

Honors Biology Course Guidelines

Framingham High School

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Office hours:	After school help Monday - Friday in room A213
Optional Textbook:	BIOLOGY , 6 th Edition (Audesirk, Audesirk, & Byers)
Course website:	www.langdonbiology.org/Honors

Introduction

Honors Biology is an intensive overview of life science. We will study biology from the molecular level to the biosphere—from biomolecules to cells to organisms to the interactions of the many different creatures on the planet. Key topics covered this year are: biochemistry; cell structure and function; how cells get energy and raw materials; DNA and protein synthesis; cell reproduction; genetics; evolution; bacteria, viruses, & prions; protists & fungi; plants; animals; human biology; and ecology. There will be dissections in this course.

This course will be very different from science course you have taken in the past. Honors courses are unique: not only do we cover more material and move faster than standard courses, we expect you to master the material at a higher level. For example, in the past you may have only needed to memorize definitions and facts. Now you not only must *know* the definitions or facts, but also *why* they are true or *how* they work. You must be able to apply your knowledge to situations that you have not seen before.

It is important that you stay up to date with the material. If you start to have trouble, see me after school for extra help as soon as possible. You can also e-mail me with questions.

Required Materials

You must bring the following to class everyday:

- Notebook. This can be a spiral bound notebook or loose-leaf pages kept in a binder, at your preference. Oftentimes, students in a science class have found it easier to take notes on quadrille paper (grid paper, like graph paper) which helps to draw graphs and make columns.
- Binder or folder. You must have some way to collect and organize all of the handouts you will receive.
- Pen or pencil, at your preference
- Calculator. A simple calculator will suffice; the advanced TIs used in your math classes are more than adequate.

Homework

Homework will always be checked for completion, but not always collected for grading. Assume, unless you are told otherwise, that work assigned outside class is to be done independently. This means that even if you work with others or ask someone with help, you must always write your response in your own words. Beyond written work, you should also spend time in the evening reviewing and clarifying your notes from class. You should expect around one hour of homework or review a night.

Quizzes and Tests

Pop quizzes may be given anytime. Major tests are given about once a month, and will always be announced ahead of time. Before each test you will be given a review sheet that lists everything you will be held responsible for, and a practice test and answer key so that you get an idea of the type of questions asked.

Grading

All major tests are worth 100 points. Quizzes are scaled to a point value that reflects their difficulty level and size: a large quiz might be worth 50 points, a typical quiz may be worth 20 points, and a pop quiz or ACTIVote only 4 or 5 points. Homework and other assignments are worth varying amounts, usually 3 to 5 points. Formal lab reports are worth 100 points (they are just as important as tests!) while lab quizzes, oral exams, or smaller results report sheets are worth varying points. **Please note that test grades are the most important contributor to your final grade.**

The final grade is calculated according to FHS policy, with each marking period worth 20% and the midterm and final exams each worth 10%.

Late Assignments

Late major assignments, particularly lab reports, will be docked 10% for every day they are late. After more than three school days late, they will not receive any credit.

Homework is not accepted late, and will simply be graded as a zero.

Classroom Rules

You must be on time and prepared for class. You are expected to be respectful of fellow classmates. Abusive language or disruptive behavior in any form will not be tolerated.

Because the classroom also doubles as a laboratory, due to safety considerations you cannot eat or drink in the classroom.

Absences

If you are absent from school, you are responsible for getting the missed work and notes. Check the course website (www.langdonbiology.org), ask a classmate for his or her notes to copy, and then see me to get any missing work. It is not my responsibility to seek you out and give you your assignments.

If you are absent on the day of a test, you will be expected to take the test the day you return. Work due the day you were out will be due immediately on your return. You will have time to make up any assignments given out while you were absent. If you are out for an extended amount of time, special arrangements can be made with me to make up your work.

If you are absent on a lab day, you must arrange to make up the lab after school. Since labs often require special equipment or reagents, you must do this as soon as possible so the teacher still has access to the chemicals and apparatus. Often, I will schedule one after school make-up session for all students who have missed the lab. You should bring a friend who did the lab in class with you, to serve as your lab partner.

Academic Integrity

Understand that *any* instance of cheating or copying on any assignment will not be tolerated. You will receive a zero on that assignment, and I will report the incident to your grade principal. It is expected that all assignments will be completed on your own. If you study in groups, make sure you write your answer in your own words. If you are assigned an independent project, you must do all the work yourself. If you are using other sources for information (like the web or books), make sure you cite the source. When in doubt, see me. I understand that it is sometimes unclear when you should cite a source, and I will be more than happy to help you.

This sheet must be signed and returned to Dr. Langdon.

I have read the course expectations and safety guidelines for Honors Biology, which are summarized below.

Classroom Expectations:

- Students will be on time.
- Students will be prepared for class.
- Students will be respectful to others in the classroom.

Safety:

- No horseplay is allowed in the lab.
- Students will follow directions carefully, and not carry out any impromptu side experiments.

Failure to comply with safety rules will result in the student's expulsion from the laboratory, a zero on the laboratory assignment, and Saturday School.

Grading:

- Tests are the most important contributor to the class grade. Other assignments, like quizzes, pop quizzes, laboratory reports, ACTIVote quizzes, and laboratory worksheets, also contribute to the final grade student's grade.
- Copying or cheating will result in a grade of zero and a report to the Principal and grade Vice Principal.
- Final course grades are calculated according to FHS guidelines, with each quarter weighted 20% and the final and midterm exams weighted 10%.

Late Work:

- Only major assignments like lab reports will be accepted late, with one letter grade deducted from the final grade per day, up to the third day. After the third day, the grade will be zero.
- Homework will not be accepted late.

Absences and work missed due to absence:

- It is the student's responsibility to get notes and assignments missed due to absence.
- It is the student's responsibility to make up labs missed due to absence.
- Assignments due the day of the absence will be due immediately when the student returns to school.
- Assignments given during the absence will be due upon a date determined by the student and Dr. Langdon upon their return to school.

I understand the expectations and requirements for this course.

Name of Student

Date

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent/Guardian