

## Biology - Course Outline & Policies

Mr. Miller      [lmiller@visalia.k12.ca.us](mailto:lmiller@visalia.k12.ca.us)  
Mr. Billingsley      [jbillingsley@visalia.k12.ca.us](mailto:jbillingsley@visalia.k12.ca.us)



**Course Goal:** For each student to achieve the defined California State Standards for High School Biology. To prepare students of college ability for further study in biology and at the same time to present material of use in daily life. This course satisfies the one-year life science requirement for graduation.

**Organization:** The course is organized into eight units according to VUSD's Essential Standards for biology. Following is a rough approximation of the progression of chapter material.

<u>Semester 1</u>	<u>Semester 2</u>
<b><u>Unit One – Cell Biology</u></b> Chapter 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5	<b><u>Unit Five – Protein Synthesis</u></b> Chapters 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 9
<b><u>Unit Two – Cell Energy</u></b> Chapters 2.5, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6	<b><u>Unit Six - Evolution</u></b> Chapters 10, 11, 12
<b><u>Unit Three – Cell Reproduction</u></b> Chapters 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2	<b><u>Unit Seven - Ecology</u></b> Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16
<b><u>Unit Four - Heredity</u></b> Chapters 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3	<b><u>Unit Eight: Human Physiology</u></b> Chapters 28, 29, 30, 31

**Grading:** Students are first and foremost expected to achieve the essential standards for biology. Student achievement of the standards will be assessed primarily through benchmark quizzes. Students will be allowed unlimited opportunities to pass benchmark quizzes with a score of 75%. Retakes may be done during office hours before school in addition to Tuesday and Thursday at lunch.

**ONLY** the first attempt at a quiz can earn a score of better than 75%. All ensuing passing scores will be recorded as 75% of the available points. Because of this, it is always in the student's best interest to give a quiz all of his/her effort the first time. Benchmarks must be made up by the end of the **NEXT** unit, or the end of the semester, whichever ever comes first. The day after the unit test, any unpassed benchmarks from the previous unit become zeros.

Term grades and semester grades will be based on a weighted percentage of the points earned on assignments up to that time. Weighting is as follows:

Benchmarks = 20%  
Unit Tests = 25%  
Labs = 20%  
Final = 20%  
Writing Assignments = 10%  
Homework and other assignments = 5%

Course grades will be assigned according to VUSD's standard grading practice:

100% - 90% = A || 89.9% - 80% = B || 79.9% - 70% = C || 69.9% - 60% = D || Below 60% = F

Grades will be updated and posted regularly so that all students will know their current grade and what assignments they need to make up.

**Assignments:** All assignments are announced on the Class Calendar and are expected to be complete the day after they are assigned. Frequent homework checks will occur, and students who do not complete homework will have their citizenship grade lowered.

In keeping with the college preparatory nature of the class, I will insist on proper and complete sentences, correct punctuation and spelling, and legible handwriting. **Work neatly.**

**Attendance:** It is your responsibility to find out what assignments have been missed during an absence and make plans with me for getting caught up on missed tests, quizzes and labs. If your illness will keep you out of school for more than two days I expect you to contact the school and request your homework assignments. I follow the school policy of giving you two school days to make up work for each day of excused absence.

**Honesty:** Plagiarizing and copying assignments (including labs and homework), or cheating on tests and quizzes will not be tolerated. *All work is to be done individually.* Failure to do so will result in a parent call or conference and a "zero" on the assignment. Repeated offenses will result in an unsatisfactory citizenship grade.

**Citizenship Guidelines:** District policy states that teachers will assign a citizenship grade to students on report cards. Choices for the citizenship marks include "Outstanding," "Satisfactory," "Needs Improvement," and "Unsatisfactory". Students receiving two or more unsatisfactory citizenship marks from their instructors in a given grading period are ineligible for extracurricular activities for a period of at least six weeks.

District policy states that the following criteria shall be used in determining a student's citizenship mark in his/her class:

1. Attends class regularly
2. Comes to class on time. Five (5) or more unexcused tardies in a quarter may result in an unsatisfactory citizenship mark.
3. Comes to class with necessary materials.
4. Completes homework assignments.
5. Meets deadlines.
6. Does his/her own work when independent work is required; does not cheat.
7. Exercises reasonable care of school property.
8. Shows respect for others.
9. Does not disrupt class; exercises good conduct.

**Materials for Class:**

1. Students will check out a biology book through the school library, and are accountable to the library for damage or loss of the textbook. I hope to be able to provide a class set of books so that students need not bring their textbook to class each day.
2. A binder with paper, pens, and a #2 pencil.

**Assistance:** I am available for help virtually every day before school and during our office hours by appointment at lunch on Tuesday and Thursday.

We maintain an Internet web site as a resource for our biology students. At the site you will find the assignment calendar, practice quizzes, as well as all of the standard based notes, PowerPoint's, reading guides, and labs. Most of the documents are in Adobe PDF format, for which you will need to download a free viewing application. There are links from at our site to the Adobe web site. Students who do not have Internet access at home may gain Internet access through our learning resource center in the library. The website is located on the El Diamante server at <http://www2.visalia.k12.ca.us/eldiamante>.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- If you are absent the day of a **lab**, your next lab score will be doubled to account for the missed lab.
- If you are absent the day of a **test**, you are expected to take the test at lunch during office hours or on a day agreed upon with instructor. The test given will be either the regular test (multiple choice) or the essay make-up. All tests will be announced at least a week in advance. If you are absent the day before a test, you are expected to take the test on the regular test date.