

PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY I
Biology 1105 (Fall 2008) CRN: 90820
TR 9:30 – 10:45 AM, Litton-Reaves 1670

Instructor: Dr. Jill C. Sible
Derring 5029 (for office hours)
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Student Teaching Assistants: Paul Stevens (ptsteven@vt.edu) and John Welsh (jwelsh05@vt.edu)

Course Information: posted on Blackboard

Text: *Biology*, Raven, Johnson, Losos, Mason and Singer 8th ed. 2008

Office Hours: Jill: Tuesdays 1:30 – 3:00 PM in Derring 5029 or by appointment

Paul: Wednesdays 6:00 – 7:00 PM through chat room in Blackboard; John: Tuesdays 6:00 – 7:00 PM in Derring 5029

Learning Goals:

- 1) Students will develop an appreciation for and understanding of living systems, especially at the level of the molecule through the cell, which is the focus of this semester in the two – semester sequence,
- 2) Students will make connections to see how cells and molecules fit into the “bigger picture” topics of evolution, development and ecology.
- 3) Students will appreciate the approaches and tools that scientists apply to ask questions in biology and will begin to use some of the cognitive tools (e.g. model building) to construct their own knowledge of the subject matter.
- 4) Students will develop group and team learning skills that they can apply throughout their education at Virginia Tech.
- 5) Students will appreciate the ethical and social context in which biology is embedded and identify issues that are important to each of them.

iClickers: iClickers have been assigned and will be used during every class meeting except for exam days. Students are responsible for bringing their clickers (and only their own clickers) to class each time. Responses to clicker questions are automatically recorded and stored. Clickers are a valuable pedagogical tool to help me gauge student learning and adjust the class discussion accordingly. They are also an effective active learning tool to help students stay engaged during the class meeting and monitor their own learning. Finally, clickers provide valuable data that can help me work with students outside of class to identify areas of difficulty. Every clicker question answered contributes to extra credit applied to the next exam. Thus, clickers will boost your grade directly and indirectly.

Be certain to register your iClicker so that I can give you credit. iClickers can be registered at <http://www.iclicker.com/registration>. The only people who will have access to your individual iClicker responses are myself, the TAs, and you when you come to meet with us for help. Like your homework and exams, your individual iClicker responses will otherwise be confidential, and we will respect your privacy.

Evaluation: The grade for the course will be based on the following:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%
Final Exam	20 - 40%
Homework	20%

Exams 1 – 3 will be will in multiple choice format. They will cover the material discussed since the previous exam. The final exam (also multiple choice) will cover 2/3 old material and 1/3 new material (discussed since exam 3). If the final exam is higher than any of exams 1 – 3, it will count double (40%) and the lowest exam will be dropped.

Make-up Exams: You must take the exams during the times indicated in the syllabus. Make up exams will be given only with a letter from a physician or from the Dean's office. The make-up exams must be taken within one week of the originally scheduled exam time and may be given in essay format.

Homework Assignments: Homework assignments will accompany each reading assignment. The purpose of the homework is to guide your reading toward retention and understanding of the most important material. The homework questions will be available on the Assignments page of Blackboard at least 48 hours before they are due (by 9 AM before the class meeting on the syllabus). If they are not posted in this timely manner, then the entire class will receive full credit for that assignment. However, it is still in your best interest to complete the assignment at some point, as you will be held accountable for the material. Completion of readings and homework assignments will help you learn much of the factual material leaving class time for focusing on concepts, applications and the most challenging information.

Extra Credit: Active learning and formative assessments during class meeting times will be facilitated by the use of iClickers. Every clicker question answered will be tallied (regardless of whether the answer clicked was correct or incorrect) and extra credit will be assigned to the next exam based on the percentage of questions answered: 100% = 5 points, 80-99% = 3 points, 60-79% = 1 point

Grading: A = 90-100% B= 80-89% C= 70-79% D= 60-69% F= <60%

Pluses (+) and minuses (-) will be assigned to the final grade based on the overall class distribution but will only be assigned to the benefit of the student. For example, any student with a 90.00000% or above will earn an A, but a student with an 89.9% may be assigned an A- or B+ rather than a B.

Handouts:

Handouts will be posted on the web site before each class meeting. These handouts should be printed and brought to class. The handouts are not comprehensive class notes but will allow students to take fewer notes and to focus on listening, understanding, and discussion during class meetings. It is recommended that students read over the handouts before coming to class so that they are somewhat familiar with the vocabulary and material and better prepared and organized to learn. Most handouts will contain the basics of the Power Points but not necessarily the details.

Honor Code:

All participants in this course are expected to abide by the honor code (<http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu>). Bringing another student's clicker to class and submitting responses on his/her behalf is prohibited. If such behavior is identified, then both parties will lose their extra credit clicker points for the remainder of the semester. Random "clicker checks" may be performed at the end of each class.

Accommodations: Any student needing adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (learning disability, attention deficit disorder, psychological, physical, etc.), if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. I will respect your privacy and do everything I can to provide a supportive, comfortable, and safe learning environment.