



Mercy High School San Francisco

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A College Preparatory High School for Young Women

AP Biology Class Guidelines

Mrs. Howett, Room 306 (2009-2010)

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Course Description:

AP Biology is a rigorous course taught at the college level. AP Biology is equivalent to the first year of biology offered at many universities throughout the country. You will be using a college level textbook, complete college level units and explore the complex and exciting world of biology by performing college level labs. This course is designed to meet the requirements of the Advanced Placement Exam in Biology. You will be required to take the AP Biology exam which will be on May 10th, 2010 at 8:00 am. The AP testing fee is \$86.00.

This course will be conducted at the college level and students are expected to work accordingly. Students will be expected to come to class prepared and on time. *The overall success of this program depends, in large part, on each student meeting their individual responsibilities.* A significant part of this course will be covered independently by each student. Allowances should be made for *substantial study time*.

Major themes in Advanced Placement Biology:

Throughout the year we will be exploring the following major themes in biology:

- Science as a process
- Evolution
- Energy transfer
- Continuity and change
- Relationship of structure to function
- Regulation
- Interdependence in nature
- Science, technology and society

Laboratory Component:

There are 12 laboratory experiments that are part of the AP Biology curriculum. Because of the nature of the length of many of the AP Biology labs, labs will be started during class time but will occasionally need to be conducted before school, after school or during lunch. Students are expected to attend all lab sessions. If you are unable to attend a lab session it is your responsibility to get the information you missed from your lab partners. You will be tested on the materials from the labs on the AP exam!

Textbook:

Campbell, Neil and J. Reece, 2004. *Biology*, 7th Edition, Benjamin/Cummings, San Francisco, CA.

Notebook:

All students should maintain an orderly notebook. You might want to have a 1" three-ringed binder for current work (lecture notes, handouts and study guide assignments) and a large 3" three-ring binder to

store all of your materials as we finish each unit. The more organized you are the easier it will be to study for the AP exam!

Attendance:

If you have an excused absence on the day of a test or quiz, then you may make up the test or quiz. The test/quiz is to be made up the day that you return with Mrs. Howett or in one of the Science Labs after school. You will need to take your test/quiz within one week of your absence. Otherwise you will receive a zero on that test/quiz. In cases of extended illness, other arrangements will be made.

Tardies:

You are tardy if you are not in your assigned seat and ready to work when the bell rings. For unexcused tardies you will receive a detention. Excessive tardies will lead to a lowered grade in class.

You will not be allowed to leave the lab during class for any reason, unless a pass comes for you from the office. But, at the start of each semester, you will be given a magical hall pass (“The Howett Hall Pass”) that you may use 3 times, in an emergency. *If you do not use this hall pass during the semester, I will collect it from you, and I will add 9 extra credit points to your lowest homework grade.*

Late Assignments:

Assignments are expected to be turned in on time in order to receive full-credit. **Late homework assignments will not be accepted** (unless there is an excused absence). Late lab reports and class projects will only be granted a maximum of 50% of the points possible. If there is a group project and one member is absent, the other members of the group still need to turn in their part of the work on time. Once corrected labs have been passed back to the class, a late lab will not be accepted.

Cheating/Copying:

Copying, or letting someone copy your work is considered academic dishonesty, or cheating. Notes taken from your textbook must be in YOUR OWN WORDS. Plagiarism and using unauthorized materials during tests is also considered cheating. You will receive a zero and be referred to the assistant principal.

Grading:

All students are expected to maintain a grade of at least a “C” at all times during the year.

Your semester grade will be based on points earned from:

Homework (~10%)

Homework will be posted on the board. You are responsible for checking the homework board each day. Homework assignments are due the following class period unless otherwise specified. On the day of each test you will turn in your “Homework Packet” with all of the assignments from that unit.

Labs/Projects (~20%)

You will be given the proper format for a written lab report and this should be followed. Lab reports **MUST BE HANDWRITTEN** in your laboratory Composition Book. Points will be deducted if your lab area is not cleaned or if you are not working “on task” during labs. Lab reports are usually worth 20-40 points. Projects are usually worth 40-60 points.

Exams/Quizzes (~50%)

Exams will be given according to the AP Biology exam format (60% objective, 40% essay). Tests are about 40-55 points. Quizzes are about 15-25 points.

Final Exam (~20%)

The First semester final exam will be the same format as tests. Second semester, you will take a practice AP exam prior to the AP Biology exam, which will count as 25% of your final exam grade. For second semester you will also have a project/presentation for your final exam grade, which will count for 75% of your final exam grade.

Grading scale:

A	95-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	75-79%	D+	60-64%	F	0-49%
A-	90-94%	B	83-86%	C	70-74%	D	55-59%		
		B-	80-82%	C-	65-69%	D-	50-54%		

AP Biology Class Rules

While in Biology class, you will be expected to:

- Bring all needed materials to class each day.
- Be in your seat and prepared for class when the bell rings.
- Participate in all class activities and class discussions.
- Show respect for yourself, others and the teacher.
- Take notes during the lectures. You will need these notes later to pass the exams!
- Respect school property and the property of others. Do not write on the lab tables or computers.
- Have FUN !!!



Lab Safety Rules

When we are performing experiments or labs, you will be expected to:

- Follow all instructions and safety precautions carefully.
- Know how to locate all safety equipment.
- Actively participate in the lab.
- Never eat or drink while in the lab.
- Be responsible for your lab equipment.
- Always carry microscopes with two hands and return them to the shelf at the end of the period.
- Dispose of lab materials as instructed and clean your lab area before leaving the lab – otherwise points will be taken off.
- Always wash your hands before leaving the lab.



Computer Usage Rules

- Do not turn on the computer unless directed by the teacher.
- Do not change the desktops background image.
- Do not write on the computers or the desks. Report any writing to the teacher at the beginning of class or you will be held responsible.
- Always log off and shut down the computers at the end of class.
- Do not save to the hard drive. Save to your own disk.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN ACTIONS. If you CHOOSE to violate the class rules, you also CHOOSE to accept the consequences.

AP Biology may possibly be the most difficult course you have ever attempted. If take seriously, it will be a rewarding experience. Good Luck!!

[Please sign and return this form to Mrs. Howett (rm. 306) by _____]

I understand that AP Biology requires extensive reading and independent work. I have read and agree to the AP Biology Class Guidelines and the “Safety in the Biology Laboratory” Guidelines.

_____ Student name (print)	_____ Student #	_____ Period
_____ Student signature	_____ Date	
_____ Parent/Guardian signature	_____ Date	

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