Advance Biology Syllabus: Course Overview & Expectations

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Welcome to Advance Biology! Biology, in the simplest definition, is the study of life.
As one of the many areas of science it is a study and inquiry of how life interacts with the natural world. I am excited to explore this fascinating and incredible subject with you in the coming school year.

Course Description: What is this course all about?
Throughout this course we will learn about the extraordinary life that surrounds us. You will learn about the basic building blocks of life, the diversity and organization of life, how organisms use resources to stay alive, how life can change over time, and how organisms grow, reproduce, and pass on their characteristics to their offspring. We will examine these amazing achievements through a variety of labs, inquiry activities, and group/individual projects over the course of the year. The Course Organizer details when topics will be presented throughout the year. This advance course is specifically designed and implemented to meet the needs of students requiring enhanced and rigorous curriculum. Topics will be discussed in greater detail and, consequently, will be examined at a faster and more challenging pace.

Course Structure: How will the course work?
The course will be broken into a number of units, usually three to five weeks each. Units will begin with a pre-assessment approximately a week before beginning the unit. Review of state determined learning standards followed by labs, inquiry activities, projects, presentations, reading from a variety of sources, discussions, graphic organizers, writing, models, demonstrations, etc in order for our class to achieve proficiency of learning standards. Classes will generally begin with a warm-up to review a previous lesson's objectives or prepare students for the day's learning standard; learning objectives will be presented on the board and discussed. Lesson activities will be designed to meet the needs of all learners and are differentiated by readiness, ability, and/or interest. To ensure that students designated as "Talented and Gifted" (TAG) receive academic instruction that is appropriate to their rate and level of learning, the curriculum and instruction of this course may be differentiated to include specialized groupings, compacting of curriculum, accelerated pacing, and providing of extension/challenge activities. Please check and use Mr. Rott's website as it will contain useful information.

This course will be conducted as part of the TTSD Technology grant and each student will use a Google Chromebook during class to complete, save, and submit work electronically.

Course Assessment & Grading:

<u>Proficiency & Standards Based Grading</u>
This course will be conducted using proficiency and standards based grading. Each unit will have corresponding standards that students must meet in order to meet or exceed proficiency. These standards have been created through combination of State Science Benchmarks and ACT College Readiness Standards. Each unit will conclude with an assessment of the unit's corresponding standards. Students will have opportunities to prepare for the unit assessment through labs, practice problems, discussion, and projects. Additionally students will be assessed throughout each unit on Career Related Standards (CRLS): Scientific Planning, Data Collection & Analysis, Application of Science, Teamwork, Work Ethic, and Communication. The mode of each these CRLS standards will contribute to a students overall grade.

<u>Practice, Labs & Notes</u>
Each unit will have a corresponding section on my website. These pages will contain all instructional materials, handouts, and instructions. Students will turn in work as well as notes and labs electronically

either through Google Documents or posting to their individual class blog. This will be primarily a paperless course; assignments, documents, and information will be provided and assessed electronically.

Assessments

Assessments will be conducted through a test, lab, or project designed to determine the student's knowledge of the unit standards. Students can meet proficiency for each standard by receiving a 75% or better on the particular standard. If a student does not meet proficiency for any standard, they will be provided two additional opportunities to meet proficiency for that standard(s) (or work with Mr. Rott to develop an alternative assessment). Unit proficiency should be met before the next unit's assessment.

Grading

Students must meet proficiency for all unit standards in order to pass each semester. Grades in this course are based on the goal that all students become proficient in all course standards. Grades for standards will be recorded in the following manner:

- ***Exceeds Proficiency:*** ***5***
- ***Meets Proficiency:*** ***4***
- ***Not Yet Proficient:*** ***1***

Final grades will be determined in the following manner:

How semester grades are determined:		
To earn an A	To earn a B	To earn a C
Meet proficiency (4) for all content standards **and** exceed proficiency (5) on at least 2/3 of semester standards	Meet proficiency (4) for all content standards **and** exceed proficiency (5) on at least 1/3 of semester standards	Meet proficiency (4) on all content semester standards

Final grades are determined at the end of each semester, using the entire body of student work. **Averages and percentages will not be used, and should be disregarded on eSIS**. Instead, eSIS will be used to present students' meeting, exceeding, or not yet proficient. **Zero's indicate the student did not complete work for that standard**. CRLS standards will be updated continually updated throughout the semester at a minimum of once per quarter based on student performance. At the end of each reporting period, the final CRLS score will be posted on eSIS.

Getting Help

Biology can be a difficult subject. I will do my best to be available to students and parents. Each unit page on my website will have valuable resources to help students as well as contact information. If you need help with any part of the class, ask for help! This includes organization, unit material, studying & reading strategies, staying focused in class, or applying concepts. I can't help if I don't know there is a problem, so ask!

Course Expectations:

Biology is an amazingly interesting and stimulating subject. My promise to you is that I will do my best to make the subject interesting, engaging, and comprehendible (even if it may not be your favorite subject, yet). Additionally, I will work to ensure our classroom is a place of enthusiastic rigor where learning can occur and everyone feels a part of the community. Tualatin High School's three expectations: Responsible, Respectful, and Safe will be followed by everyone, including myself. We will spend time discussing what this means in class while creating a classroom community agreement. Please don't harass Phyllis.

- Responsible: Be responsible for your learning by getting arriving to class on time and prepared and asking for help if you need it!
- Respectful: Treat others with respect and dignity
- Safe: Practice safe laboratory behavior and inform Mr. Rott of accidents

Academic Honesty:
Students are expected to do their own work or contribute equally in group projects. If another source is adapted or used to develop ideas it must be cited correctly (ideas, images, sentences, or work). Credit will not be given for copying and it will not help in meeting proficiency.

Food & Gadgets:
I love to eat and to use my cell phone/Ipod. However, I put these away during class. I ask you to do the same and save them for breaks. I will confiscate. Water is okay, it's important to stay hydrated, but please ensure it does not become a distraction.

Attendance & Tardiness:
In order to meet proficiency for state standards it is important for students to come to class everyday prepared to learn (writing utensil, completed practice problems, organized documents). However, I understand emergencies and sickness are part of life. In the event that you are absent it is your responsibility to complete practice problems and make-up missed class work. My website will contain both a calendar and unit assignments. If you know you will be absent in advance, please see Mr. Rott; PLEASE SEE ME IF YOU ARE IN A SPORT AND FOURTH PERIOD. Being tardy distracts classmates, and me, and should only occur if your tardy is totally unavoidable. I will follow the school's tardy policy. Not all labs will be available after class at the teacher's discretion.

Late Work:
With over 180 students each quarter it is extremely difficult to grade late work and will only be graded if possible. Don't save work for last minute. Plan ahead and see me before the due date if you will be absent, need additional assistance, or need an extension to work out a solution.

Keep this portion in for your records for the duration of the school year.

Please share and go over these expectations with your parent/guardian and acquire a signature to acknowledge you both have read and understand the course syllabus for Advance Biology. Please detach the lower part and turn in to meet proficiency.

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(Student) (Parent/Guardian)