies of any e-mails you send to me. If I don't receive it, you must have a copy of the e-mail with any attached file, indicating the date sent, to prove that you submitted it. **It is your responsibility to maintain copies of your sent e-mails, as there is no way to guarantee that any e-mail message will be delivered.**

Contact your instructor with questions regarding the content of the course and your progress. Please include **"SPC Online BIOL 101"** in the subject line of your e-mail. If you send me an email and do not receive a response in a couple days, please email me again indicating that this is a second attempt to reach me.

LESSONS

The course is divided into eleven lessons. Each is equivalent to a week and a half of an on-campus course.

To guide you through your reading, I have provided a commentary section in each lesson, sometimes pointing out important points or clarifying difficult concepts, and sometimes just adding a few favorite "gee-whiz" anecdotes. MasteringBiology has additional exercises to help you apply the material you have learned. I may also point you to relevant material on the Web, particularly some that is currently in the news. You will have a chance to check your understanding of the material through MasteringBiology activities that accompany each lesson.

Getting Started

The course schedule is up to you. You can complete the course in as few as twelve weeks or take as long as nine months. The important thing is to get a good start, then maintain your momentum.

Since this course is not held in a classroom, we may never meet in person. Still, I would like to know something about you so that I can associate each e-mail message from you with something more than a name. Therefore, your first task is to send me a completed **Personal Information Sheet** and a pre-course survey. This also gives us a chance to make sure our lines of communication are working.

Begin with Lesson 1 (in the left sidebar of Sakai)

Lesson 1	The Study of Biology
----------	----------------------

Lesson 2	Scientific Method, Chemistry, and Cells
Lesson 3	Cell Energetics
Lesson 4	Cell Reproduction and Inheritance
Lesson 5	Practice Test 1 and Test 1
Lesson 6	Evolution
Lesson 7	Molecular Genetics
Lesson 8	Practice Test 2 and Test 2
Lesson 9	Animal Form and Function
Lesson 10	Plant Form and Function
Lesson 11	Ecology and Behavior
Please fill out a brief online course evaluation. We want to know if this course met your needs and expectations.	

© The University of North Carolina
Send comments and questions to fridaycenter@unc.edu.