Mr. Curry’s Biology Syllabus

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**Course Overview:**

We are living in a genuinely exciting time to be involved in the study of life sciences. Due to large technological advances over the past four decades great strides have been made in our understanding of all aspects of biology; from how ecosystems interact to how cancer begins on a molecular level. While all of this information is great for the professional biologist it can be overwhelming for the novice student. Introductory biology is intended to be an overview course, exposing the student to most major aspects of biology. We will cover diverse topics ranging from the nature of science, ecology, evolution, the cell, metabolism, genetics and basic biochemistry. It is important that students come to class each day prepared as the class will move very quickly. Also, labs will play a major role in this course and coordination with classmates will be crucial to successful completion of the labs.

Special note: We will occasionally be using live animals for experiments. All creatures will be live and handled according to NSTA guidelines (see Edline for a full-text description).

**Grading:**

The course will be graded by the semester. Each semester will be graded in the following manner:

Points Earned

Points Possible X 100%

Each semester will constitute %40 of the final grade. The final exam will be the remaining %20.

The following will be the approximate number of points coming from each assessment

Tests and quizzes 100 pts./test 10-50 pts./quiz

Labs variable points according to length

Homework and Homework Quizzes 5-10 pts. each

Notebook Checks 75 pts. each

Other (article summaries, web assignments, etc.) 5-20 points depending

**Binder/Organizational Tool:**

It will be up to you to maintain organization in my and all of your other classes this year. One of the crucial skills you need to develop as a young scholar is organizing the sometimes overwhelming amount of information you are presented with so it can be useful to you. I would suggest that you use either a 1 ½” binder or a file folder (I will have examples of each) and divide it into the five following sections.

Section 1: Lecture notes

Section 2: Labs and Lab Notebook

Section 3: Vocabulary/Greek and Latin Derivatives

Section 4: Returned/Graded work

You will be assessed on the organization and usability of your organizational tool: First by the rubric you will be given at the beginning of the year; second by a periodic (pop) check where I will ask you to produce five items that should be in your binder within two minutes.

You should have the binder/organizer by the end of the first week (cycle) of class.

Note: If a grade has been posted on Edline as a 0 or blank you must see me within one week or after a week present me with the graded paper to be given credit. Failure to do this will result in a 0 for the assignment.

**Class Materials:**

You will need the following for my class. These will be checked off for a grade the first time we meet during the second week of classes.

* *Prentice Hall Biology-Miller Levine*
* Organizational tool
* Notebook that can be kept in a 3-ring binder
* Pencils
* Colored pencils
* Protective eye goggles
* Library card
* Graphing Paper
* Calculator
* USB drive

**Laboratory:**

We will be doing many labs, probably at least one a week. Most lab work will be done in pairs. Following lab procedures and safety rules is essential to having fun, meaningful labs. Therefore, each student and their parent/guardian must sign and return a Lab Safety Contract before being allowed to participate in lab.

**Cheating:**

Academic dishonesty will be dealt with per the student handbook.

**Late Work/Absences:**

Unexcused absences will be handled per the student handbook.

With the exception of an excused absence any work turned in late will be -20% for the first day late and -50% up to the end of the first week. Any week being turned in after one week will need approval from me.

In the case of an excused absence the student will have as many days as they were absent to make up missed work. After make up time has elapsed the policy above will stand.

Don’t get on the slippery slacker slope. That is once you get behind in one course the effects tend to impact everything; late to practice making up tests, skipping other homework to catch up, skipping lunch to rush an assignment that is due the next period, you will find life is a lot more fun if you meet deadlines.

ALL STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING OUT WHAT THEY MISSED. I WILL NOT HUNT YOU DOWN TO GIVE YOU MISSED WORK!!!!!

I will post to the blog site web site every evening with the day’s assignments so you can keep up even if you are not here.

**Tardy Policy:**

We will begin most classes as soon as the bell rings therefore you are expected to be in your seat, ready to go at the beginning of class. Failure to bring materials will also result in a tardy.

**Technology:**

Brebeuf is now a B.Y.O.T. school. Here are my expectations for your use of technology in my class:

1) Any technology should be charged and ready to go before class. We have a limited number of plugs around the room and their use will be first come first served.

2) If you have an assignment it is your responsibility to get it done regardless of technology issues. A late assignment is late regardless of the reason.
3) Your technology is your tool for completing items in class. You should bring your tablet/laptop every day or be ready with a suitable backup.

4) Misuse of technology as outlined in the student manual (pp. 42-46) and violations will be handled accordingly. This should really not be an issue. If the little voice in the back of your head says, “maybe this is not a good idea” just listen to it; it avoids a lot of trouble.

Pay attention and follow general school rules as outlined in the handbook and we will learn a lot this year and maybe (yes, gasp) have some fun at the same time.

**Please, arrange to see me before/after school or during PRTs if you need extra help. Sometimes just a little individual/small group help goes a long way.**

**Grading Scale:**

* 1. A+

93-96 A

90-92 A-

87-89 B+

83-86 B

80-82 B-

77-79 C+

73-76 C

70-72 C-

67-69 D+

63-66 D

60-62 D-

59 and below F