**General Biology Syllabus 2015**

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**Teacher websites and additional class information can be found on the WDHS website http://www.wdbqschools.org/) under school staff.**

**Text:** *Biology,* Stephen Nowicki, Holt McDougal Pub.

**Tentative Schedule**

**The following is a tentative schedule as to when and what chapters will be covered in Biology for first trimester.**

**Unit 1: Introduction to Biology (Chapter 1)**

**Unit 2: Cells, Energy, Photosynthesis & Cellular Respiration (Chapter 4)**

**Unit 3: Cells Growth and Division (Chapter 5)**

**Cumulative Final**

**Biology Class**: The following are specific core characteristics regarding each student’s performance and final grade evaluation.

1. **Quizzes/Exams**: There will be quizzes over the sections learned. These will primarily be objective questions (multiple choice, short answer, etc.) and will not count towards the student’s final grade. Each chapter test may include information learned from the chapter preceding it. ***A number of questions are higher order thinking, including analysis, application, inferences and evaluations. Graphs, charts and diagrams are often part of exams. There will also be an end of the year test.***
2. **Participation**: All students are expected to participate within biology class. Participation is used as another form of formative assessment and again does not count against the student’s final grade. Participation can take place through the student’s completion of homework, participation in class discussion and activities, and attendance. If a student has an excused absence and completes any missed work within the one day allotted for makeup work, there will be no deduction in points.
3. **Class:** Students are expected to come to class, on time, each day. Missed class time will be detrimental to doing well in environmental, and may put students behind with assignments and overall concept development. If a student misses a class, it is their responsibility to meet with the instructor for any information/assignments missed. ***Any missed assignments will be due the NEXT DAY.***
4. **Help:** It is the student’s responsibility to come and ask for help on concepts they might not understand. Study Tables are available Monday-Thursday 3:15-5:00 pm. and Monday – Friday 7:00-7:45 pm. *Students are highly encouraged to arrange times with their instructor to seek help.* Missed exams must be made up As Soon As Possible. This is the responsibility of the student. Set up a time with your instructor to do so.
5. **Student Review**: Chapter worksheets will be available for each section. These worksheets will be used as enhancement tools of the biological concepts and ideas. If you would like to review for the test, use the study guides or power notes. You may find these worksheets at **classzone.com (username/password: wdhsteacher).**
6. **Homework:** As a school district we are currently in the process of revisiting our grading procedures to more accurately portray what a student understands, knows, and is able to do. To accomplish this goal, students will not receive any points for homework in my classroom. This may sound as though homework is less important; however, the opposite is true. The expectation for students is that their homework is completed for the day it is due. They must complete the homework because this helps foster a commitment to learning. Homework is designed as practice and practice will not be graded. A student’s grade will reflect what they know after a chance to practice.
7. **Activities/Labs/Projects**: As a school district we are currently in the process of revisiting our grading procedures to more accurately portray what a student understands, knows, and is able to do. To accomplish this goal, students will not receive any points for projects in my classroom. This may sound as though projects are less important; however, the opposite is true. The expectation for students is that their projects are completed for the day it is due. They must complete the project because this helps foster a commitment to learning and working with others. Projects are designed as enrichment and enrichment will not be graded. A student’s grade will reflect what they know after a chance to practice and application.
8. **Formatives (Daily Checks):** Students will participate in a daily check based on the previous day’s learning targets. Questions for the daily check may contain homework problems and questions similar to what they might expect on their final test. My goal with daily checks is to informally assess what students know and understand and what concepts need to be re-taught. In order to use daily checks as information for re-teaching, it is not acceptable to grade the daily checks. If a student performs poorly on a daily check they will participate in a re-teaching opportunity. Re-teaching may happen during class time during individual work time in small groups or during bobcat period. These groups are constantly changing, but I will be able to better assess what specific needs each student has and provide direct instruction as I progress through the learning process. Daily check scores will be recorded in Campus, but will not count against the student’s grade because again the checks are designed as practice and intended for information. They are recorded in Campus as a communication tool for other teachers, parents and the students to monitor their progress.
9. **Summative Assessments (Tests):** Summative assessments will be the **most** important grade students will receive. The summative assessment grades will be the only grades entered into campus that count and will therefore make up a student’s percent and letter grade. An end of unit summative assessment is the time for students to show what they know and understand after multiple practice opportunities and re-teaching. The hope is for each student to be ready to take each assessment and be able to demonstrate understanding. However, if a student earns an assessment score they are not pleased with, students willing to put in the extra effort and time will be allowed to retake any test.
10. **Grading:** It is not the normal homework and test grading system. I grade based on the NGSS. Standards are measured through Unit Tests and reported in Campus. Every Standard is evaluated using a 4 point rating scale:
    * 0/M- Did Not Attempt- I did not try to do the work
    * 1- Beginning- I really have NO IDEA what I’m doing
    * 2- Developing- I get the basics but still need A LOT of help
    * 3- Proficient- I get everything, just not in great depth
    * 4- Strong- I GET IT! I could teach this to someone
    * NO EXTRA CREDIT
    * ***3.5, 2.5, and 1.5 scores may also be used.***

When visiting campus online you will be able to view what rating your child received on each standard (0-4). This communicates to what degree your child has met the standard and provides more information on specific skills.

**Assessment Retake Policy**

**A student will only be allowed to retake an assessment if they have no late or missing assignments.**

If a student fails an assessment they will be required to retake an alternative assessment, within two weeks of the original assessment date. A retake will only occur after a student has reviewed the initial assessment, charted data from the assessment and met with the instructor to ensure the student is prepared for a retake. Additionally, if a student wishes to retake an assessment, they must provide a written response outlining why the assessment was failed. The written statement will be used as a guide by the instructor to assist the student to understand the material. Students who fail an assessment do not have any other option but to provide the written statement and retake the assessment.

If a student is consistently performing poorly, a time outside of class will be set up for additional support and instruction. As such, students should not fail environmental science.

Students who did not fail but did not perform as well as they would have liked on the assessment will also have an opportunity to better their score. The student will need to provide a written response outlining why the student wishes to retake the assessment and set up a time outside of class to redo the work. Additionally, the student must complete preliminary work as assigned by the instructor prior to the retake. Students will have **one** try to improve their grade. The higher of the two scores will be used.