

Greenville Technical Charter High School
Biology Syllabus 2020-2021

Instructor: Mr. Merritt

Text: *Biology* (Holt)

Biology Course Description:

This course is designed for students desiring a formal background in biology. It includes laboratory work and extensive study of biological principles. Course content encompasses interrelationships of living things, levels of biological organization, human biology, social implications, biochemistry, and genetics. Taking this course will enable students to develop and hone their analytical, critical thinking, synthesis and writing skills.

Course Goals/Objectives:

South Carolina State Biology and Common Core Science Standards will be taught in order for students to gain a better understanding of the biological world. My personal goal for the class is to help students understand the basic tenets of science and how the scientific method functions in our daily lives, while also empowering them with the skills and abilities they need to become scientifically-literate, knowledgeable, and informed decision makers.

Contact Information: Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have regarding your student's performance in this course.

- Email: amerritt@staff.gtchs.org (please allow 24 hours for a reply)
- Work Phone: 603-1660 (for business purposes only; conversations may be recorded)
- Etc: Please be mindful that the gradebook functions as an inadvertent, indirect, and ultimately incomplete communication tool, and that this very specific quantitative dimension is not designed to serve as a comprehensive evaluation of any student.
- Office Hours: Friday 9:15 AM – 10:30 AM; Normal Schedule: Thursdays, 2:50 – 3:30 PM
Please encourage your student to advocate on their own behalf regarding any missing work or low test scores. This takes maturity, patience, and sincere persistence- even if your student does not consider science their strongest subject- this is important.

Materials:

Students will need a 3-ring binder with a copy of the class syllabus, a set of dividers (for class notes, lab activities, book notes, and returned work), pens or pencils, and loose leaf paper. You will need these supplies every day in class. At home assignments may require arts and crafts supplies that you use for other classes- feel free to make other arrangements with me via e-mail if necessary.

Assessments: Students will be given a variety of summative and formative assessments to practice content skills and demonstrate their mastery of concepts.

- Tests: Traditional tests will include a variety of questioning styles: true-false, multiple choice and completion. Each test will include items such as: short answer questions, labeled drawings, problem solving or graphing (depending on the content being studied). Test items may be cumulative in nature.
- Quizzes: May be by section or chapter (and may be unannounced) to ensure students are prepared. Quizzes may also be designed to review what they students have learned.
- Projects:
 - a) Labs/Activities: Labs and other activities may be completed in groups; lab reports will be assessed individually, as a group, or both depending on the nature of lab work.
 - b) Group work: Students may also be expected to work in pairs or groups on discussions, presentations and other classwork.

- Exams: A comprehensive exam will be given at the end of each semester. Students are also traditionally required to take a state-mandated End of Course Exam (EOC) that will count as 20% of their final grade.
- Participation: Biology, like all classes, requires that students are *active learners* in the classroom environment. This means that students should ask questions, participate in class and group discussions, and should not engage in distracting or disrespectful behaviors during class (e.g., cell phone use, talking, laying head on desk, sleeping, etc.). Students will earn or lose points for their participation preparedness, and this component will factor into their grade each quarter.

Late Work:

- Minor Assignments: Points are taken off each day an assignment is late. Students can complete assignments through the end of the unit for partial credit.
- Major Assignments: Students have 5 school days to complete any missed major assignments.

Following an absence, students should immediately confer with their instructor to reschedule assessments and receive any materials they may have missed.

Zeros may be entered in the gradebook regardless of circumstance. Speak to me to alleviate any tension this could create.

Grades:

All work must have the following criteria met or it may be returned for a REDO.

- Full name and class section must be on EVERY paper
- If the assignment is a lab report, the correct format must be followed.
- You must show all work (especially if you are working on problems).
- You must include units when necessary and adhere to the rules of significant digits.
- All work must be legible.

Grading Scale:

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
Below 60	F

Mastery: In order for students to attain mastery level knowledge of course content, students are able to make test and quiz corrections, for a maximum score of a 75, during Science office hours or other pre-designated times. Extra help, one-on-one time with teacher, and some peer tutoring can also be arranged to help students master the material.

School Rules: Students are expected to follow the rules and procedures as specified in the Greenville Technical Charter High School handbook.

Class Rules*:

1. Act in a safe and healthy way.
2. Treat all property with respect.
3. Respect the rights and needs of others.
4. Be responsible for your own learning.

Class Consequences#

- Non-verbal warning
- Verbal warning
- One-on-one discussion or lunch detention
- Email or call home
- Referral or parent conference

*Students will not delay, distract from, or otherwise disrupt my instruction, your learning, or the progress of their peers
 #Depending on the severity of the violation, steps may be skipped.

Laboratory Safety Contract

Safety will be stressed in both the classroom and laboratory. Each student is required to read and sign a lab safety contract prior to admission to any laboratory exercise. A parent or guardian must also sign this contract, and return it to the teacher. Some common guidelines are listed below. More detailed safety procedures will be covered with all students prior to the first lab exercise and reinforced throughout the year.

- Eating or drinking is strictly prohibited in the lab. Candy and chewing gum are also prohibited in the lab. There are no exceptions.
- Hands should be kept from contacting the face, mouth, eyes and nose while in the lab. A small amount of a chemical may find its way to the hands, and cause injury to these sensitive areas of the body. Hands must be washed just prior to leaving the laboratory area. Soap and warm water are to be used.
- Gloves, aprons, lab coats, goggles and other protective equipment will be used where appropriate, and as designated by the teacher.
- Contact lenses are not recommended during laboratory exercises. If contacts must be worn special goggles are required, and will be provided by the school as needed.
- Students will be briefed on all chemical hazards and appropriate safety precautions using Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). An MSDS for each chemical used in the lab will be readily available in accordance with Federal regulations (OSHA).
- Any accident or injury, no matter how small, must be reported to the teacher immediately.
- Failure to safely participate in these activities may result in a student's removal from the activity and the requirement to complete another assessment.

For documentation procedures please have your parent or guardian email me their name and contact information in a message with the subject "Student Name's Safety Contract"