Course Description

This course is designed as an introduction to biology. We will discuss not only the what but also the why and attempt to make connections that are applicable to students in any field. The course delivery is web broadcast. Lectures will be delivered live through Zoom during the scheduled class time. During class, you will listen to lectures, watch video clips, answer polling questions, and engage in discussion with your peers. Outside of class, you will read the textbook and take weekly online quizzes. Your major assessments are four unit exams. In this course, you will gain a broad overview of biological concepts and theories, and learn how these relate to important real-world issues. This course covers cellular and molecular biology, genetics, evolution, and ecology.

Students are expected to participate from a distance at the scheduled classtimes. They will provide their own computer or mobile device and network access. A web camera and microphone are highly recommended but not necessary. Students without microphones can dial into a Zoom meeting (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AGsLQwjr0o) from their phones. Zoom can also be accessed entirely from a smartphone using the Zoom mobile app (https://zoom.us/download) for iOS or Android. There are also ways to use a smartphone as a webcam (https://www.tomsguide.com/news/how-to-use-your-phone-as-a-webcam).

If students struggle with connecting to a Zoom class, they can contact the IT Service Desk (https://it.usu.edu/service-desk) for support.

Fees

Course fee: $28. A course fee is assessed as part of your registration in this class. Course fees cover partial or all expenses related to hiring Graduate Teaching Assistants, Undergraduate Teaching Assistants, and/or Lab and Media Assistants, assigned to your course. All of your course fees are used to enhance your learning opportunities in this course and are required for all registered students. Please contact your instructor if you need additional information related to how your course fees are spent.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Objective 1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
2. Objective 2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
3. Objective 3. Learning to apply course materials (to improve rational thinking, problem-solving and decisions)

Instructor
Course Instructor: Rachel Buck
E-mail: rachel.buck@usu.edu
Class time (Zoom): Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:30 am - 8:45 am
Office hours (Zoom): Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, or by appointment
Zoom link for office hours:
https://usu-edu.zoom.us/j/94683921018?pwd=Ui8rL0Y5VVRwSjFEBkRZU1IUSzZSZz09
Passcode: 143804

Teaching Assistants
Audrey Lidgard: audrey_lidgard@yahoo.com
Kate Hunter: kate.hunter@usu.edu

Supplemental Instructor
Madeline Measom: madeline.measom@aggiemail.usu.edu

Attending SI sessions is not mandatory, but will improve your understanding of course material, and probably increase your grade.

Textbook
You have weekly reading assignments to engage with course content outside of class. This will facilitate your learning. We use a free (open access) online textbook, Concepts of Biology (2017) available for download here https://openstax.org/details/concepts-biology. You may also buy print copies at the campus bookstore.

Assignments/Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1 Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2 Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3 Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to a congressperson</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Class participation (Zoom).** To get full participation points, you must attend at least 50% of Zoom lectures live at the scheduled class time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of live Zoom sessions attended</th>
<th>Points (out of 10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 49.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.1 - 19.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• **Quizzes.** You will take weekly multiple-choice quizzes that will focus on material covered in the textbook. Quizzes will become available to take at the beginning of each unit and are **due by 11:59 pm on Saturdays.** The quizzes are not timed and are open-book. The lowest quiz score will be dropped, and late quizzes will not be accepted.

• **Unit Exams.** The unit exams will consist of multiple-choice questions that will ask you to use both simple fact recall and higher-level scientific reasoning skills. Exams will cover material from class lectures and the textbook. We will not meet in class on exam days. You will take exams on Canvas using a reliable computer. Exams are closed-book. Requests to take exams at times other than the regularly scheduled times will be considered only for excused absences (see below for attendance policy).

• **Letter to a congressperson.** You will apply your biology knowledge as a citizen and write a succinct one-page, single-spaced letter to a congressperson regarding a biology-related issue we cover in class that you are passionate about. See the assignment description for details.

### Grading Scheme

The following grading standards will be used in this class and will not be rounded up to the nearest whole number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 % to 93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 93.0 % to 90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90.0 % to 87.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87.0 % to 83.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 83.0 % to 80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt; 80.0 % to 77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt; 77.0 % to 73.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>&lt; 73.0 % to 70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>&lt; 70.0 % to 67.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>&lt; 67.0 % to 60.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 59.0 % to 0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Schedule/Outline**

Class schedule ([https://usu.instructure.com/courses/639185/files/79611719/download?verifier=Cba3bthEKBBnQnsuefBKVBVEAiXDIA8YrKBc1Ct7&wrap=1](https://usu.instructure.com/courses/639185/files/79611719/download?verifier=Cba3bthEKBBnQnsuefBKVBVEAiXDIA8YrKBc1Ct7&wrap=1))

**Attendance and Excused Absences Policy**

(adapted from the USU Course Catalog): The university views class attendance as an individual student responsibility. Full participation points will be given as long as the student participates in live Zoom sessions at least 50% of the time.

The following are considered excused absences if properly documented: absences demanded by university-sponsored or sanctioned activities; mandatory participation as a student-athlete in NCAA-sanctioned competition; injury, illness or medical condition/status that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class; major injury, illness, medical condition/status, or death in a student's immediate family; required participation in military duties; mandatory admissions interviews for professional or graduate school; participation in legal proceedings that require the student's presence. In the case of an excused absence, you must provide your instructor with written evidence substantiating the reason for the absence (for example, a medical confirmation note that contains the date and time of the visit and the medical professional's confirmation) prior to the date of absence if feasible. In cases where advance notification is not feasible (e.g., accident or emergency), the student must provide written documentation by the end of the second working day after the absence. If the absence is excused and properly documented, you must meet with your instructor outside of class to discuss make-up work. Any make-up work must be completed within 14 calendar days of the last day of the absence. Your instructor will deny any excused absence make-up work requests that exceeds 20% of class sessions (more than eight class sessions).

**Library Services**

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc. ([http://libguides.usu.edu/rc](http://libguides.usu.edu/rc))

**Classroom Civility**
Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article5) for more information.

University Policies & Procedures

COVID-19 Classroom Protocols

In order to continue to provide a high standard of instruction at USU, and to limit the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic, students are asked to follow certain classroom protocols. These protocols are in place not only for your safety but also the safety of the rest of the campus community. You will be asked to clean your desk area at the start of each class, sit in designated seats, wear face coverings, and follow dismission instructions. There may be individual medical circumstances that prevent some students from using face coverings. These circumstances will be rare, but if they do exist, we ask that everyone be respectful. It is imperative that we each do our part so that on-campus instruction can continue.

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (http://www.usu.edu/hr/files/uploads/Policies/403.pdf) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Academic Dishonesty

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating**: using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
  - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually;”
  - Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;

Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;

Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;

Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

- **Falsification**: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
- **Plagiarism**: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)

**Sexual Harassment/Title IX**

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and USU Policy 339 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/339) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.

The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU's Office of Equity (https://equity.usu.edu/) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment (USU Policy 305 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/305/)), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

**Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy**

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term 'extenuating' circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

**Students with Disabilities**

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (http://www.usu.edu/drc/) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu (mailto:drc@usu.edu)). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

**Diversity Statement**
Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

- Division of Student Affairs: https://studentaffairs.usu.edu (https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/), (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu (mailto:studentservices@usu.edu), TSC 220
- Student Legal Services: https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services (https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
- Access and Diversity: http://accesscenter.usu.edu (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu (mailto:access@usu.edu); TSC 315
- Multicultural Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
- LGBTQA Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa/), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity (https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity/), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/)

Grievance Process

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7).

Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:

- Student Conduct (http://www.usu.edu/studentconduct)
- Student Code (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/)
- Academic Integrity (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)
- USU Selected Academic Policies and Procedures (http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty-life/syllabus.cfm)

Emergency Procedures

In the case of a drill or real emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate the building by the sound of the fire/emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with either notification, evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). Turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairs.

Mental Health

Mental health is critically important for the success of USU students. As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. Utah State University provides free services for students to assist them with addressing these and other concerns. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (https://counseling.usu.edu).
Students are also encouraged to download the “SafeUT App” (https://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/programs/safe-ut-smartphone-app) to their smartphones. The SafeUT application is a 24/7 statewide crisis text and tip service that provides real-time crisis intervention to students through texting and a confidential tip program that can help anyone with emotional crises, bullying, relationship problems, mental health, or suicide related issues.