

Biol 1010: Evolution & the Diversity of Life

Spring 2023 Tentative Course Syllabus for Section A

Department of Biology, College of Science & Mathematics, Valdosta State University
Meetings in 1011 Bailey Science Center – The Large Auditorium

Dr. Leslie S. Jones

Please Use Blazeview for All Routine Class Communications

Office: 1096 Bailey Science Center Phone: 219-1337 Email: lesliesj@valdosta.edu

Student Hours for Instructional Support will be in Room 1043 BSC: MW 1:00-2:00

Personal Appointments will be scheduled by Blazeview (BV) Email

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Sara Barrera (sebarrera@valdosta.edu)

Available for Meetings – Most Thursdays @ 3:30 in 1043 BSC – The Reef Lab

PAL Facilitator: Jacob Bruch (jtbruch@valdosta.edu) Sessions TBA

Sessions will be in scheduled soon and are also in 1043 BSC – The Reef Lab

What You Need to Know!!!

This Is Not a Typical Science Class

My Teaching Philosophy

I love science, and I want you to see how all of the Natural Science disciplines are connected around an organized conceptual framework. I also have an active personality and the “attention span of a flea.” I resent being forced to sit through anything boring, so I try to make my classes interesting.

If you look bored, I will speed up, so your best bet is not to do that or fool around. Thus, I can present information at a reasonable rate that allows you to take notes. If I speak too fast for you, I recommend taping the lectures. This way you can go back and add missed information to your notes.

➤ **If you make an effort, keep up, and do the assignments, you can pass this course!**

Course Objectives

Since most of you are taking this class to satisfy an Area D requirement in the Core Curriculum, I will structure the information to be **useful to people who are not biology majors**. The Core has been designed to give breadth to your education.

Area D centers on Natural Science, Math, and Technology to provide information about the physical universe and the nature of science using scientific methods and/or mathematical reasoning and concepts to solve problems. This particular class is described as “an introduction to the diversity of life on Earth with a special emphasis on ecological and evolutionary processes and relationships.”

Statement of Social Justice Commitment & Student Support

As an educator, I have a strong personal commitment to **teaching the principles of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)**. For me, **social justice is the most important part of being an American**. Concern for other people should not be depicted as a political issue when it is a matter of being human. When I see examples of discrimination, it breaks my heart because it is so unfair.

Therefore, as part of the course content, there will be relevant interdisciplinary lessons that connect biology to these social value issues:

- 1. Sex & Gender** to clarify the complexity of LGBTQ+ issues
- 2. Religion & Science** to highlight the importance of personal worldviews
- 3. Human Diversity** to demonstrate how “Race” was invented to justify racism and has no *biological* validity

I support all students regardless of immigration status or country of origin. As a Dreamer Ally, I support Dreamer students and promote their sense of belonging and safety as they pursue their higher education goals. A helpful site is https://international.uoregon.edu/immigration_faq. I commit to not sharing your status with anyone if you reveal it to me. I also remind you that **when interacting with faculty, staff, and offices around campus you are never required to reveal your immigration status**.

Your Grade Depends on Your Effort

Attendance– **10%**

SmartBook Assignments – **10%**

Practice Pretests (2/13, 3/20, 4/24) – **10%**

KRITIK Writing Assignments Average Grade – **20%**

Unit Tests – Multiple Choice – Each is 10% for **30% Total**

Comprehensive Final Exam – **20%**

✓ Personal Responsibility

- You must keep track of all assignment deadlines - **late work will not be accepted!!!**
- SmartBook & Pretest assignments should be completed early because those deadlines are final.
 - **If you miss a unit test** for any reason, you must notify me within 24 hours.
- Make-up tests will only be given for legitimate reasons and will be Essay Exams.
- Your grades will be posted in Blazeview, so you will know where you stand.
 - If that is not the grade you want for the semester, make more effort on the assignments!

✓ Attendance Policy

- You are expected to attend all class meetings because the **tests are based on the lectures.**
- You will not understand the course enough to pass unless you are present.
- **Exchange contact information with 3 classmates – in case you need something, or you miss class.**
- Being tardy or leaving early will be recorded; **more than 3** of these will be considered an absence.
 - If you do miss class for any reason, you are responsible for obtaining the notes from a classmate.

Sara, your GTA, is completely responsible for all attendance matters – please contact her (Thursdays after class)

- She will scan your ID card, before class, outside the entrances on the West side.
 - If you arrive after 2:00, you must go upstairs & enter the back of the room.
- Sit in the Tardy Section, and you can **Sign in on the Tardy Sheet after class** (3 Tardies = 1 Absence)
- **NO exceptions** for missing the computer check will be made later in the semester.
 - If you need to leave early on any day, mention this before class to the GTA
- Sit in the back of the room so you can leave easily without disturbing the class.

Email her in BV if you have any issues – She decides if absences are excused!

- If you have a legitimate reason for missing class, it can be excused if:
 1. Obtain the notes and write a 300-word paragraph.
 2. Summarize the topic using key vocabulary and terminology used in the lecture.
- **Send these to the GTA within 2 weeks by BV email** with the date & your reason for missing that class.

Anyone who misses more than 20% of the class sessions will receive a failing grade for the course

Here is how your attendance grade will be calculated:

No Absences at ALL	125%
1 Absence	100%
2 Absences	75%
3 Absences	50%
4 Absences	25%
More than 4	0%
More than 6	Course Failure

Attendance will count as 10% of the final grade

Textbook

Biology: Concepts & Investigations (5th Ed.) Marielle Hoefnagels (2021)

- Your eBook account was in the DAY 1 Program – you can log in now.
- **11 SmartBook** assignments are listed on the Schedule & Posted in BV.
 - **These books introduce/remind you of vocabulary that is important before lecture.**
- For Tests, be sure to reread the parts of chapters on what was covered in class.
- **3 Graded Unit Pretests** allow you to check your preparation and need to study more.

Kritik Peer Grading

Students Grade Other Students' Written Papers through a Systematic, Anonymous Peer Evaluation

- Writing is a way for you to learn the science being taught while also giving you space to express your personal opinions.
- Papers are an alternative to tests as a way to show your effort and understanding.
- **Every college graduate should be able to write effectively!**
- Each Unit will include 1-2 Peer-Reviewed Assignments to evaluate your knowledge.
- **KRITIK** is a new program that will help you write better by seeing what others do.

3 Topical Units each culminate in a test (10% of the grade)

- These are conceptual, multiple-choice tests with ~75-100 questions including some sequences.
 - **Test Dates will be on: February 21st, March 28th, April 25th.**
- Scantron scores will be posted on Blazeview ASAP, but you will know how you did.

Comprehensive Final Exam will take place in the classroom on Wednesday, May 3rd - 2:45 – 4:45 pm

Everything we cover or discuss in class can be included in this final evaluation.

- You are expected to have a conceptual understanding of this information.

Emails - Please Use My Blazeview (BV) Email for All Class Matters!!!

My VSU email: lesliesj@valdosta.edu should only be used if it is urgent.

To be safe, you need to **Check Your Blazeview Email OFTEN** (several times per week) for updates.

- Class emails are not text messages and are expected to be written coherently.
 - My title is **Dr. Jones**, and you should start any email with that included in a greeting.
 - Mrs. Jones is my mother, and I can forward your emails to her if you want...?
- 1. The first thing you should do is tell me **which of my classes you are in** because I have several.
- 2. The next sentence should contain the **reason for your message**.
- 3. After you explain yourself, you should close the message properly.

Instructional Support

- I am replacing the idea of "Office Hours" because Covid STILL makes it hard to meet in my office.
 - **We will be in the lab (1043) from 3:30 – 4:30 every Tues & Thurs right after class.**

Our class has an embedded PAL from the ASC – Jacob will hold regular sessions that will be announced.

- **You will receive 1 point of Extra Credit on your final grade if you attend 5 of those sessions**

The ASC – Academic Success Center – provides unlimited, in-person, free tutoring

→ Contact information: 229-333-7570, email asc@valdosta.edu, or visit the website www.valdosta.edu/asc for more information

- **VSU provides 10 hours of free tutoring via Tutor.com** (Available 24/7) – Click the BV Link.

Required Technology Platforms

LMS - Blazeview (BV): Learning Management System - Your VSU Account

- This will be used for **ALL** class communication, writing assignments, and access to various resources. (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/elearning/blazeview-d2l.php>)

KRITIK - A peer-grading platform designed for fair and accurate assessments

- You need an invitation to join this program.
- This uses evaluation through the collective intelligence of your classmates.
- Your participation as an evaluator will strengthen your content knowledge & writing skills.
- Your Creation (Paper Composition) is 50%; your 3 Evaluations are 40%; your Responses are 10%.
- Read the instructions for each paper and look at the rubric which will be the basis of the evaluation.

CMS - McGraw Hill (MH) Connect: Course Management System – **SmartBook & Pretests**

- You can start early for all chapters in each unit. **Missed Deadlines = 0% No Exceptions!**
- The program contains a complete electronic version of the textbook – click on the book cover on the right.
- **SmartBook** – pre-reading will be assigned, allowing you to work until you reach 100%.
 - This adaptive program adjusts to every student's individual skills and content knowledge.
 - Prompts drill on vocabulary and basic concepts in preparation for class.
 - Exercises take longer if you do not read the book.
 - Work as long as you want to get 100%.
 - These are much "lower order" questions than you should expect on class tests.
- **Pretests** – consist of 50 questions, randomly selected from a large pool
 - These can be taken 3 times, and only your best grade will be reported.
 - They are each due at midnight on the day before the Unit Tests.

McGraw Hill (MH) Customer Support - Call (800) 331-5094

- If you have any problems with these programs...
 1. First try another Browser.
 2. Then, shut down your computer and restart it or try another computer.
 3. Go to campus and use a computer in the lab if you must.
 - The MH people are supposed to take care of any problem, but in case they do not, get the **Case Number**.
 - If MH does not help you, then email me in Blazeview and be sure to send me the Case Number.

Class Decorum

- When class begins at **2:00**, be prepared to begin taking notes in writing or on a laptop.
 - You are more than welcome to record the lectures to playback later.
 - I encourage you to snap images of key slides on your phones.
 - **It is very easy for us to tell if you are texting, so don't do that in class!**
- This is a large class and getting up distracts your classmates.
 - You should **only get up during class if you have a personal emergency**.
 - *Phone calls can wait* even if it is your mother or someone that important!
- Class ends at 3:15. I can tell the time, so we will usually end just before the designated time.
 - Please do not fidget or rattle your book bags until the minute hand is horizontal.
 - Then you can make a fuss, **unless I beg you to give me a few more seconds**.

Biol 1010 – Spring 2023 – Tentative Weekly Outline

Topic	SmartBook	Assignments
Unit 1: The Nature of Science		
1. Opening		
1/10 – Petals around the Rose		
1/12 – Patterns in Nature		
2. The Natural World		
1/17 – Levels of Organization		
1/19 – Holism & Reductionism	Ch.1	Alphabetical Review Homework
3. Science		
1/24 – The Disciplines		Academic Challenges Paper
1/26 – Reasoning: Induction & Deduction		Creation (1/23)
		Evaluation (1/26)
		Response (1/28)
4. Sex & Gender		
1/31 – The Biology of Sex	Ch.35	
2/2 – The Cultural Construction of Gender		
5. Life		
2/7 – Characteristics of Life		Sex & Gender Paper (2/6,9,11)
2/9 – Emergent Properties		
6. Transition to Unit 2: Evolution		
2/14 – Unit 1 Test – The Natural World		Pretest Due 2/13
2/16 – Social Religious Controversy that Surrounded Evolution		
7. History of Evolution		
2/21 – Origins	Ch.15	
2/23 – Evidence	Ch.13	Worldview Paper (2/23,26,28)
8. Types of Selection		
2/28 – Artificial	Ch.12	
3/2 – Natural		
Midterm 3/2 & Last Day to Drop Classes 3/9		
9. Change over Time		
3/7 – Speciation	Ch.14	
3/9 – Patterns, Rates, & Extinctions		
XXXXXXX – SPRING BREAK (3/13-3/17)		
10. Human Evolution		Evolution Unit Paper (3/20,23,25)
3/21 – Migrations		
3/23 – Skin Colors		
11. Transition to Unit 3: Biodiversity		
3/28 – Unit 2 Test – Evolution		Pretest Due 3/27
3/30 – Human Diversity Is Not Race		
12. Microbes		
4/4 – Prokaryotes	Ch.17	
4/6 – Eukaryotes (& Protists)	Ch.18	Racism Paper (4/3,5,7)
13. Flora		
4/11 – Biomes	Ch.39	
4/13 – Plants	Ch.19	
14. Fungi & Fauna		
4/18 – Fungi	Ch.20	
4/20 – Animal Adaptations		Biodiversity Unit Paper (4/14,17,19)
15. Culmination		
4/25 – Unit 3 Test – Biodiversity		Pretest Due 4/24
4/27 – Social Significance of Science & Exam Review		

Comprehensive Final Exam – Wednesday, May 3rd – 2:45 – 4:45 pm in BSC Lecture Hall 1011

Writing to Think & Writing to Learn

You Will Be Graded on Something Beyond Your Ability to Take multiple choice Tests

Academic Challenges Essay:

- Gives you a low stake (less important and counted for a smaller portion of the essay grade) chance.
- This is deliberately a chance for you to learn the KRITIK system.
- You will have 2 sets of the basically same instructions for all 6 essays.
- One is on KRITIK, and the other will be my explanation in class.

Reflective Essays on Sociocultural Issues:

- As you encounter new and different ideas, it is good to engage in some introspection.
- **Feel free to discuss and even go deeper in any way that interests you.**
- These can be either from class or beyond what we discuss.
- You can make a clear distinction between different sides of the topics if there is a debate.
- You are more than welcome to write an entire paper on what you think, especially if it is the opposite view.
 - Just support your case with convincing ideas. *Make an argument for a different perspective!*
 - Be sure you use a **thesis** that addresses the **Objective of the Assignment that is posted on KRITIK.**

Science Content Reviews for Evolution & Biodiversity Units:

- Review each lesson sequentially.
- These lessons prepare you for the Unit Tests.
- Evaluate the content that has been covered in this unit by writing out detailed paragraphs.
- Organize descriptive paragraphs that cover the entire unit, lesson by lesson.
- Summarize the whole unit in **Introductory & Concluding paragraphs.**
- Distinguish the significance of critical vocabulary.
- Demonstrate your confident ability to explain science.
 - After you submit yours, you will be evaluating 3 others that classmates wrote.
 - This allows you to get their perspectives on the science.
 - **That is the very best way to study for those Unit Tests!!!**
 - If you do not submit a "Creation" in KRITIK, **you will get a zero for the assignment.**
- You also will not see any other papers in the "Evaluation" process.

"Writing to Learn" is a strategy that ensures you will wrap your brain around important material before a test. If you can write sentences in your own words about the content, it will enhance your confidence. **You can only compose these essays if you can use your knowledge of the subject.**

Requirements and Tips

No citations should be in these essays!

- If it is science, the convention is not to cite widely known facts.
- You are writing personal essays, so I do not want quotes from other people.
- Think about what you read, then write your own interpretation of that in your own words.
 - That is called paraphrasing!
 - You can use phrases of up to 3-4 words that you find, especially if it is new language for you.

I strongly suggest that you write these papers in word using the spell and grammar checks

- The point of these writing exercises is to strengthen your writing skills.
- You will be graded down for typos & other errors.
- Punctuation is also important, so use commas in appropriate places.
- Write a draft early and go see a tutor at the ASC if you need help.
- Also, Sara is an English major, so you may ask her for help on Thursday after class.

These should always be close to, but are absolutely limited to only one page

- Three other people have to read your paper, so this limit is important.
- The rough estimate of the absolute limit is about 700 words.
- These papers are to be single-spaced.
- If yours is long, reduce your margins and/or the size type to be sure it only is 1 page before you submit it.

When you evaluate others, remember what I said about starting with something affirming (kind)

- If you are not sure about any of the scientific content in their paper, please look it up.
- Use the glossary of the text or on the Web such as Wikipedia.
- In most cases, they should only be discussing the material we covered in the class lessons.
- Clarify anything they have misstated because this will help them.
- More importantly, it will also strengthen your understanding.

General Information

Everything That Must Be Stated for Everyone's Protection

Cheating Will Not Be Tolerated!

Members of the class are expected to maintain high standards of integrity. This course will use the VSU Handbook Code of Ethics as a basic standard of behavior. Everyone in the class is expected to read the Biology Department Plagiarism Policy posted at: <http://www.valdosta.edu/colleges/arts-sciences/biology/documents/resources/PlagiarismPolicy.pdf> Evidence of dishonest conduct or cheating will result in no credit for the assignment and depending on the case, a grade of "F" for the course.

Do not expect leniency for claims on the grounds of not knowing better. By taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin, a tool within Blazeview. For more information on the use of Turnitin at VSU see [Turnitin for Students](#). You will be reported to the Dean of Students and letter of concern documenting the problem will be sent to the College of Education. Be aware that employers such as school systems do call that office at VSU to check on whether you have a record of infractions.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

Grades cannot be posted by Name or Social Security Number. Scores and student work will not be given over the telephone, by email or to another student. Faculty members can't speak to parents without a student signing a consent form that is filed in the registrar's office.

Non-Discrimination and Title IX Statement

Valdosta State University (VSU) upholds all applicable laws and policies regarding discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, political affiliation, or disability. The University prohibits specific forms of behavior that violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities that receive federal funding. VSU considers sex discrimination in any form to be a serious offense. Title IX refers to all forms of sex discrimination committed against others, including but not limited to: sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence by other employees, students or third parties and gender inequity or unfair treatment based on an individual's sex/gender. The designated Title IX Coordinator for VSU is Mr. Darius Thomas. To view the policy or to report an incident visit: <https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/title-ix/>

Accommodations Statement:

Students with disabilities who are experiencing barriers in this course may contact the Access Office (<https://www.valdosta.edu/student/disability/>) for assistance in determining and implementing reasonable accommodations. Please note, you will be required to provide documentation from an appropriately licensed medical professional indicating the requested accommodations are medically necessary. The Access Office is located in University Center Room 4136 Entrance 5. The phone numbers are 229-245-2498 (V), 229-375-5871. For more information, please visit VSU's Access Office or email: access@valdosta.edu.

Mental Health Support:

Mental Health services are available and treatment does work. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on campus at <https://www.valdosta.edu/hopeconnect>

If you, or someone you know, needs support, is distressed, or exhibits concerning behavior, help by making a referral to the BIT Team. <https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/bit.php>

To request reasonable accommodations for pregnancy and childbirth, please contact the Christina Kidd 333-5941