

Syllabus – BIOL 1210

Instructor Info

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Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Textbook](#)
- [Time Management](#)
- [Course Structure](#)
- [Audio Files of Lecture Outlines](#)
- [Video Files](#)
- [Assignments](#)
- [Exams](#)
- [Grading Scale](#)

Introduction

Welcome to Biology 1210. My name is Rosemary Gray and I am an Associate Professor in the Biology Department at the University of Utah. I am also Director of the Bioscience Undergraduate Research Program (yes, our acronym is BURP!) as well as Director of the ACCESS Program. Both of these programs are designed to help students get an introduction to basic research during their undergraduate education. I thoroughly enjoy working with undergraduate students and having the opportunity to watch them find their goals and work to achieve them.

This on-line class is a new adventure for me and I am hoping that you give me some feedback on how to improve the class for future students. **My first assignment for you is to write a few sentences introducing yourselves** on the discussion board; tell me why you chose to take this class as an on-line class. Also, tell me what you hope to get from the course, and discuss how the material to be covered in the course is relevant to your life. Not only will this help me to get to know you a little bit but also it will make sure that we are all able to communicate.

An introductory class to Biology covers a lot of material. It is said that within such a class as much new vocabulary is covered as in a foreign language class AND you have to understand the concepts. This is a fairly tall order but I am confident that you will succeed in gaining a basic understanding of Biology.

Textbooks

The textbook for the class is **Biology: Concepts and Connections** by N.A. Campbell et al. 5th edition.

Time Management

As in most Distance Education courses at U of U you have a full 9 months to complete the course. I suggest, however, that you try to keep yourself to a rigorous schedule in order to be successful. To that end I've drafted a [suggested schedule](#) to guide you.

There are 5 units in this course composed of 2-4 lessons each. If you're following the suggested schedule, each unit should take you approximately 3 weeks to complete, broken down into one lesson a week.

In a typical university class **students should plan on spending 2-3 hours in study for each hour spent in the classroom**; since this course is online the "classroom" is the Web site's lessons and discussion forum. This is a 4 credit course, that means **plan on spending 4 hours a week engaging with the lessons and discussions**, and **another 8-12 hours each week** reading your text book, taking practice quizzes, working through the written assignments, and studying for an exam. If you're spending 12-16 hours per lesson in this course, you're moving at the recommended pace.

Course Structure


This course's structure is divided up into **5 Units** divided into **15 Lessons** covering **38 Chapters** as follows:



- **Unit 1 (Lessons 1-3): The Life of the cell**
Chapters 1-7
- **Unit 2 (Lessons 4-6): Cellular Reproduction and Genetics**
Chapters 8-12
Concepts of Evolution
Chapter 13-15
- **Unit 3 (Lessons 7-8): The Evolution of Biological Diversity**
Chapter 16-19
- **Unit 4 (Lessons 9-12): Animals: Form and Function**
Chapters 20-30
- **Unit 5 (Lessons 13-15): Plants and Ecology**
Chapters 30-38


Each unit found on this Web site begins with a list of the tasks you must complete. These center around the course textbook, but also include my lecture outlines in both text and audio versions, as well as practice quizzes, a unit journal summary, a unit discussion board assignment, and a unit written assignment. Refer to each unit for more details.


Here is a typical Unit with step-by-step instructions:


BIOL 1210 Principles of Biology


-  [Unit III Objectives and Tasks](#) ————— *Start here*


-  [Lesson 07](#)
Chapters 16-17
-  [Lesson 08](#)
Chapters 18-19
- View the presentations, read the outlines,
take practice quizzes*


-  [You Decide: Can We Prevent Species Extinction?](#) ————— *View the interactive case study*

-  [Discussion 3: The Evolution of Biological Diversity](#) ————— *Post questions & respond with
answers on the discussion board*

-  [Written Assignment 3](#) ————— *Complete & submit the Unit written assignment*

-  [Summary Journal 3](#) ————— *Summarize the unit & record your thoughts*

-  [Study Resources & Review Games 3](#) ————— *Use these resources to prepare for the exam*

-  [Unit 3 Survey](#) ————— *Complete a survey for each unit on your experience*

PowerPoint Presentations

Presentation files for each chapter take you through the materials in a different way, shedding light on obscure issues and highlighting important information. These PowerPoint files are made available through the textbook publisher's Web site, and are linked to from within each lesson.

Lecture Outlines

Included in each Unit are Dr. Gray's lecture outlines as PDF files. You should read these in conjunction with the textbook as a means of learning and preparing for exams. In order to read the PDF files you must have the appropriate PDF reader plug-in on your computer. Check the [Media Plug-Ins](#) page to download a PDF reader.

Audio Files of Lecture Outlines

For your convenience, I've converted each lecture outline into an MP3 audio file that you can download and listen to on the bus, while you workout, or when you're driving. These should be used as a supplement to your textbook readings.

Each file is a 32kbps MP3 file spoken by a computer speech synthesizer. While not perfect, the computer voice used for these audio files is quite good. However, **do not trust the speech synthesizer's pronunciation** of biology vocabulary terms. Instead, refer to the Web site's **glossary** for accurate pronunciation information.

The size of each MP3 file is about 3.5 megabytes in size, and runs about 17 minutes in length. You will need an audio player installed on your computer, or a physical MP3 player to listen to these audio files. Check the [Media Plug-Ins](#) page to download an audio player.

Video Files

Many chapters will contain video files pertaining to the content. There are two kinds of video files:

1. **Campbell Biology videos**
The textbook publisher has compiled some excellent videos to correspond with your chapter readings. Viewing these videos is **required**.
2. **Opencourseware video lectures**
UC-Berkeley and MIT both have video lectures from their regular general biology courses available online. We have included only those videos which are relevant to the Unit. Viewing these lectures is **optional**.

You will need an appropriate video player installed on your computer to view these. Check the [Media Plug-Ins](#) page to download a video player.

Assignments

Each Unit will have two assignments:

1. a online discussion assignment
2. a written assignment

Online Discussions

The online discussions will generally ask you to **post 2 open-ended questions** (not yes/no questions) pertaining to the unit in the discussion board. You should **be prepared to respond to your peer's responses** to your questions, and should plan on posting appropriate responses. Your discussion board participation will also be graded on your responses to the questions posted by other students in the class.

If you have other questions about the course at any time, post those to the online discussion board in the hopes that one of your fellow students can help you understand the concept. It is a very helpful exercise to try to answer questions as well as it really helps clarify your understanding. I will also be available to help with concepts that you don't understand. As well as a forum for posting questions (and answering others questions) we can use this to discuss some current topics in biology.

This course is open entry/open exit, and while I encourage you to try to be active in whatever unit you are learning about, you may find it necessary to discuss topics in units past. This is a good chance for you to help your peers who are just learning these past units, and it will help you prepare for exams.

Participation in online discussions will be worth 100pts. You may earn up to 4 points for each quality posting.

Summary Journals

At the end of each unit you will be asked to collect your thoughts, summarize the critical information in the unit's chapter, and describe your learning experience in a few paragraphs. This is referred to in each unit as a Summary Journal, and is a good way to reflect on your readings and self-assess your progress.

It's also great feedback for me on the course.

Written Assignments

Each unit will require you to complete a written assignment, which usually will consist of questions related to the test. Each assignment will contain a rubric which lets you know how you will be evaluated. You will submit these assignments online through the WebCT Assignments tool.

Each written assignment is worth 100pts.

Exams

There will be **3 exams**, one following Unit I, one following Unit II and III, and the **Final** following Unit IV and V. **The final exam will be comprehensive** but with a heavy emphasis on Units IV and V. **All exams are paper-based and must be proctored** at an approved location.

Preparing for an Exam

Practice quizzes and games pull questions from the central testbank that is used for the exams. You should take the short practice quiz that accompanies each chapter. Games will be available in each unit. Though these are not graded, they are effective as study tools as you prepare for the exams.

Additionally, the Campbell book publisher Web site (www.campbellbiology.com) has a tremendous amount of information and if you learned all of it you would be ready to teach the class! I encourage you to check out links on concepts that you find particularly difficult. I have included some websites for you as well.

How to Take an Exam

You may not take any exam until all preceding assignments have been graded and returned to you. When you are ready to take an exam, you must [request an exam](#) through the University of Utah Distance Education office. You are required to make arrangements to find and coordinate with an approved proctor to administrate your exam(s). To take an exam, you will need to submit an [Exam Request Form](#) through Distance Education. Keep in mind that this coordination between Distance Education and your approved proctor could take time, **so proper planning is essential**. In addition, there are costs associated with proctors and that amounts vary depending on the institution. If you have any questions regarding exams, please contact the Distance Education office at (800) 467-8839.

Each Midterm Exam is worth 100pts. The Final Exam is worth 200pts.

Final Exam

You must pass the Final Exam in order to pass the course. **If you fail the Final Exam you will fail the course**. This is a requirement of U of U Distance Education courses.

Grade Breakdown & Grading Scale

Course Grade Breakdown

Assessment Type	Points	Percent
Written Assignments	500	50%
Discussions	100	10%
Midterm Exam 1	100	10%
Midterm Exam 2	100	10%
Final Exam	200	20%
Total:	1000	100%

Grading Scale

A	95-100%
A-	90-94%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
B-	75-79%
C+	70-74%
C	65-69%
C-	60-64%
D+	55-59%
D	50-54%
D-	45-49%
E	0-44%