

BISC 104. Inquiry into Life: The Environment

Syllabus

Spring 2007

Dr. Wendy J. Garrison

Welcome students! Thank you for signing up for my class! I'm looking forward to exploring many biology topics with you, and getting to know you this semester.

Your first tasks are to:

1. Read this syllabus
2. Get your textbook from the bookstore in the Union on the Oxford campus, or any other store or online.
Required: Essential Biology with Physiology. Authors: Campbell, Reece and Simon. 2004. Publisher: Pearson, Benjamin Cummings. ISBN 0-8053-7476-0. At the bookstore, \$100 new, \$75 used.
Recommended: An Inconvenient Truth. Author: Al Gore. 2006. Publisher: Rodale. ISBN-13:978-1-59486-567-1. Price \$21.95 new.
3. Click on Lessons tab at top of page.
4. Click on Lessons Folder one through fourteen.
5. Click on Lesson Folder one and begin on the assignments there.
6. Remember you must log in at least twice each week! Logins must be on two different days.
7. Importantly you need to logout also, not just let the session expire. If you don't logout, your login may not be counted.
8. Remember you need to make TWO postings to each discussion board, one is your post, one is a response to someone else's. Must be on different days.

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I. About the Instructor: Dr. Wendy Garrison

My teaching philosophy is that students are interested in subjects that are real and that apply to their lives. Biology is that and more. Welcome!

I have a Ph.D. in Biology, and am an instructor of Biology in the Biology Department at the University of Mississippi, Oxford Campus. I have been an instructor here since 1996. The courses I teach most often are BISC102 and 104, and I also teach or have taught Honors College Biology classes, the Costa Rica Biology Study Abroad class, most recently in wintersession 2006, and upper level Biology classes such as BISC 342, Plant Diversity, which I taught in Spring 2006.

I love teaching online! You, the students are very smart about using online resources, and, the format frees you to learn the material in a way that suits you.

Outside of Biology, I'm a slide guitar player - maybe you've seen me or will see me playing the music for Theatre Oxford Productions such as "Ten Minute Plays" performed in September 2006 at the Powerhouse Theater in Oxford.

II. How to contact the instructor

A. Office Hours by email on Angel anytime.

I will answer your email in 48 hours Monday through Friday unless I have alerted the class that I will be unavailable for a few days.

B. Office hours, chat room . 10-11; and 3-4 Tuesday and Wednesday. This is when I will answer you as you write.

C. Office Hours in my office , 228 Shoemaker Hall, on the Oxford Campus:

2 to 3 on Tuesday and Wednesday. This is when you can stop by and I will be in my office to visit with you and talk about biology.

D. Telephone: I prefer not to communicate by telephone. Because of some vocal problems, it is difficult for people to hear me over the phone. Thank you. If it is absolutely necessary for you to leave me a phone message, you may call my office number 662-915-1089. I cannot return your calls, but I will be happy to email a response to you. You may also call the Department of Biology's Oxford Campus office: 662-915-7204

III. What feedback to expect from the instructor : individual or group feedback on assignments as needed, interaction in discussion boards as needed, one to one email and class email as needed.

IV. Course Description:

A survey course intended for nonbiology majors, emphasizing the relationships of humans to the environment, including origin and diversification of life, behavior, ecology, role of plants, and environmental concerns. Applies to the science requirement of the core curricula. Associated laboratory is BISC 105. Will not count for credit if BISC 162 is counted.

Semester hours: The course is 3 semester hours.

Prerequisites: BISC 102

Permission from the instructor to register is not required.

Minimum technology requirements: Please look at these two sources.

1. <http://www.outreach.olemiss.edu/OleMissOnline/FAQ/>

FAQ #7 mentions the hardware and software requirements
FAQ #15 mentions self motivation and provides a link to "survival skills" online students should have.

2. Under the Lessons tab at the top of your page:
Helpful Guides for Online Students folder -> Online Learning Basics,
Tips and Study Skills

Online course, instructional methods: The course is presented on a weekly schedule throughout the semester. Students will progress by written assignments, online quizzes, and by participation in discussion boards, as well as by other assignments . It is the student's responsibility to regularly access the course site and read the instructor's postings. Teaching methods include directed discussions, outside assignments, prescribed readings, and assigned projects.

Issues approach: Students should be aware that we have chosen to cover some controversial issues in this course. We have selected materials that present a balanced discussion of various controversies. We believe that being exposed to contrasting points of view, considering the merits of other points of view, and respecting people with other views is an essential part of being an educated person, and an essential part of being a member of the University community.

V. Course Learning Objectives:

1. To enhance students' existing curiosity and concern about the natural world. To encourage caring and action on behalf of our natural world.

Activities and Evaluation: "Making a Difference" Project, "Nature Lovers" Discussion Board, "Being a Good Consumer" Discussion Board

2. To help students understand similarities and differences among various organisms including humans.

Activities and Evaluation: Readings, Weekly Quizzes; Midterm and Final exam; "Population of Oxford" discussion board.

3. To give students a basis for objectively analyzing current issues. To give students practice at evaluating current issues.

Activities and Evaluation: Readings, Critical Thinking Paper, Weekly Quizzes, Midterm and Final Exam.

4. For students to understand exponential growth.

Activities and Evaluation: Graph homework; "Cats and Dogs" discussion board.

5. To enhance students' grasp of how environmental concerns affect them directly, AND how their actions affect the environment.

Activities and Evaluation: "The Case of Holly" Discussion Board; "At your garden center" Discussion board.

(Weekly assignments will guide the student through the process of understanding concepts and objectives.)

VI. Course Schedule:

WEEK 1: 16 January - 19 January, 2007

Note: Each week please click on the folder for that week.

Lesson 1 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #1

Introduction

Chapter 28: The Life of a Flowering Plant

Reading: p. 618 - 631 in

Due: Monday, January 29 at 4:00 P.M. our time:

- (1) Syllabus prac. quiz
- (2) 2 postings for "Nature Lovers" on different days;
- (3) Practice quiz #1

See Class Participation, below.

WEEK 2: January 22 - January 26, 2007

<>Lesson 2 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #2.

Chapter 29: The Working Plant

Reading: p. 639 - 646

Due: Monday January 29 at 4:00 P.M. our time:

- (1) Quiz #2

WEEK 3: January 29 - February 2, 2007

Critical Thinking Paper Introduced

Lesson 3 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #3.

Chapter 7: Photosynthesis

Reading: p. 102 - 116

Due: Monday, February 5, at 4:00 P.M. our time:

- (1) 2 postings for "At your local garden center" two different days.
- (2) Practice quiz #3

WEEK 4: February 5 - February 9, 2007

Lesson 4 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #4.

Chapter 13: How Populations Evolve

Reading: p. 242 - 269

Due Monday February 12 at 4:00 P.M.

- (1) Quiz #4
- (2) Two posts "Population..." two different days

WEEK 5: February 12 - February 16, 2007

<> Lesson 5 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #5.

Chapter 14: How Biological Diversity Evolves

Reading: p. 270 - 295

Due Monday, February 19 at 4:00 P.M. our time

(1) Quiz #5 due 4:00PM

WEEK 6: February 19 - February 23, 2007

Lesson 6 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #6.

Chapter 15: The Evolution of Microbial Life

Reading: p. 296 - 319

Please contact Ms. Mary Lea Moore at mlea@olemiss.edu one to two weeks before the midterm exam to make a reservation. Please see week 8 for more info.

Due Monday, February 26 at 4:00 P.M.

(1) 2 postings for "Making a Difference"

(2) Practice quiz #6

WEEK 7: February 26 - March 2, 2007

Lesson 7 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #7.

Chapter 16: Plants, Fungi, and the Move onto Land

Reading: p. 320 - 342

Due Monday March 5 at 4:00 P.M

(1) Quiz #7

Get ready for Midterm Exam

WEEK 8: March 5 - March 9, 2007

Midterm Exam, . This will be a proctored exam on campus. You will need to make arrangements to take the exam on one of those three days. Please see instructions under Evaluation Tools, below.

Lesson 8 - Please click on the Lessons tab a the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #8.

Chapter 17: The Evolution of Animals begin

Reading: p. 343 - 359

Due Tuesday, March 20 at 4:00 P.M.

(1) Quiz #8

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 9: March 19 - March 23, 2007

Lesson 9 - Please click on the Lessons tab a the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #9.

Chapter 17: The Evolution of Animals continued

Reading: p. 360 - 376

Due Monday March 26 at 4:00 P.M.

(1) Quiz #9

WEEK 10: March 26 - March 30, 2007

Lesson 10 - Please click on the Lessons tab a the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #10.

Chapter 18: The Ecology of Organisms and Populations (begin)

Reading:

An Overview of Ecology p. 381 - 387

The Evolutionary Adaptations of Organisms p. 387 - 389

Due Monday April 2 at 4:00 P.M. our time

(1) Quiz #10

WEEK 11: April 2 - April 5, 2007 (Good Friday April 6 is a holiday)

Lesson 11 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #11.

Chapter 18 : The Ecology of Organisms and Populations (continued)

Reading:

What is population Ecology? p. 388 - 398

Life Histories and Their Evolution p. 398 - 405

Due Tuesday April 10 at 4:00 P.M.

- (1) 2 postings on "Cats and Dogs"
- (2) Quiz #11
- (3) Graph drop box

WEEK 12: April 9 - April 13, 2007

Lesson 12 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #12.

Chapter 19: Communities and Ecosystems begin
<>New addition to syllabus: ***You will register online for the final***

Due Monday, April 16 at 4:00 P.M. our time

- (1) "Making a Difference" results
- (2) Practice Quiz #12

WEEK 13: April 16 - April 20, 2007

Lesson 13 - Please click on the Lessons tab at the top of the page, then on Lesson Folder #13.

Chapter 19 Communities and Ecosystems continued

Due Monday April 23 at 4:00 P.M.

- (1) Practice quiz #13
- (2) Critical Thinking

WEEK 14: April 23 - April 27, 2007

"An Inconvenient Truth" and
Chapter 20: Human Impact on the Environment begin

Due FRIDAY, May 4 at 4:00 P.M. our time

- (1) Practice quiz #14
- (2) Two posts on "The Case of Holly"

Get Ready for Final Exam - Please see information in
section VII.

WEEK 15: April 30 - May 4, 2007

"An Inconvenient Truth" and
Chapter 20: Human Impact on the Environment continued,
Wrap up and Review.

Due FRIDAY, May 4 at 4:00 P.M. our time

- (1) Practice quiz #15

Get Ready for Final Exam - May 7, 8 or 9. Please see
information in section VII.

DUE DATES. HERE IS A HANDY SUMMARY OF WHEN YOUR
ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE. Most assignments are due Monday at
4:00 P.M. Please click on the lessons folders for the
assignments.

Jan. 22 - 29 Syllabus Prac. Quiz; Prac. Quiz #1; Two
posts "Nature Lovers"

Jan 29 Quiz #2;

Feb. 5 Prac, Quiz #3; Two posts "At your local
garden center"

Feb. 12 Quiz #4; Two posts "Population..."

Feb. 19 Quiz #5;
Feb. 26 Prac Quiz #6; Two posts "Making a
Difference"
Mar. 5 Quiz #7
Mar. 6,7,8 Midterm Exam
Mar. 20 (Tues) Prac. Quiz #8
Mar. 26 Quiz #9
Apr. 2 Quiz #10
Apr. 10 (Tues.) Prac. Quiz #11; Graph Drop Box: Two
posts "Cats and Dogs"
Apr. 16 Prac. Quiz #12; Making a Difference Results
Apr. 23 Prac. Quiz #13; Critical Thinking;
Apr. 30 Quiz #14; Two posts on "The Case of Holly"
May 4 (Friday) Quiz #15
May 7, 8, 9 Final Exam

VII. EVALUATION TOOLS/POINT DISTRIBUTION DISCUSSION/ATTENDANCE: 140

1. We will be discussing relevant topics, for example in one forum you will research online the ingredients of home and garden herbicides and pesticides and see if you really want to use them anymore. In one discussion forum students will work in groups, and will learn to evaluate the project plans of other students. To get full credit each week for discussion/attendance, you need to

A. log in at least twice each week.

B. Complete the week's assigned discussion board postings

Because this course does not officially "meet" at a given time during the week, the attendance policy is somewhat different than that of a traditional course. This is great for many students, you can work when it is most convenient for you - no more early classes, and no more stuffy classrooms! A record is kept of the number of times you log in each week. Failure to log in at least twice every week will result in one absence. Also, failure to complete the week's assigned discussion board postings will result in one absence.

C. Students are required to post twice on each discussion board subject. One posting will be your discussion, and the other posting will be a response to a group member's discussion. The postings must be on different dates.

2. An automatic "F" for the class will be assigned on the fourth absence.

3. Full credit will be given for thoughtful entries with correct spelling and grammar, of about a paragraph in length. If you miss a discussion for any reason, then unfortunately I will not be able to give you credit for that discussion. Your contribution to the threaded discussion (and most other assignments) is due by 4:00 p.m. on the scheduled dates. Each post will be scored up to 10 points depending on quality.

4. You are expected to complete all readings on time and join the discussion forum prepared to exchange views. The discussion topics are designed to promote critical thinking. When reading your responses, I will be checking for your understanding of the topic, as well as your ability to effectively communicate your ideas.

MIDTERM EXAM: 150

MidTerm Exam: 150

The Mid Term Exam will be multiple choice.

1. Mid-Term will be administered at the Oxford campus. There is a 3 day window, March 6, 7 or 8 where you may take the exam in a proctored environment. Please contact Ms. Mary Lea Moore at mlea@olemiss.edu one to two weeks before the exam to make a reservation.

2. Students from schools outside of the Oxford area must complete the off-campus online form located at www.outreach.olemiss.edu/OleMissOnline/Test_Info/ and find an appropriate proctor for their exams. The distance learning office must approve the proctor before the exam may be taken.

FINAL EXAM :150

Final Exam: 150

The Final Exam will be multiple choice. It will be administered at the Oxford campus. There is a 3 day window, May 7, 8 or 9 where you may take the exam in a proctored environment New addition to syllabus:

Please make a reservation online Exam may include a combination of picture identification, multiple choice, matching, and essay questions.

WEEKLY QUIZZES : 155

Weekly Quizzes: 155

All scheduled Practice Quizzes and Quizzes must be taken by the scheduled time, or a grade of zero will be recorded for each quiz that is missed. Both quizzes and practice quizzes are worth 10 points each. The syllabus quiz is worth 5 points. Unfortunately I will not be able to let you make up a quiz, so to do your best, work ahead.

HOMEWORK: 150

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Critical Thinking Paper: 50

You will be asked to select a news topic about anything we have talked about and to analyze it critically by answering a set of specific question.

Graphing exponential growth: 30

You will be instructed step by step how to make a professional quality graph using Excel.

Making a Difference: 70 + (a 40 point discussion board)

You will follow specific steps, and with feedback from other students, you will identify waste in your community and do something about it, OR you will design a wildlife friendly habitat for a selected area.

VIII. Make up policies. In this particular course, make-ups unfortunately are not possible for assignments or online quizzes. If a student misses the midterm exam because of an emergency or other unavoidable reason, the midterm may be made up. The make up midterm exam

will be an essay test, given immediately after the final exam. Extra credit work will not be possible in this course.

Computer malfunctions/late assignments. In order to do your best, please count on the fact that your computer, or sometimes even the University system will occasionally be down. There is no doubt that it will happen. Unfortunately even though this happens, it is not possible for me to count it as an excused reason for not turning in an assignment. Luckily in an online class you can work ahead to make sure you meet all deadlines. If an assignment is important to you, please give yourself some extra time to complete it. In general, you will be allowed to work 3 weeks ahead of the posted schedule.

IX. Grading: To see your grades at any time, please click on the "Tools" tab at the top of the page. Your final grade will be determined as follows: Add up all the possible points. Add up the number of points you have received and divide. Your total points/Possible total points times 100 will give you a percent.

90 - 100% A

80 - 89% B

70 - 79% C

60 - 69% D

59% and below F

X. Communication:

Communication between student and teacher is vital in online classes. Students must check the Angel mailbox frequently. Failure to respond to mail from the instructor may result in blocked access to the class site.

Respect:

I expect every student to respect his or her classmates and contribute to a positive learning environment. Learning is an active process; none of us can expand our understanding without an active exchange of ideas. All of our experiences are potential resources in this course. Most importantly, mistakes are an expected part of learning and even a necessary part! Don't be afraid to make a mistake, because that is part of learning. The course provides a safe environment for all to make mistakes and learn from their own mistakes and those of others.

Clearly, I consider our class time together as central to achieving the objectives of this course, and I expect your regular participation. A word of caution, however, since the virtual classroom provides a measure of anonymity: Communicating from a distance may tempt some students to speak informally while in the discussion room—but I remind all students to keep their communication formal—as if you were in a classroom on campus. Please do not use abbreviations in your communications (for instance please spell out by the way, don't use BTW.)

XI. STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICES:

The University of Mississippi is committed to ensuring equal access to an education for enrolled or admitted students who have disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The office serves those with physical, nonphysical, and mental disabilities. University policy calls for reasonable accommodations to be made for eligible students with verified disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis.

It is the responsibility of any student with a disability who requests a reasonable accommodation to contact the Office of Student Disability Services (662-915-7128) in 234 Martindale Center to be verified with that office. SDS will then contact the instructor through the student by means of an Instructor Notification of Classroom Accommodations form. For more

information, please visit their website at <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/sds> .

XII. ACADEMIC CONDUCT:

Academic honesty is the basis of a University. Academic honesty is expected from all students.

See The University of Mississippi's M-Book, Section II, subsection G, et seq.
<http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/dos/mbook/index.htm> .
Academic dishonesty in online courses includes excuses, blaming technology, plagiarism and self-plagiarism. Self-plagiarism is defined as re-using a paper written for another class and submitting it in whole or part for credit in another class, without obtaining permission from the instructor prior to the submission of the paper. Plagiarism is harder to define, but it boils down to representing someone else's ideas as you own. If you have any questions about plagiarism please consult the web links below or contact me directly. Plagiarism is not only prohibited by the university but it could also be a legal offense. (ex: copyright infringement, fraud, etc.) See Plagiarism in Colleges in USA by Ronald B. Standler for more information about potential legal issues. <http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm>

Sometimes, students have not been taught how to properly write a paper and may unintentionally be plagiarizing. If you are not sure, please look at the following sites. The Online Writing Lab at Purdue has a great site on Plagiarism, including a checklist for students.

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html

How Not to Plagiarize - Margaret Procter, Coordinator of Writing Support, University of Toronto.

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

The University of Mississippi's Academic Conduct policy will be followed, including Standards of Honesty, and Disciplinary procedures, which include several options, ranging from failing the course to being suspended from The University of Mississippi.

XIII. ABOUT ANGEL COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

We will use the Angel course management system in this course. Students will submit all writing assignments to the instructor via the Angel system. For Technical assistance contact the Ole Miss Online office, 915-7313.

Because this course is an online course, you should be aware that violations of the appropriate use policy might constitute academic dishonesty. You should not share your private personal passwords (for your Angel account or for your email) with anyone else, including brothers or sisters, boyfriends or girlfriends, or parents. Logs of all your activity within the Angel course environment, including the Internet location from which you are accessing Angel, are available to the instructor and to the Ole Miss Online office. Any evidence of logins to a student's Angel course by someone other than the student will be treated as an act of academic dishonesty and will result, at minimum, with failure in the course; the student may also be subject to the more severe disciplinary actions outlined in the M Book.

For the ANGEL Guide on How to Use a Drop Box see the - Helpful Guides for Online Students Folder - ANGEL "How-tos" and Plagiarism Exercises. To get there, please click on "Lessons" tab at the top of the pages.

How to submit documents:

I prefer all submissions in Microsoft Word (.doc file). If you are using WordPerfect you should have no problem. Otherwise your best bet for saving a document is through "RTF" (Rich Text Format). PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT DOCUMENTS IN WORKS. Please budget your time to allow for computer glitches. I will only be able to count work that has been submitted on time. So, it is in your best interest to work a little ahead of scheduled deadlines.

