**Biological Sciences - BSC 1005**

**Syllabus**

**SPRING 2017**

**Professor:** Dr. Carlos Rossetti

**Class Meeting Hours:** Tuesday’s 6pm-8:45pm

 Friday: 9am-11.45am

**Consulting Hours:** Tuesday: 5pm to 6pm, by appointment

 Friday: 8am-9am, by appointment

**Email:** crossetti@valenciacollege.edu

**Required Text:**

Eric J. Simon. 2017. Biology: The Core- Second Edition . ISBN-13: 978-0-134-15219-6

**Catalog Description:**

An introduction to essential principles of biological science. Topics include, but are not limited to, the nature of science and the scientific method, chemistry for biology, cell structure, metabolism, reproduction and genetics, organisms, evolution theory, and classification of organisms. This is a general education course for non-biology majors, but is also recommended for students who need preparation before enrolling in a biology course for science majors. Students should be prepared to complete college level reading, writing, and mathematics assignments as part of this course. This course meets the General Education Core Science requirement for graduation.

**Course Objectives:**

This course examines various aspects of biological science as outlined in the above catalog description. Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the aforementioned topics by answering questions on an objective examination.

**Core Competencies:**

Valencia College’s core competencies (Think, Value, Communicate, Act) are interwoven into the fabric of this course. The students will be asked to think about the new concepts acquired in this course. Students will grasp the value of this course as they discover how these concepts form the foundation of modern biotechnology and how human activity influences the environment. Students will be further encouraged to consider the pros and cons of modern biotechnology and to communicate their opinions supported by evidence ascertained in this course. Equipped with the knowledge ascertained through this course, students will be able to enact changes in their lives and make informed decisions in their future lives.

**Student Assessment and Evaluation:**

This course may seem extremely intensive to some students who may have not had extensive experience in the sciences. Your performance on a variety of learning activities and assessment measures that support the overall course objectives comprise your final grade. I strongly encourage you to stay abreast with the material and assignments. Do NOT fall behind.

*A total of 1000 points* that can be achieved during this course. Students are able to gauge their

performance according to this grading scale at any time during this course by simply dividing their total earned points to date by the total potential points.

There will be *two exams* given during this course. Each exam will be worth **200 points** toward the overall final grade. Each exam will not be comprehensive per se. However, math and science courses build upon concepts previously taught. Therefore, you will need to have a solid understanding of the material before progressing onto subsequent chapters successfully.

There will be *3 projects assigned* during this course. These projects will be based upon topics covered during class time, information presented in your textbook. These projects will be **worth 100 points each** and will be **due on dates** specified in the Blackboard Announcements. No extensions for projects due dates will be given. One of three projects will be performed individually, while the rest can be performed individually or with classmates, while using class notes, posted Power Points, the textbook, the internet, etc. Quizzes may be attempted multiple times during the quiz deployment period until the desired grade has been achieved. If a quiz is not attempted at least once, you will not have access to those quiz questions, or their associated answers, for studying purposes. I will not provide you with these questions/answers if a quiz is not attempted. Therefore, I strongly encourage each student to log onto Blackboard and complete the quizzes (if are present). Quizzes points can be earned through the generation and participation in discussions. One discussion generation be equivalent to three participations.

There are *12 class assignments* that will contribute to your overall course evaluation. Each completed assignment will earn you **up to 5 points** toward your final grade. Although you may work in groups, each student must turn in his/her own work. I am more than happy to look at your work during class time to provide you feedback. Students that ask me to check their work often times perform extremely well on exams, while those that do not often do not pass exams. Thus, I encourage you to ask me to check your work before you leave classroom. It is impossible to make up a class session due to logistics, therefore it is imperative to be at class each day. You are allowed to miss one class assignment without penalty, as we will be conducting 15 class experiences in total. If you attend and complete each class assignment, the points earned on the 15th class assignment contribute towards your overall course grade as extra credit points.

*Class participation* will account for **70points** of the final grade. Students have the opportunity to earn up to 3 points each class meeting. Basically you will begin each class period with 3 points. However, you will lose 1 point for being late to class, 1 point for being disruptive during class, and up to 3 points for leaving class early (There are good reasons and bad reasons! Please tell me your reason and I will probably understand), etc. Obviously, if you miss class you will not receive any points for participation that day. Students are allowed to miss one class sessions without penalty, given that there are 15 class meetings where class participation points can be earned. If a student attends all 15 classroom sessions, that student has the opportunity to earn up to 6 extra credit points. *Point assignment will be at the discretion of the* *instructor*, and the criteria for earning these points are subject to change at any time during the semester.

Creative thinking will be encouraged so that a plethora of perspectives might be shared during class. Even if a student does not hold a particular belief to be true for herself, it is hoped that the alternative viewpoint will be shared. Points will be deducted from the class participation grade for: disrespecting other students’ opinions, holding personal conversations that are deemed by the instructor to be disruptive to the class, cell phones ringing during class, leaving and returning to class to take phone calls, etc. Please refer to the announcements on Blackboard regularly, as quiz and weekly assignment due dates/times will be posted.

**Assignments Points: Total Points:**

2 Exams (200 points each) 400

3 projects (100 points each) 300

12 On-Line/Class Quizzes/Discussions (10 points each) 120

12 Class Assignments (5 points each) 60

Class Participation (3 points/class) 70

Possible extra credits 50

Total Possible Class Points: 1000

**Grading Scale:**

The following grade scale will apply to this class:

A: 90 % or above

B: 80 - 90 %

C: 70 - 80 %

D: 60 - 70 %

F: below 60 %

**Policy for Class Attendance and Late Work**

1. Students must be mentally present for the entire class period, each class meeting. After three (3) absences, a student may be withdrawn from the course at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

2. Students that are continuously tardy, leave early, exit and return within a class period, are holding personal conversations, who use electronic devices for non-class related material, or are otherwise not mentally present (to be determined by the instructor) will be marked as absent. These activities disrupt the desired classroom setting and are a violation of Valencia College’s Student Code of Conduct. As stated above, following three (3) absences, students may be withdrawn from the course at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

3. Students are responsible for all of the policies and procedures stipulated in Valencia College’s Student Code of Conduct (Policy 6Hx28:8-03). Violation of any of these policies and procedures will result in the student being withdrawn from the course. The Student Code of Conduct policies and procedures (Policy 6Hx28:8-03) can be found at the following link: http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/ValenciaCollegePolicyVolumes.cfm?volumeID=8.

4. No late submissions will be accepted.

5. Written assignments submitted after the due date/time will lose 50% of their value. Thus, if a student comes to class late and subsequently turns in an assignment, it will be deemed past due and will lose 50% of its graded value. Furthermore, the student will be counted as absent, as previously outlined. Late work will only be accepted through the subsequent class meeting. Anything submitted more than one week late will receive a zero. The only exception to this rule is prior notification of an extenuating circumstance. Validity of the extenuating circumstance is to be determined by the instructor.

6. Tests are to be taken on the date that they are assigned and no makeup tests will be given without prior notification of an extenuating circumstance. Validity of the extenuating circumstance is to be determined by the instructor.

7. The deadline for withdrawal (W grade) from this course is March 31 @ 11:59 p.m.for Spring Semester 2017. Before withdrawing from the class you are advised to consult the professor and an advisor or counselor. The drop/refund deadline is January 17 @ 11:59 p.m.

**Electronics**

Tape recorders are allowed. Laptop computers may be used in class for note-taking purposes . Cell phones on silent during class. Students must refrain from text messaging during class. Cell phones must be out of sight for the duration of ANY Quiz or Exam. If a cell phone is observed being used during a test or quiz, student will receive a 0.

**Student Security**

We want to reassure you that our security officers are here around the clock to ensure the safety and security of the campus community. It’s important to remain alert and aware of your surroundings, especially during the early morning or evening hours. Remember that you can always call security for an escort if you feel uncomfortable walking alone on campus. Security phones can also be found in many of our buildings; simply pick up the phone and security will answer.

Finally, report any suspicious persons to Osceola Campus Security at (407)-582-4000,

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

Students are expected to respect and uphold the standards of honesty in submitting written work to

Instructors. Though occurring in many forms, plagiarism in essence involves the presentation of another person’s work as if it were the work of the presenter. Any cheating or plagiarism will result in disciplinary action to be determined by the instructor based on the severity and nature of the offense. It is the student’s responsibility to review the Valencia College’s Student Code of Conduct

(http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/ValenciaCollegePolicyVolumes.cfm?volumeID=8). Collaboration and discussion are encouraged in all course aspects other than actually completing the assigned work (exams, homework, projects, etc.). Indeed, collaboration often leads to increased understanding of the material being covered. If you have questions about an assignment, I encourage you to speak up and ask questions about it.

It should, but will not, go without saying that plagiarism is a form of fraud and will not be tolerated. You are expected to do your own work. Copying text or images from any source and claiming it as your own is considered plagiarism. Submitting copied text as most or all of your answer on a homework or project is also a form of dishonesty, even if you cite the source. I want to read YOUR words, not someone else’s words. Using quoted text to support your answer will not usually be necessary in this class.

If I catch you in any form of academic dishonesty, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment. If I catch you a second time, you will earn a failing grade for this class and a report will be submitted to Valencia College.

If a student desires to file a complaint or dispute a grade, the following link found on Valencia College’s Student Academic Dispute and Administrative Complaint Resolution webpage should be consulted for procedures and forms: http://valenciacollege.edu/students/Disputes/Withdrawal Policy

Students may withdraw without academic penalty from any course by the established deadline published in the College’s calendar. These dates are available at the following link:http://valenciacollege.edu/calendar/importantdates\_withdraw.cfm. Students who abandon the course or do not withdraw themselves by the published deadline are subject to receiving a grade of F.

**BayCare**

Valencia College is interested in making sure all students have a rewarding and successful college experience. To that purpose, Valencia students can get immediate help in dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, substance abuse, time management as well as relationship problems dealing with school, home or work. BayCare Behavioral Health Student Assistance Program (SAP) services are free to all Valencia students and available 24 hours a day by calling (800) 878-5470. Free face- to-face counseling is also available.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students must provide a letter from the Office of Students with Disabilities and discuss specific needs with me at the beginning of the semester. Do not wait until after we have taken exams or completed class activities to provide the OSD letter. The OSD letter will determine what accommodations are needed for each student.

**Disclaimer**

I reserve the right to change and/or modify the content, procedures and policies of this course at any time.

**Welcome**

Together we will explore some of the biological foundations of life. Although biology may not be your field of study, you are expected to have fun, to be interested in biology (or at least act like it!), and to attend each class period prepared to cover the day's topic.

 My hope is that the material presented in this course will feed your intellectual mind, creating a continued desire to learn more about the world around you. Each of us brings our background and culture to the classroom and through credible and respectful interaction we will leave the classroom as better-informed stewards, citizens and decision makers!

**Tips from Other Professors…**

Remember that the amount of time spent studying in relation to the amount of time you are in class is recommended to be 4:1. You are going to be busy this semester!

* Make copies of the semester schedule. See how it fits in with your other academic, work or personal schedules. Put copies of this schedule on your refrigerator, your bulletin board, in your notebook, and on your phone reminders.
* Your workspace at home is important. Get a selection of favorite colored pens, pencils, markers, erasers, Post-It- notes, blank 3x5 cards (buy several hundred, as a start), white-out and a stapler. Give yourself some inspiration- tack up a favorite photo, cartoon, or quotation.
* Peruse each chapter in the text before really digging into it. Put a Post-If- note at the end of the chapter so you won't have to waste time constantly seeing “how many more pages" are in the chapter.
* Look at the chapter learning objectives and key concepts in the beginning of each chapter to get a feel for the type of subjects you will be learning.
* Note that there is a chapter summary at the end of each chapter. Make sure that you can define all of the selected key terms.

 To prepare for exams, follow these 5 steps:

1. Start early. You typically need 2 weeks to prepare for a test. Notice that the first test in just a few weeks. Start tonight!
2. Make and use flash cards. Study them in "down time"- waiting in supermarket lines, while preparing dinner, during commuting (but only if you're not driving).
3. Try to understand concepts, not just memorize fact
4. In a class such as this, it is optimal to form study groups early! Meet other students in your lecture, exchange phone numbers, and start studying together soon. It will benefit you to begin making flash cards and working on the study guides immediately!
5. Work hard! Success in this course comes to those who are dedicated, persistent, and enjoy the learning process.