

Syllabus

Human Biology

BSC2023

General Information

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Maureen Walter
Phone:	(305) 919-5898 (don't leave a voicemail; email if there is no answer)
Office:	Academic 1, Room 380 (BBC)
Office Hours:	Email for an appointment (can be phone meeting)
E-mail:	Please use Canvas Inbox for messages or walterm@fiu.edu

Course Description And Purpose

This course assumes prior scientific knowledge of biology at the High School level, and thus serves for non-biology major students who wish to satisfy the Life Science requirement (lecture and separate lab) within the University Core Curriculum Natural Science category. BSC2023 may also serve as a prerequisite course for specific majors, such as Psychology. The primary emphasis will be on the structure and function of the human organism including basic concepts, principles, and processes in human biology; chemistry, cells, genetics, reproduction, disease, evolution, and the anatomy and function of major organ systems in humans.

Natural Sciences

Our technologically dependent world requires an understanding of the processes that led us here. Learning the basic concepts and ideas of scientific fields provides contact with not just those fields but with how science is done. In these courses, students study the scientific method through examination of the foundational theories of modern scientific thought. Students apply scientific principles and theories to problem solving, evaluate scientific statements, and incorporate new information within the context of what is already known.

Emphasizing the essential connection between theory and experiment, the hands-on laboratory experience found in the BSC2023 Lab provides the context for testing scientific theories. Students will be able to describe the scientific method through examination of the foundational theories of modern scientific thought.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- relate basic chemical structures to physical structures and processes of cells;

- identify the structures and functions of the systems of the human body;
- describe how the human body functions as a whole through the interactions of systems;
- recognize DNA as the basis for genetic control of life, growth and reproduction;
- critically discuss current news stories regarding human health examining the human biology involved and addressing controversies; and
- explore concepts using the scientific method.

Teaching Methodology

This is a fully online course in which all of the instructional materials and activities are delivered through Canvas, and/or other internet-based media. This course is divided into Modules. Each Module includes 1 or 2 Chapters of included text that covers the different Human Biology topics. There will also be a "Guide to the Material" for each Chapter. These Guides will help to lead you through the concepts covered in each Chapter and will also include links to outside material that will enhance your learning experience. By utilizing the Guides and answering any included questions, you will be helping to prepare yourself for the Chapter Quiz and the Sectional Exam 1 (Modules 1-6) and Exam 2 (Modules 7-12).

Policies

Please review the [FIU policies page](#) as it contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all courses at FIU and additional information on the standards for acceptable netiquette important for online courses.

While the on-line format of this course offers the student a degree of flexibility in when they participate in the work, **it requires self-discipline to stay on track through the semester.** You will receive Announcement emails (sent to email you have registered with FIU) indicating where you should be (ideally) in the work and how much you should have completed by that time and each student is responsible for **keeping up with their work.**

The suggested work pattern is to do at least one Modules per week noting that some Modules have more than one Chapter, therefore more than one Quiz. If you choose to wait until the last few days or hours to complete your work, you are taking the chance of having something preventing you from completing the work, much to your unhappiness, since the work will **not** be reopened.

Quite often, students select online classes because of travel plans during the semester or other potential scheduling conflicts. I will NOT customize the course to fit your specific plans. Be sure to see when material closes. If these dates are going to present a problem for you, drop the course while you can get back all your money. Baring hurricanes and other natural disasters, there will be no extensions on the closing dates for the **Chapter quizzes or Exams.** Please refer to the dates in the calendar below. Each student is allowed to take a quiz or Exam 2 times. **But if they do take it two times, they receive the average of the two scores.**

- If you have an emergency that prevents you from accessing the material (minimum total time period: the last 3 weeks of the ~6 weeks for quizzes and assignments and the last 3 days for exams), the Instructor **MUST** be contacted (at least 2 weeks for Quizzes and 3 days for Exams) **before the closing of the material.** These circumstances must be

supported with official documentation such as the official hospital records showing day of admittance and release or police records showing day or arrest and release.

- If you choose to wait till the last few days (or hours) to do the work and something prevents you from completing the work (including an emergency), the material **WILL NOT** be reopened. By making the choice to wait, you are also accepting the possibility that (Murphy's Law) "If anything can go wrong, it will" and always at the worst possible time.
- As with any Syllabus, it is subject to change due to external events. Any change will be sent out by Announcements and will be posted in Canvas. Be SURE to read all Announcements and check your email on a regular basis.

Technical Requirements and Skills

One of the greatest barriers to taking an online course is a lack of basic computer literacy. By computer literacy we mean being able to manage and organize computer files efficiently, and learning to use your computer's operating system and software quickly and easily. Keep in mind that this is not a computer literacy course; but students enrolled in online courses are expected to have moderate proficiency using a computer. Please go to the "[What's Required](#)" page to find out more information on this subject.

Please visit our [technical requirements page](#) for additional information.

If you are having a technical problem with the course, use the Technical Support link in the left hand menu to receive help. I cannot help you with technical issues. Also, be sure to keep all email correspondence to and from the Technical Support people.

Accessibility and Accommodation

Obtain more detailed information about the [specific limitations with the technologies](#) used in this course.

For additional assistance please contact our [Disability Resource Center](#). Students registered with Disabilities must follow the course rule of informing me of any issues in submitting work **before the work closes**. These issues must be verified by the Disabilities Resource Center.

Academic Misconduct Statement

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Academic Misconduct includes: **Cheating** – The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course

assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. **Plagiarism** – The use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student’s own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is responsible for plagiarism.

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

Textbook

This course does not require any purchased textbook. All material is included on Canvas.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, meaning that all of the course work (100%) will be conducted and completed online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as for a traditional course; in fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills that can make them more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **Review the how to get started information** located in the course content
- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion forum. This posting is optional and **will NOT** count towards the required 8 Article postings
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas. There are no earned points for this quiz.
- **Take Student/Instructor Quiz as many times as necessary to earn a perfect score. This Quiz acts to certify your knowledge of the course rules and deadlines and your acceptance of said rules. Taking this quiz is a requirement.**
- **Interact** online with Instructor/s and peers
- **Review** and follow the course calendar for due dates and times. **All material in this specific course opens and closes at 9AM.** If you have a smart phone, put those dates and times with alerts in your phone so you do not miss them.
- Log in to the course as many times **as necessary to keep up with the work and complete scored material by the closing date and time**
- Regularly check your registered FIU email and Canvas page for course Announcements.

The instructor will:

- Log in to the course at **multiple times a week.**
- Respond to **emails** within **72 hours.**

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via **internal messages (Inbox) and announcements.** You may also email me at my regular FIU email, walterm@fiu.edu. **But be**

sure to put your name and course number in the subject line indicating you are an online student. I will NOT respond to any email that does not identify what course you are in.

The course *Inbox* feature is a private, internal Canvas only communication system. Users must log on to the Canvas system to send/receive/read messages. It is recommended that students check their messages routinely to ensure up-to-date communication.

The announcements are messages posted on your My Course page and sent to your registered email account. This is typically your FIU account email. If you do not check your registered email account, you will still be responsible for checking for announcements on the Course Canvas website. The announcement messages are very helpful because I use this tool to inform the whole class about course issues such as material closing or any technology problems students have encountered. I will be sending out an announcement the first day of class. **If you do not receive it, contact technology support (through *Help* link on left-hand menu) and ask them to confirm your email account.**

I receive many messages throughout the semester. For some, I respond individually, but to others I will respond as a message to the whole class because I view it as an issue that everyone needs to know about. And for some messages, I do not respond at all. Some of these are the messages that request I reopen material that has closed. Since the course guidelines are very clear on this matter, and since all students will have taken the Student-Instructor quiz covering these guidelines, there is no reason for me to tell the student what they already know: the material will not be reopened.

I typically log in to the course multiple times a week, so you can expect to receive an answer to any messages within 72 hours. If it is an emergency, send an email to my regular FIU email account.

Visit our [Writing Resources webpage](#) for more information on professional writing and technical communication skills.

Discussion Forums

The Discussion Forum will be used for class discussions and other postings of general interest that are directly related to the course. Keep in mind that forum discussions are public, and care should be taken when determining what to post.

- **Articles taken primarily from the New York Times are included in the Course Modules. Read all the posted Articles. During the first half of the semester: Choose 2 of the read Articles and post an original comment on each of the chosen Articles. Essentially, you will be entering in a conversation with the rest of the class about what you thought of the Article, what you found interesting, did you agree or disagree with the Article's points, etc. After students have made these original postings, you will choose 2 of other student's original postings and you will post a response to these 2 original postings. These postings can be on the Article postings you made or on another student's original postings. By the end of the first half of the semester, you will have posted at least 4 times (by the closing of Exam 1)... 2 original postings and 2 responses to other student's postings. You will duplicate this process during the second half of the semester so that at the end of the**

semester you will have a total of at least 8 postings (by the closing of Exam 2). The 5% you earn for these postings is an 'all-or-nothing' opportunity. If you do not post at least the 8 required postings, you will receive NO points.

Discussion Forum Expectations:

- Provide clear guidance on the expectations and requirements
- 1. The approximate length of a response is as long as is necessary for you to say what you wished to say.
- 2. During each half of the semester, you will post 2 original comments about the article you read. Do not recap the Article. You will also post 2 responses to other student's original comments. Think of it as engaging in a conversation with another student. (4 postings during each half, 8 postings total).
- The Articles for each half of the semester will be available from the opening of the quizzes to the closing of the exams.
- I will be monitoring the postings during the semester and will assign the 5% of the grade at the end of the semester. **This 5% is an all or nothing score.** Students who do not make the required 8 postings will receive NO points. So even if you post 7 times, you will receive NO points since it would be viewed as incomplete.
- Because Canvas does not have a clear-cut way of compiling your Discussion postings, I have it set up as a graded activity with zero points. It's just a way for me to keep track of how many postings you are doing. As mentioned before, I will not determine if you have done the mandatory 8 postings until Exam 2 closes.

Quizzes (and Exams)

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the "Practice Quiz" from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum [hardware requirements](#).

Please note assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact [FIU Online Support Services](#).

Quiz and Exam Expectations:

- Please note that the semester is divided into two periods:
 - August 24 - October 5; 9AM
 - October 5 - 12; 9AM
 - October 12 - November 23; 9AM
 - November 23 - 30; 9AM
 - 9 Quizzes
 - Exam 1
 - 7 Quizzes
 - Exam 2

- Quiz duration: 30 minutes
- Exam duration: 1 hour
- Quiz and Exam links are seen in the specific Modules
- Details for results:
 1. Students will be able to see the results immediately after Quiz or Exam.
 2. Students will they be able to see the total earned score only.
 3. **Students may take each Quiz or Exam 2 times.** But if you choose to do so, you will receive the **average** of the two scores. Questions on the second attempt may be different from the first attempt.
- Each student will be required to enter into a "course contract" with the Instructor by taking the INSTRUCTOR-STUDENT CONTRACT QUIZ found on the Course Content page and under Assessments. This contract specifies that you have read the Syllabus and therefore understand the time frame for completion of the Exams, Quizzes, and Discussion Postings. You do not receive points for this quiz.

Grading

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Quizzes	16	10	160	45%
Exams	2	50	100	50%
Discussions	8			5%
Total	26	N/A	N/A	100%

Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)
A	Above 92	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 92	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	< 60