

Biology 1010: The Evolution & Diversity of Life Spring 2019

Department of Biology, College of Arts & Sciences, Valdosta State University

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Office Hours: Mon & Tues 11:00-12:00 or By Appointment. Please feel free to call the office or email in BV to schedule a more convenient time. Anytime I am in my office, you are welcome to stop in to ask questions.

A Very Important Message to Students: I am making a default assumption that you are in college to get an education. Becoming an educated person takes work, and I expect you to make a sincere effort to learn. The most important contribution to your success will be your personal work ethic because the grade will be based as much on the homework as the test scores. Every assignment has been developed to help you build a deeper understanding of the scientific content that is presented in the class sessions. Every examination will evaluate your conceptual knowledge, which requires far more depth than just memorizing factoids. I set the bar high in my courses because I want you to learn both the science content and the satisfaction of achieving something that took resolve. You need to take the time to read this document because it spells out important information about the course. If you do not read this, you are putting yourself behind everyone in the class who has done so because they will understand more than you about what to expect within the nontraditional format of the course...

Educational Outcomes: This class is designed to fulfill three of the eleven general education credit hours required in Section D1 (Science, Mathematics, and Technology) of the VSU core curriculum as prescribed by the University System of Georgia. The course will address the VSU Learning Outcome that states: *"Students will demonstrate understanding of the physical universe and the nature of science, and they will use scientific methods and/or mathematical concepts and reasoning to solve problems."* According to the VSU Undergraduate Course Catalog, BIOL 1010 is "an introduction to the diversity of life on Earth with a special emphasis on ecological and evolutionary processes and relationships." The BIOL 1020 Biodiversity Lab is a co-requisite that complements this course by covering parallel material.

Instructional Design: Given that the student/instructor ratio is over 150/1 there will be certain constraints, but efforts will be made to make this more than a mundane lecture class. Since memorization will not be enough to succeed in this biology class, we will use a variety of instructional methods to engage students and promote learning. The course is designed to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

BIOL 1010 Class Protocol

Email: We are going to use the Blazeview email for class. There is a certain standard of etiquette in higher education that is very different from the way you interact with your friends while texting. My VSU email is for emergencies.

Writing Assignments

Objectives: In order to encourage you to see the relevance of the topics covered in this course, there will be seven essays required as part of the course content. These assignments also have been designed to help you to learn, outside the classroom, through your own writing. Writing is an important way to learn because if you can construct sentences about something, it will organize your understanding in your mind or let you know that you need to seek more information about a subject. Papers are also an opportunity to display your knowledge through more than just exams. These assignments also allow you to pursue the connections between your own personal interests and what we cover in class, so you should take pride in them. If you do not follow the following guidelines, your grade will be reduced.

FOCUS: Well-crafted writing always has a specific purpose. Decide on a thesis for the assigned topic and a specific case you want to make before you start writing. Every composition should have a central idea. Your thesis should directly address the nature of the writing assignment. Write the thesis down and check throughout the writing process to be certain that the work supports it. Starting a paper can be the hardest step, so if you feel blocked, try brainstorming. Take a blank sheet of paper without lines, an

