

BIOL 1100, Biology Freshman Seminar- Introduction to Biological Sciences
Spring Semester 2013 (1 Credit hour)
Department of Biology, College of Arts & Science, Valdosta State University

Lecture (BC 1024):	Section A (CRN#20656)	T: 9:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.
	Section B (CRN#20657)	T: 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.
	Section C (CRN#20658)	R: 9:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.
	Section D (CRN#20659)	R: 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Instructor: Dr. Brian C. Ring
Office: BC 2084
Office hours: **M & W** 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
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Course Description: Pre- or co-requisite for biology majors: BIOL 1107. 1-0-1. An introduction to college-level science and specifically the field of the biological sciences. Topics covered will include strategies for success, basic descriptive statistics and data analysis, exposure to possible careers within the field, professional ethics, and resource and library use. Students will also learn major requirements, general advising, the scientific method and scientific writing.

General Course Objectives: BIOL 1100 will address parts of the following departmental & university goals:
From the Department of Biology's Educational Outcome #1:

1. ...present the results and conclusions in both written and oral formats used in peer-reviewed journals and at scientific meetings.

From VSU General Education Outcomes #3, 5, 7, & 8:

3. Students will use computer and information technology...They will be able to find information using computer searching tools.

5. Students will demonstrate knowledge of scientific principles... They will understand the basic concepts and principles underlying scientific methodology, learn a body of scientific knowledge, and are able to judge the merits of arguments about scientific issues.

7. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze, to evaluate, and to make inferences from oral, written, and visual materials.

They will be able to acquire and evaluate relevant information, analyze arguments, and synthesize facts and information.

8. Students will demonstrate knowledge of principles of ethics... They will recognize and understand issues in applied ethics, understand their own value systems in relation to other value systems, and judge values and practices in a variety of disciplines.

Specific Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will:

1. Recognize the rigorous nature of this field of study and the skills and discipline needed to be successful.

2. Learn the Biology major requirements (BA vs. BS), general advising skills, and 4 year graduation plan.

3. Comprehend the scientific method and write a paper(s) based on research conducted in primary scientific journals in the style of a short review paper and/or introduction to a research paper.

4. Connect the requirements of the Biology major to the foundations of Life Science and possible careers.

Course Materials: None required. Assignment will be handed out in lecture and/or posted on Blazeview.

Academic Honesty: Members of the class are expected to maintain high standards of integrity. Always cite any source of original information. Never copy text from a classmate, book, or website and represent it as personal work. The VSU Biology Department Policy on Plagiarism is included on the Departmental Website (<http://www.valdosta.edu/biology/>) to clarify common types of academic misconduct. **Students are required to read, sign, and hand into their BIOL 1100 instructor for inclusion into their file.** This is listed as assignment 2 (A2), due in week two (see schedule below).

Dishonesty will not be tolerated; evidence of cheating will result in no credit for the assignment or depending on the case, a grade of "F" for the course and a report will be sent to the Dean of Students. Evidence of plagiarism will be monitored using Turnitin on the Course Blazeview website; see disclosure statement below.

Turnitin Disclosure Statement: By taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin, a tool within BlazeVIEW. Course work documents may include but are not limited to papers, blog postings, journal entries, presentations, discussion postings, emails, or any other written work, in electronic or hardcopy, submitted in the format and on the schedule required by the course instructor.

According to the Family Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education, your course work documents are education records within the meaning of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Education records may not be disclosed to third parties in a form that identifies you without your consent. As a third party product, Turnitin is governed by this provision of FERPA.

Your course work document may be submitted to Turnitin via one of two methods. The different options simply determine how the work is submitted to Turnitin, and whether the work includes identifying information. For more information on the use of Turnitin at VSU see <http://ww2.valdosta.edu/academic/trnitnstu.shtml>.

Mid-term: Students will have completed several lecture sessions (attendance & department) and assignments to determine their overall grade by the Mid-Term and decide whether to withdraw by the deadline date (2/28/2012). **If you miss more than 3 lecture sessions you will automatically fail this course as per University policy (see below).**

Note: VSU policy on withdrawals is a maximum of 5 during your undergraduate career. If you are late, your attendance may not be acknowledged. The student is responsible for all material missed regardless of the reason for absences. In the event that a student will miss a lecture session, s/he should notify the instructor in writing by BlazeView email and be prepared to provide documentation of the excused absence. It is the instructor's prerogative to accept the excuse or not. **ABSOLUTELY NO LECTURES OR ASSIGNMENTS CAN BE "MADE UP."**

Student identification: Students should have in their possession at all times their VSU student identification card. In order to verify the identification of students officially enrolled in the course, it is the instructor's prerogative to request official student photo identification cards at any time during lecture.

Privacy Act (FERPA): The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibit the public posting of grades by Social security number or in any manner personally identifiable to the individual student. No grades can be given by email or over the telephone, as positive identification can not be made by this manner.

Biology Tutoring at the Student Success Center: The following statement was copied from the SSC Website: "The Student Success Center (SSC) at Valdosta State University is located in Langdale Residence Hall above the Tech Shop and is available to all students. The SSC provides free peer tutoring in core curriculum courses, including biology, chemistry, math, writing, and foreign languages. The SSC also provides free professional academic advising and on-campus job information in one location. Call 333-7570 to make an appointment, or visit the website: www.valdosta.edu/ssc." A seminar by representatives of the SSC will also be provided in this course (see schedule).

Students with Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability must let me know and must also contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in Farber Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (voice) and 219-1348 (tty).

Important Course Requirements

Attendance: Student attendance is mandatory and is recorded by your signature each week. Each student is responsible for all material missed regardless of the reason for absences and this information should be obtained from classmates. After talking to a classmate, your instructor will be happy to clarify anything that is unclear. **Each absence will reduce the attendance grade by 10% unless excused.** These will only be allowed when class is missed due to a good reason supported by evidence (e.g. doctor's note). **Note the University policy regarding attendance:**

- 1) Students who miss 20% of lecture time (**4 or more days**) will receive an automatic failing grade for the course.
- 2) Students who do not regularly attend lecture, as determined by taking class role prior to the proof role date may be automatically dropped from the class.
- 3) Students who neither drop nor attend class by the midterm date will receive an automatic F for the course.
- 4) Students who miss 20% of lecture time on a given day (**10 minutes**) will be counted as absent for that day.

Assessments:

Attendance	60%
Assignments	20%
Scientific Writing (Paper)	10%
Career Presentation	<u>10%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Grades are assigned on a normal scale: A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), and F (<59%).

There are approximately 10 assignments (e.g. A1-A10) due during lecture time only as specified by your instructor. Paper requirements are described below. Career Presentation & Slides will be described by your instructor.

Tentative Class Schedule (Subject to Change)

Date	Class Topic	Assignments
Jan 07	Introduction to Biology Major & BlazeVIEW	A1: Note Taking & Levels of Organization (in -class)
14	General Biology Knowledge Exam	A2: Student Information Survey & Plagiarism Policy (homework)
21	Learning for Conceptual Understanding	Read Crow et al. 2008- "Blooming Biology"
28	Student Success Center Seminar	A3: Blooming a Biology Exam (homework, post results on BlazeView!)
Feb 04	Academic Planning in the Major	A4: Career Plan (homework)
11	Continued- Discussion	A5: Choice of BS/BA, Tracks, & Electives (homework)
18	Scientific Method & Enterprise	A6: 4- Yr Course Plan by Semesters (homework)
25	Scientific Writing- Discussion	None
28	MIDTERM (Last Day to Withdraw without penalty)- 5 W Policy!	
Mar 04	Library Visit - Literature Search	A7: Topic Selections: Research vs. Review (homework- bring to library!)
11	Scientific Writing-The Paper	A8: Annotated Bibliography (homework)
18	SPRING BREAK – No Class	
25	Rough Draft Due - Discussion	A9: Rough Draft Peer Review (in-class)
Apr 01	Directed Research & Club Opportunities	
08	Biology Careers- Discussion	Final Paper Due (Turnitin BlazeView)
15	10 year plan- Discussion	A10: Career Slide (Upload to BlazeView)
22	Career Presentations Session I	A11: 10-yr plan (homework- Blazeview post)
28	Career Presentations Session II	
29	FINALS WEEK- No Class	

Notes: The lowest of A1-A11 will be dropped. The Career Slide (A10) is due one week before presentations begin by posting to BlazeView. After this date, A10 grade will drop 50% prior to your presentation.

Writing Guidelines

Objective

The papers assigned in this course will provide you practice toward the types of papers you will be expected to write as a biology major. There are two basic types of papers written by biological scientist and you will practice these paper types in this course to prepare you for future upper division and capstone senior seminar (BIOL 4900) papers.

First, there are primary research papers that are a summary of a scientist(s) research and follow the typical style of Introduction, Materials & Methods, Results, and Conclusions/Discussion. These are commonly referred to as “lab reports” by students but in the real world these are called publications. We will practice writing the Introduction section of a primary research paper that you may utilize in BIOL 1107 if you are currently enrolled.

Second, there are review papers that are a summary of primary research papers pertaining to a certain topic or thesis. We will **practice writing a one page review paper** on a topic and you will be given guidance by VSU librarians on how to search for primary research articles.

Integral to both types of scientific papers are proper citation and referencing of primary literature sources. We will practice this in both papers as described below.

Focus

Well-crafted writing always has a specific purpose. Every paper should have a distinct thesis or central idea. Your thesis should directly address the nature of the writing assignment. Decide on the topic and a specific case you want to make before you start writing. Write the thesis down and check back throughout the writing process to be certain that the work supports it.

Organization

Before you begin to write, think through how you plan to develop your thesis and use an outline to structure the paper. An Introduction and Conclusion will be the first and last paragraphs of your paper. Start paper with something catchy to interest the reader. Make it perfectly clear, in this introductory section, what your point or central idea will be. Support that concept throughout the body of your paper. Paragraphs in the middle will be the Body of your text. Subheadings are an effective way to support and indicate the organization of longer papers. Any paper over 3 pages probably needs subheadings. Avoid using statements such as “In this paper I will discuss...” since it is much more sophisticated to avoid this type of “crutch statement.”

Paragraphs

Divide the paper by major themes and make each of these a distinct paragraph. You should have at least 3 paragraphs on a 1-page paper. The first sentence of each paragraph is a topic sentence that shows what the paragraph cover. **ONE SENTENCE IS NEVER AN ENTIRE PARAGRAPH** because there should be at least 3 sentences elaborating any significant idea.

Format

Your papers are to be typed using something comparable to 12-point Times New Roman type, single-spacing, and reasonable (1-1.5 inch) margins. Other professors often expect double-spacing, but to save paper, I require single-spacing. The lengths of these papers are stated in the assignments. After you draft your ideas, if the paper is too long, go back through and shorten it up by taking out the less important aspects. If it is too short, go back and incorporate more support or add more detail to what you are saying. When I say 1 page that means one sheet of paper that is full of text. Place your references and heading on the same page. Use the word counting function on your word processor to be sure your text is 600-800 words per assigned page when single-spaced.

Requirements

Each paper should have a creative title identifying the approach to the assignment. For long papers, the title is centered on the title page and followed by the student’s name, ID number, and full course information. For short papers, the information should be in the upper right corner and the title should be centered on the first line. That course information should include the name, course number, instructor, and the university.

References

Be very careful about giving appropriate credit to the sources of any outside information that you use. You should have properly formatted references at the end of the paper that include: Author (Last name, Initials), Year, Title, Journal or Book Title, Volume & Pages. We will use the CSE style guide which a variation on APA or American Psychological Association style. A link to CSE style is found on the VSU Biology plagiarism policy statement and here:

<http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/cbegd.php>. When you include information that is general knowledge, it does not require a citation in the text. If you can find the same information in 2 or 3 books, it does not require a citation in the text. Be sure to reword or paraphrase text from your sources to avoid plagiarism. Think about what something says and completely restate it in your own words. Avoid making your paper look like a mosaic of other people’s ideas by synthesizing the meaning in your own words. The best idea is to quote someone only when the wording is extremely original and/or it can’t be stated differently. A direct quote always requires a citation in the text with the page where the quote was found which is common in MLA style of writing you will be familiar with after taking core curriculum English courses (ENGL 1101 & 1102). **Quotations are very rare in biological science writing so simply avoid it.**

Grading

Papers are graded based on a rubric. Focus on the objective of the assignment and address it clearly in thesis of your paper. You can dramatically improve your work if you critique your own rough draft and revise it at least once. Outside feedback can also make a difference. **Therefore, we will use class time for peer-review among your classmates.** One must also proofread to avoid careless errors. Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar do effect our impression of the quality of your presentation. These papers will be graded on Effort, Quality, Organization, Content, Proper citations and whether or not you followed these directions. I will look specifically at extent of your coverage of the topic and the clarity in your presentation of the material. Be sure to support general statements and do not use hypothetical examples. Papers are due at the start of class only.

Plagiarism Monitoring

This course utilizes Turnitin software and your final paper will be submitted through Turnitin BlazeView (see above). You will have the opportunity to monitor the level of plagiarism with Turnitin before final submittal so use this software wisely. I will provide more details in class as to what constitutes plagiarism resulting in a grade of F for the paper assignment.