

Minnesota Biology Syllabus

Instructor: Mr. Dokken (Room 315)

Office Hours: Available by appointment. I am also around school from 7-7:50 am.

Course Description

This class is designed for students who have an interest in our local environment, its ecology, and the organisms that inhabit it. This 1 trimester course will survey Minnesota's plants and animals from basic identification, classification, physiology and behaviors. The course will focus on our trees, mammals and birds of our state. Additional topics will be the geological history of MN as well as environmental issues that affect MN. Field experiences outside of the classroom will include visits to our regional and state parks and undertaking an on-site restoration of our prairies.

Class Structure

Class materials: Please come to class prepared. You will need to bring the following materials to class each day:

- pencil/pen, 3 ring binder (with 5 dividers), calculator, colored pencils, scissors
- You may also wish to have a ruler, highlighter, and glue available

Attendance: You should come to class each day. If you are absent, you are responsible for determining what you have missed, getting make-up work, and getting missed notes. See me right away if you missed class. School rules apply to tardiness and unexcused absences. NOTE: You are counted tardy if you are not in your seat when the bell rings.

Quizzes & Exams: There will be formative quizzes throughout each unit. Exams will be given at the end of each unit and will include multiple choice, true/false, matching, and essay questions.

Labs & Homework: There will be homework and labs throughout the course. We will do as many labs as possible and you are expected to cooperate with your lab groups to get the best grades possible on lab work.

Class Website: There are Google Classroom and Moodle sites for this class where you can find copies of all notes, homework, handouts, and a link to the homework index for each unit that also contains due dates.

Lab Fee: There is a \$15 lab donation for this course to cover lab materials.

Grading Policy

Grades for this class are weighted so that formative work (homework, quizzes, and classwork) is worth 20% of your grade. Summative work (exams and grad standards) is worth 80% of your grade.

Percentage Scale:

A- 90%-93%	A 94% and above	
B- 80%-83%	B 84%-86%	B+ 87%-89%
C- 70%-73%	C 74%-76%	C+ 77%-79%
D- 60%-63%	D 64%-66%	D+ 67%-69%

LATE WORK POLICY: Each assignment earns one stamp (two points) in your assignment index while each late assignment earns one late stamp (1 point). Work for each unit is due the day of the unit exam.

*Do not wait until the end of the term to turn in work...it will not help your grade!

Course Expectations

We have specific expectations of each of you while you are taking this class. We expect the following:

Respect for yourself and your quality of work for the semester. I expect you to try your best and produce the best work you can. You all start to class with an A and your job is to maintain that grade for the rest of the semester. It won't be easy but you are all capable of maintaining it!

Respect for each person in the room. This includes listening to others and remaining quiet while they are speaking or working. When asking questions or asking for help during labs, please raise your hands. I will see your hand before I hear your voice and if I am helping someone else, I don't want to be interrupted. Your turn will come soon...be patient. During labs, trust yourself to be able to figure things out and solve problems before asking for help.

Respect the environment in which you are working. This includes the place that you are in during class, whether inside or outside. All organisms, materials, and equipment will be maintained and used appropriately. Before you leave each day, ALL of your materials need to be put away and lab stations cleaned (depending on activity). This includes garbage, papers, and anything else you have used in class.

Closing Comments

This course can be challenging and enjoyable! It is important to stay on task and up to date. If there are any things you are excited to learn about, let me know and maybe we will be able to spend a day on some of your favorite topics! In order to be successful, I have a few suggestions: (1) stay organized, (2) participate in class each day, (3) turn in your homework on time, and (4) ask questions when you need help. I hope you enjoy the course!

“He who never fell never climbed.”

-Anonymous