

EVR 1001 Introduction to Environmental Science
Valencia College West
Fall 2023

Instructor: Dr. Joyce Merritt

Email: jmerritt11@valenciacollege.edu or through Canvas email

Student Engagement Hours:

Engagement hours are an opportunity for us to connect regarding questions on content, assignments, and your progress. You can expect quicker response times for Canvas/Email questions during this time. If you would like to connect via phone or Zoom, please do try to give advance notice, and mention the topic you wish to connect on so that I can be best prepared to assist you. **Virtual Engagement Hours are Wednesdays and Fridays from 3:00 – 5:00 pm.**

Modality: Online

Credit Hours: 3

Prerequisites: None

Welcome to the Course!

Environmental science is the study of the effects of natural and unnatural processes, and of interactions of the physical components of the planet on the environment. This semester will be filled with hot topics on environmental science issues. You will get a broader perspective of what's happening in the world and how you can make a difference.

Course Information

Course Description

This course is a general education credit, non-laboratory course that provides a survey of basic chemical, biological, and physical principles of environmental science and ecology, the application of these principles to current political, scientific, and economic issues and our responsibility for the environment.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, you will:

1. Connect environmental principles to the management of natural resources.
2. Relate the reciprocal effects of human and nature within environmental systems.
3. Compare the effects of different types of pollution sources on the environment.
4. Review policies that have impacted various environmental systems.
5. Compare the roles of fundamental principles of science in the function of environmental systems.
6. Discuss social concerns regarding environmental issues.

Textbooks

We will be using *Environmental Science, 16th edition* by Miller and Spoolman. This is a Cengage book, and you will use MindTapV2.0 for some assignments. You can get an immediate access or immediate access and loose-leaf textbook from the Cengage store. You can also get an access code from the bookstore for those on financial aid. If you have other courses that use Cengage books, you can subscribe to Cengage Unlimited for approximately \$120 for 4 months and get online access for multiple books. Through this, you can rent a copy of the book for \$7.99.

Here is a [video](#) on how to login and register. You can also access MindTapV2.0 through a mobile app. Here is the [user guide](#) for that.

Valencia College Core Competencies

Valencia's Student Core Competencies are complex abilities that are essential to lifelong success. This course will help you to develop and demonstrate the abilities to:

1. THINK clearly, critically, and creatively.
2. COMMUNICATE with others verbally and in written form.
3. Make reasoned VALUE judgments and responsible commitments.
4. ACT purposefully, reflectively, and responsibly.

Due to the nature of these global competencies, many of the problems will be presented in the context of an application. These applications will require students to select appropriate information from the problem and communicate effectively in order to explain and/or describe how the student used the skills they are learning to arrive at an appropriate solution for the problem.

Our Inclusive Learning Environment

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently and bring different strengths and needs to the class. We expect everyone in this class to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive environment to support the learning of all other members of the class. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment or achievement, please let me know as soon as possible.

If you have a disability and require accommodations, please let me know during the first two weeks of the semester. You will need to register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) (West Campus SSB 102, 407-582-1523). OSD determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities and provides a letter to me with them.

Course Expectations

Professor Expectations

I believe that anyone can succeed in the class if the right learning environment and strategies are used. I have structured this course to provide a variety of learning assessments with diverse learners in mind. I value your uniqueness and experience and want you to value your classmates as well. We are all learning together so please reach out to me if you have any questions or need extra assistance. I am here to help you learn.

- I will follow the course outline as closely as possible and will notify you of modifications in the outline if they happen.
- I will attempt to create and maintain an online atmosphere in which you feel free to both read others' views and express your own views and ask questions to increase your learning.
- Please message me through the Canvas Inbox or schedule a Zoom meeting if there is anything you want to discuss or about which you are unclear. I want to be supportive of your learning and growth.
- I will provide feedback/grades within **a week (7 days)** on a submitted assignment. It will be posted to the Canvas Gradebook.

Student Expectations

Set goals for yourself for this course and plan/work to meet them. Value your classmate's opinions and be open to learn new ways of thinking. Complete all assignments without sharing/copying other's work or answers and be proud of your work.

- Please inform me by Canvas Inbox or e-mail if there is something that prevents you from turning in assignments.
- You are expected to check your Atlas email and Canvas inbox on a regular basis throughout the week.
- You are expected to complete assignments thoroughly and on time and contribute to class discussions.
- The general rule is to spend 3 hours of study per week for every 1 credit hour of class. This is a 3-credit course. This means that you will need to spend approximately **8 – 9 hours each week studying** and doing assignments for this course. I recommend that you schedule time for almost every day of the week to study. Start assignments early so that you have time to ask any questions that you may have before the assignment is due.
- Feel free to share feedback regarding how well the class is meeting your needs or if material is unclear. I make changes to the class based on feedback, either on the spot or in the future.
- It is also expected that you will treat classmates with respect and observe the rules of confidentiality regarding personal information shared in class.

Professor's Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

As your facilitator in this learning experience, I will:

1. Be respectful of all diversity including gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, religion, and culture.
2. View diversity among students as a resource for learning, growth, strength, and a benefit for all of us.
3. Provide a learning environment that is inclusive and encourages everyone to maximize their potential regardless of their backgrounds.

Assessment Method and Evaluation Scale

Exams: Please note that there are no exams in this course.

Authentic Assessments: An authentic assignment is one that requires application of what you have learned to a new situation and demands judgment to determine what information and skills are relevant

and how they should be used. Individual authentic assessments will be assigned to demonstrate an understanding of the material. The products may include developing PowerPoints, videos, infographics, papers, etc. A rubric will be provided for grading the assignment.

Sources should be cited for your authentic assessments. Any information you obtain from outside sources should be summarized/analyzed and put into your own words. Copying and pasting information lacks academic integrity and is not permitted. Limit the times you use quotes when directly quoting the author. Sources are expected to be cited in APA format. The [Lib Guide](#) will assist in how to cite sources. The [Sources Video](#) from Science Librarian will help you to find reliable sources.

MindTap Activities: There are associated case studies and activities associated with the book. You will have links that will direct you to the activities in Canvas. You will have multiple chances to increase your score.

Discussions: Since environmental science often includes conflicting viewpoints and ways that you can act to improve the environment, weekly online discussions will be included in the course. Online discussions will be due each Sunday for each chapter covered. The student must make an initial response, then respond to at least two other students. Discussions should demonstrate a thorough and complete understanding of material covered in the chapter and include sources cited for full credit.

Initial posts are expected to be thoughtful and substantial. Discussion posts need to have sources cited properly in APA format. See the [Lib Guide](#) for assistance. You should also review the [Sources Video](#) from our Science Librarian, Nardia Cumberbatch. A minimum of 5 sentences is required for the initial post. Peer replies are expected to offer feedback, comments, and suggestions, and require a minimum of 3 sentences. I highly recommend that you type your posts in a word processing software such as Microsoft Word. Thoroughly check it for spelling/ grammar, ensure you have answered all questions thoroughly, cited your source, and then copy/paste into the forum to submit. Blank initial posts will receive a score of zero.

Final Project: As a culmination of the class, the final project will require you to annotate interactions between categories for three environmental topics. PowerPoint presentations will be exported from the interactive activity and combined into one final product. Additionally, you will reflect on your thoughts about the most important environmental topic to you.

Homework: There is very little additional homework. The homework category consists of the Orientation Quiz, Be in the Know, and Student Feedback on Instruction.

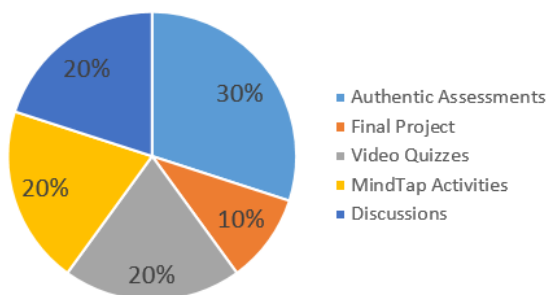
Extra Credit: There is a limit as to how much extra credit a teacher can give. However, throughout the semester, I do manage to squeeze in some extra credit, and you will have the opportunity to earn extra credit by completing the Student Feedback Survey at the end of the semester.

Late Work/Makeup Policy: To keep you on track, assignments will not be accepted late. If you are ill and not able to do an assignment, please let me know right away. I will work with you on when to turn in your assignments.

Grading Scale

A = 90% - 100%, B = 80% - 89%, C = 69% - 79%, D = 60% - 69%, F = below 60%

1. Authentic Assessments – 30%
2. MindTap Activities – 30%
3. Discussions – 25%
4. Final Project – 10%
5. Homework – 3%



COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Chapter	Topic	Assignments due on Sundays
1 Aug 21-27		Orientation Plagiarism 101 Brushing Up on the Basics	Orientation Quiz, Be in the Know Assignment Introduction Discussion Library Workshops Brushing up on the Basics: MindTap Graphing and Data Interpretation, An Introduction to Science Process
2 Aug 28-Sept 3	1	The Environment and Sustainability	Read Chapter 1: The Environment and Sustainability Video Quizzes: Introduction to Environmental Science, Human Population Impacts MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: Scientific Argumentation of Environmental Issues Authentic Assessment: Ecological Footprint
3 Sept 4-10	3	Ecosystems	Read Chapter 3: Ecosystems: What are they and how do they work? Video Quizzes: Ecosystem Ecology, Energy Flow in Ecosystems, Biogeochemical Cycles MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: Florida's Algae Blooms Authentic Assessment: Your Species, Your Choice
4 Sept 11-17	4	Biodiversity and Evolution	Read Chapter 4: Biodiversity and Evolution Video Quizzes: Ecosystem Diversity MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: Evolution and Religion Authentic Assessment: Color Variation in Venezuelan Guppies
5 Sept 18-24	5	Species Interactions, Ecological Succession, and Population Control	Read Chapter 5: Species Interactions, Succession, and Populations Overview Video Quizzes: Natural Ecosystem Change, Population Ecology MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: How Wolves Change Rivers Authentic Assessment: Your Species, Your Choice Part 2

Week	Chapter	Topic	Assignments due on Sundays
6 Sept 25-Oct 1	6	Human Population and Urbanization	Read Chapter 6: Human Population and Urbanization Overview Video Quizzes: Human Population Dynamics, Human Population Size, Land Use MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Debate and Defend: Population Growth Authentic Assessment: Human Population
7 Oct 2-8	8	Sustaining Biodiversity: Saving Species	Read Chapter 8: Saving Species Video Quizzes: Loss of Biodiversity MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: Burmese Python Invasion Authentic Assessment: Public Service Announcement for Endangered Species
8 Oct 9-15	9	Sustaining Biodiversity: Saving Ecosystems	Read Chapter 9: Saving Ecosystems Video Quizzes: Forestry and Rangelands, Fishing MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Debate and Defend: The Overfishing Crisis Authentic Assessment: Human Impact on the Environment
9 Oct 16-22	10	Food Production and the Environment	Read Chapter 10: Food Production and the Environment Video Quizzes: Agriculture MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: Confined Animal Feeding Operations Authentic Assessment: Traditional vs Organic Farming
10 Oct 23-29	11	Water Resources and Water Pollution	Read Chapter 11: Water Resources and Water Pollution Video Quizzes: Water Resources, Water Pollution MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Discussion: Water: A Right or a Commodity? Authentic Assessment: Your Drinking Water
11 Oct 30-Nov 5	13	Energy Resources	Read Chapter 13: Energy Resources Video Quizzes: Fossil Fuel Resources, Nuclear Energy, Energy Reduction, Renewable Energy, Hydroelectric Power MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Debate and Defend: Oil Drilling Authentic Assessment: Brainstorming Sustainable Solutions, Part 1
12 Nov 6-12	15	Air Pollution, Climate Change and Stratospheric Ozone	Read Chapter 15: Air Pollution, Climate Change and Ozone Depletion Video Quizzes: Atmosphere, Air Pollution, Global Climate Change, Stratospheric Ozone MindTap Activities: Case Study and Chapter activities Debate and Defend: Carbon Tax Authentic Assessment: Brainstorming Sustainable Solutions, Part 2

Week	Chapter	Topic	Assignments due on Sundays
13 Nov 13-19		Planning a Sustainable City	Discussion: Climate Change Authentic Assessment: Designing a Sustainable City
Nov 20-26			Thanksgiving - No Class
14 Nov 27-Dec 3		Final Project Due Apr 23	Discussion: Science Argumentation of Environmental Issues, Revisited Final Project: Understanding Global Change

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule if deemed necessary.

Vacations and other important dates

- Aug 21 – Classes begin
- Aug 28 – Drop/Refund Deadline
- Sept 4 - Labor Day (No Class)
- Oct 27 – Withdrawal deadline
- Nov 19 – Veterans Day (No Class)
- Nov 22 - 26 Thanksgiving Holiday (No Class)
- Dec 10 – Term ends

Professor Contact Information

You may contact me in various ways during this semester.

- You may contact me through the Canvas Inbox. This is the best and quickest method of communication. I will respond to your message within 48 hours, often much sooner, with the exception of days and times when the college is closed.
- For more complicated issues (e.g., walking you through an assignment), your best option is communication through the Zoom tool in Canvas.
- You may email me at jmerritt11@valenciacollege.edu. In your messages (if not using the Canvas Inbox), please indicate your course number so that I may better assist you.

Course Policies

No Show Policy

Since this is an online class, attendance is counted as assignments submitted. The Orientation Quiz is the required attendance activity for the first week. You need to complete the activity to show that you are attending the course. If you do not complete that activity by the end of the week, you will be withdrawn from the class as a “no show.” You will still be financially responsible for the class and a final grade of “WN” will appear on your transcript for the course. If you are unable to complete the Orientation Quiz during the first week, notify me as early as possible and we can discuss your options. If you are not planning to continue the class, drop the course before the deadline.

Attendance Policy

This is an online course, available 24/7, managed through Canvas. You must have access to the Internet (available on all Valencia campuses) to complete the course requirements. Your online attendance will be checked based on your participation in the course and submission of coursework. In the event of an extended absence, you should contact me so that we can discuss your options. If you do not submit any assignments for two weeks, I will email you about your absence. If I don't get an email back within a week

explaining your absence, I will withdraw you from the class. If you contact me but do not begin completing work, you will be withdrawn after another week. After the withdraw deadline (**Oct 28**), I will not drop you. Students will receive the final grade that is earned according to the course grading policy.

Withdrawal

The deadline for Drop/Refund is **Aug 28** and for Withdrawal is **Oct 27**. Per [Valencia policy](#) a student who withdraws from class before the established deadline for a particular term will receive a grade of “W”. A student is not permitted to withdraw after the withdrawal deadline.

Since I have an attendance policy, I can withdraw you for violation of that policy, but I strive to work with you so that you can complete the class. If you are withdrawn, you will receive a grade of “W”. This can affect you financially and cause problems with any future financial aid you receive. After the withdrawal deadline, I will not withdraw you and you will receive the grade earned at the end of the course. If you withdraw or is withdrawn from a class during a third or subsequent attempt in the same course, you will automatically be assigned a grade of “F.” If you do not intend to complete the course, you must withdraw yourself prior to the withdrawal date. Prior to withdrawing, please reach out to me to discuss your situation.

Academic Integrity

Valencia College is a community of scholars committed to the values of integrity. In this community, all members including faculty, staff, and students alike are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of academic honesty and quality of academic work. As a student and member of the Valencia College community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors. Unacceptable behavior include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, using unauthorized study aids, or facilitating academic misconduct. Please review our campus policy on [academic integrity](#).

All work submitted by you is expected to be the result of your individual thoughts, research, and self-expression. Whenever you use ideas, wording, or organization from another source, the source must be appropriately acknowledged. Copying and pasting from an online source without paraphrasing the information first, even if providing a reference, is still considered plagiarism. Since writing can be difficult, I will provide you resources to assist your efforts. I use a program called Turnitin to check for similarities with online sources. Any score on Turnitin above 15% is reviewed for plagiarism. You can see your score a few minutes you submit it (under Grades it will have a green, yellow, or red flag that you can click). If too much of your work is similar, I will allow a rewrite for up to 50% of the assignment score for the first offense. A second offense will result in a zero score on the assignment and a third offense will result in a class grade of F. Take advantage of the project check-ins to receive feedback on your writing. As an alternative to the 50% rewrite, you can resubmit your work by the due date with the partial point deduction.

College Student Conduct Policy

Valencia is dedicated not only to the advancement of knowledge and learning but also to the development of responsible personal and social conduct. As a registered student, you assume the responsibility for conducting yourself in a manner that contributes positively to Valencia’s learning community and that does not impair, interfere with, or obstruct the orderly conduct, processes, and functions of the college as described in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Netiquette

It is important to be aware of your behavior in an online learning environment to ensure positive interactions with your instructor and peers. This requires you to follow some guidelines for behaviors.

All students are expected to:

- Show respect for the instructor and for other students in the course
- Respect the privacy of other students
- Express differences of opinion in a polite and rational way
- Maintain an environment of constructive criticism when commenting on the work of other students
- Remain focused on the learning topics during discussions and activities

Third Party Software & FERPA Policy

Valencia College has a firm commitment to protecting the privacy rights of its students. Under no circumstances will your test scores, total points, or final grades be discussed on the telephone or over e-mail. FERPA rights to privacy prevent the divulging of scores or related materials by these means. Access your scores through the Canvas gradebook.

Student Resources for Support and Learning

As a Valencia College student, you may experience challenges such as struggles with academics, finances, or your personal well-being. Valencia College has a multitude of resources available to all students. Many of these resources are listed below and we encourage all students to explore them as needed. **If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, please contact 9-1-1 or BayCare Behavioral Health at (800) 878-5470.**

- **Student Assistance Program:** Valencia students can get immediate help with issues 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](#) 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.
- **Valencia Counselors:** Valencia counselors care about your emotional well-being so they offer both virtual and in-person options to connect with students. Connect to counselors through the [student support form](#).
- **Pooky's Pantry:** It is a free resource that offers non-perishable food items, hygiene items, socks, outside resource information, and local housing information. There are [locations](#) on each campus.
- **Learning Support:** Learning Support Services provides students with academic support through distance tutoring, face to face tutoring at the campuses, writing consultations, library services, and resources. Tutoring is offered in most academic disciplines including math, science, foreign languages, English for academic purposes (EAP), computer programming and writing assistance for any course. For more information on how to access tutoring and library research assistance, please visit the college-wide [Learning Support Services LibGuide](#).
- **Skillshops:** [Skillshops](#) are free workshops, or mini courses that provide real-life solutions to common student issues.
- **Career Center:** Don't wait until your last year – visit the [career center](#) today!

- **Library:** At each campus library, librarians and other qualified staff can assist students with searching and finding items and information, MLA and APA citations, and technologies. The library provides a variety of books, eBooks, online articles, textbooks, DVDs, and streaming videos to support course-related research and other learning needs. View the [Library website](#) for more information.
- **Students Requiring Academic Accommodations:** Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with me, preferably during the first two weeks of the semester. The OSD (West Campus SSB 102, ext. 1523) determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities.
- **Title IX:** Valencia College strives to be a place free from all forms of discrimination. Title IX protects students from discrimination based upon sex including protections against sexual violence, domestic violence, and stalking. This also includes protections for students who are pregnant or may become pregnant. If you experience sexual violence, domestic violence or stalking and would like assistance there are several options available to you. Valencia partners with the Victim Service Center of Central Florida which is a confidential resource available 24/7. They can be reached by calling 407-497-6701. If you would like assistance on campus, you can go to valenciacollege.edu/eo or contact Valencia College's Title IX and Equal Opportunity Officer, Ryan Kane, by emailing rkane8@valenciacollege.edu. If you would like to report to law enforcement, you may visit Campus Security or call 911.
- Please note that there are no confidential resources on campus. As your professor, I am required to report any information mentioned in this statement to the appropriate campus resources. This will include your name and detailed information shared with me. We take privacy very seriously at the College and only those who have a legitimate need to know the information will be provided with this information. If you have more questions about Title IX or the College's response, please visit <https://valenciacollege.edu/about/equal-opportunity-title-ix/frequently-asked-questions.php>.

COPYRIGHT: Material obtained during this course can only be circulated within the class only. Students must refrain from using or displaying the pictures, drawings, and presentations outside this course.

DISCLAIMER: Changes in the syllabus, schedule, evaluation procedures, and/or homework assignments may be made at any time at the discretion of the professor.

How to Succeed in this Course?

There are many ways for you to show us what and how you are learning, through your effort, interaction and class participation, application of scientific thinking to solve real world problems, and performance on assignments and quizzes. This class has been structured to help all students get the support and guidance needed to succeed in your learning. The below graphic is how the class is structured to best facilitate learning. If you skip ahead, such as missing an authentic assessment or discussion because it will take too long, this breaks the chain in understanding. The following tips will help you be successful in this class and in other classes throughout your career at Valencia College.

Intro to Environmental Science Honors Assessment Model



- “LEARNING” IS AN ACTION VERB!! Most students need to do more than just watch lectures and reread their notes. **Spend 1-2 hour blocks of time several days a week** actively writing or discussing concepts to make them a part of your memory. Use the words you learn often; they will sink in better.
- **Check Canvas every other day** and **change your settings** so you are getting the notifications for announcements and submission comments in your email. You don’t want to miss an important announcement or extra credit opportunity.
- **Progress through the modules** rather than relying on the to-do list on Canvas. The module is set-up to guide you through material and increase mastery of the information.
- **Make to-do lists and prioritize tasks.** Record all the things you need to accomplish then focus on completing one task at a time. Prioritize your task based on the most critical and time-sensitive ones. You can use paper to-do lists or an app. Don’t forget to reward yourself for a job well done once tasks have been successfully completed.
- **Eliminate distractions** so your attention is on the task-at-hand. You will finish tasks and move on to the next ones more quickly while paying more attention to details. Turn off the TV, put your phone on silent, and keep your study area organized.
- **Take good notes.** Record the key points of the video or lecture without writing down too much extraneous information.
- **Take a break.** Take a 10 – 15 minute break each hour or a 5-minute break after every 20 minutes of studying. This will prevent you from burning out too soon and you are more likely to retain the material compared to studying 3 hours straight. Good break options include listening and singing to a song, taking a walk, or getting a snack.
- **Ask questions.** Make lists of confusing topics from your studying and ask questions (as many as you can!). Talking to your professor helps you as well your professor to refocus on the topic again.

LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Expectations of Academic Integrity

Welcome to the Science Division of Valencia College’s West Campus; we are enthused to have this opportunity to assist you in achieving your educational goals. In working to provide you with the best learning experience at Valencia College, my expectation is that each of our faculty and students maintain the highest ethical academic standards.

From your professors, you can expect the following:

1. They will be on time to class and available during their scheduled office hours.

2. They will return graded tests, labs and other assignments when promised and within a reasonable period of time.
3. They will answer emails and phone calls within 48 business hours.
4. They will properly cite their references and resources, where applicable.

From you, we expect the following:

1. You will take your exams without referring to any books, notes, electronic devices, or classmates unless you are specifically instructed that a test is open-book or collaborative.
2. You will not tell other students about test questions or answers before or during their exam and you will protect the exam from being seen by others.
3. You will avoid even the appearance of cheating by not looking in the direction of other exams, by not wearing clothing/hats/visors that hide your eyes, by keeping your belongings, other than pens, pencils, and erasers away from your desktop, by going to the restroom before the exam and by asking your professor for permission and supervision if you need to retrieve another pen, pencil or eraser from your backpack or purse.
4. You will not allow anyone else to be the author of any part of your essays, lab reports or other written assignments and you will not include any materials from any sources (books, journals, other students, the internet, etc.) unless you give credit to those sources.

It is my hope that you will think about why it is important that we each show academic integrity and how cheating and plagiarism affect all of us, including those guilty of these academic crimes. Some students think that it only hurts their grade if they get caught cheating or plagiarizing, but cheaters typically lie not only to others, but to themselves. Eventually, cheaters pay a price.

- Those who cheat typically fail licensure exams, since they don't really know the material. Without a professional license, they won't be able to get employment. Would you want to be treated by a doctor who cheated in order to pass an exam that covered his or her knowledge of your disease? Also, if they falsify a patient's medical records, can you guess what can happen to them?
- Research scientists who falsify data are typically discredited and their reputations can be permanently ruined.
- Although you may think your professors have no clue when a student is cheating, usually your classmates do, and some will inform your professor.
- Cheating becomes habitual. See what happens when employees cheat their employer.
- Students who let others cheat off them are not doing anyone a favor. If you are in a highly competitive field, you may ultimately be aiding your competition.
- Guess what a professor says to a student seeking a letter of recommendation when they know the student cheated or plagiarized.
- Finally, what happens to a person's self-esteem and to their reputation when they act unethically by cheating or plagiarizing?

Use the following as your guide: *"Each student is required to follow Valencia policy regarding academic honesty. **All work submitted by students is expected to be the result of the student's individual thoughts, research, and self-expression unless the assignment specifically states 'group project.'*** To get the most out of each of your classes, it is best to learn how to study for long term comprehension, not just to memorize facts. Study so you can teach others what you are learning. My motto is, *"if you can't teach*

what you are learning to others, you don't really know the material. Academic dishonesty, in the forms of cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated and for most of our science professors will result in a student getting a zero on a test or assignment for the first offense and then an F for the course if a student is caught cheating or plagiarizing again; at that point the Dean of Students will also be notified. Don't throw away your dreams and your reputation by showing a lack of academic integrity. We wish you the best and want you to succeed and be proud of your accomplishments at Valencia.

Dr. Robert Gessner
West Campus Dean of Science
Valencia College

LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Expectations of a Valencia College Science Student

Welcome to the Science Division of Valencia College's West Campus; we are enthused to have this opportunity to assist you in achieving your educational goals. Higher education is a privilege and an opportunity; it is your responsibility to realize that you are in control of those behaviors and actions that can enable success in this course.

From your professors, **you can expect** the following:

1. They will be prompt, courteous and respectful.
2. They will provide a professional learning environment throughout the entire scheduled instructional period.
3. They will provide an up-to-date syllabus; when changes need to be made, they will announce changes in a manner that is conveyed to all students in their class.
4. They will provide you with a course that is of necessary rigor to prepare you for the career you have chosen; because the class you are taking transfers to a four year college or university, it will be taught with the same academic expectations. The bonus of starting your education at Valencia, when compared to attending a four year college, is you will be able to get more personal attention with small class sizes and you will be able to save money; the classes are not easier.
5. They will offer time outside of class to discuss your questions.
6. They will be available to discuss your class concerns in private, outside of class time; you should try to resolve your class concerns with your professor before you try to voice your concerns with administrators.
7. They will respond to emails within 2 business days.
8. They will expect from you what they have expected from the many students who passed their classes in the past.

In return, this is **what your professor will expect from you:**

1. You will be prompt, courteous and respectful.
Prompt means you come to class on time, ready to work, with all assignments completed before you enter class or lab. It means that you have studied, that all conversations, texting, and

diversions come to a stop and that you are ready to contribute to a positive learning environment from the beginning of the class or lab.

Courtesy means you are polite in your attitude and behavior towards your professor and classmates.

Respectfulness means that you regard everyone's classroom experience as valuable to them, that you accept your professor's expertise and experience to create relevant course objectives and that you treat college and personal property with care.

2. You will read your syllabus; your syllabus is a contract between your professor and you. Be aware of deadlines to complete assignments on time and know your professor's attendance policy. You will need to attend class for the full length of time allotted to your science class and lab.
3. You will be aware of Valencia College policies and procedures found in the college catalog; ignorance of policies and procedures doesn't mean they don't apply.
4. You will be serious about learning; it is your responsibility to be an active participant in your own learning. You will need to devote sufficient time to learn the material presented by your professor; for most students, this means you will need to spend at least two hours studying for every hour of instruction. Learning is an action verb; you will need to do more than sit through class and reread your notes to be successful. To succeed in higher level classes, you must retain the information, concepts, and skills you will learn; this can only happen if you work at learning to make the course content a part of your long-term memory. Do not cram!!
5. You will be encouraged to produce your own study guides. Most college professors do not provide study guides, but they can give you tips that will help you produce your own study guides to gain a better understanding of the course content.
6. You will be expected to participate fully in classroom activities. The work you produce must be your own; cheating in any form is not tolerated and your professor will have specific consequences, in their syllabus, which will be enforced should cheating occur.
7. You will be expected to contribute to a positive learning environment. Avoid classmates who speak negatively, or who have a negative outlook, about your class or your professor. Instead, get to know your professor during office hours; you will learn much more with a positive attitude.
8. You will be held to a high standard of maturity and responsibility. Disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated in the classroom or lab. First time disruptions will be handled by your professor and may include a request that you leave the class or lab. Very serious or repeated disruptions will be reported, to the Dean of Science and the Dean of Students, with specific consequences that can include your permanent removal from the class. Disruptions include:
 - Being noisy when arriving late to class or leaving early.
 - Carrying on private conversations while the professor is talking.
 - Disrespectful language, tone, and mannerisms.
 - Sleeping or attempting to sleep in class.
 - Repeatedly asking unnecessary or irrelevant questions.

My wish is that you get the best learning value from the science classes that you are taking. With everyone abiding by the expectations in this letter, your science classes at Valencia should be the next step in achieving your academic dreams.

Dr. Robert Gessner
West Campus Dean of Science
Valencia College