

Course Expectations for **Biology**

Teacher: **Houseberg**

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Room: 219



Course Description	This one-year course is designed to integrate science and engineering practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas related to biology. The topics covered in Biology include Structures and Function, Matter and Energy in Organisms and Ecosystems, Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems, Inheritance and Variation of Traits, Natural Selection and Evolution, and Engineering Design. Demonstrations and lab experiences that employ proper safety techniques are essential to this course. Instructional practices incorporate integration of diversity awareness including appreciation of all cultures and their important contributions to society. The appropriate use of technology is an integral part of this course. This course fulfills one of the science credits required for high school graduation and qualifies as a laboratory science for college entrance. This course may count towards the College and Career Ready Flex Credit requirements for the Standard Diploma.
Course Goals	1. To demonstrate an understanding of the complex interactions within ecosystems using mathematical representations and argumentation. [HS-LS2-1, HS-LS2-2, HS-LS2-6] 2. To identify the impacts of human activity on the environment and to engineer solutions mitigating any adverse effects. [HS-LS2-7, HS-LS4-6, HS-ETS1-1, HS-ETS1-2, HS-ETS1-3, HS-ETS1-4] 3. To develop models and use mathematical representations illustrating how matter and energy are cycled within an ecosystem through the processes of photosynthesis and respiration. [HS-LS1-5, HS-LS1-6, HS-LS1-7, HS-LS2-3, HS-LS2-4, HS-LS2-5] 4. To demonstrate an understanding of how DNA determines the essential functions of proteins and codes for traits that are passed onto offspring. [HS-LS1-1, HS-LS3-1] 5. To use a model to illustrate the roles of cellular division and differentiation in the growth and development of organisms. [HS-LS1-4] 6. To describe multiple sources of genetic variation and apply statistical methods to explain patterns of expressed traits in populations. [HS-LS3-2, HS-LS3-3] 7. To construct an explanation of how multiple lines of scientific evidence support common ancestry and the role of natural selection in biological evolution. [HS-LS4-1, HS-LS4-2, HS-LS4-4] 8. To evaluate how natural selection and environmental conditions cause the numerical distribution of traits in a population to change over time and may result in the emergence and/or extinction of species. [HS-LS4-3, HS-LS4-5] 9. To use evidence to evaluate how group behavior influences the survival and reproductive success of individuals and species. [HS-LS2-8] 10. To develop an understanding of how the hierarchical organization of interacting systems perform specific functions which maintain homeostasis through feedback mechanisms. [HS-LS1-2, HS-LS1-3]

Teacher Bio	Welcome to Biology at South CTA! This is also my first year at this school, so we have something in common right from the start. I was a science teacher at Coronado High School for 6 years, and I can't express how happy I am to now call myself a South CTA Saber! We are going to have an incredible year! Here is a little about me: • I have taught biology, chemistry, college level biology lab, and AP Chemistry in the 6 years I have been teaching. • Teaching is a second career for me. After earning my Bachelors Degree in Biotechnology from Cal Poly Pomona, I worked as a laboratory technician at a water quality lab in Southern California. Then after moving to Las Vegas, I worked as a trainer at a rare earth metal chemical processing plant right outside of Stateline, CA. • I am a mom! I have a 19 year old daughter in college, and 2 boys, 14 and 13, at Mannion Middle School. • I have 2 dogs, Zeek (cattle dog) and Kane (husky/shepherd mix), and one {{{chubby}}} black cat. • I love to cook and bake and love watching cooking and baking competition shows. If I didn't teach science, I would love to teach Culinary Arts! • I used to own and operate a food truck in St George, Utah. • I love nature and the outdoors. My kids and I love to go camping, Huntington Beach, and the lake. • A unique hobby of mine is visiting as many ghost towns and abandoned sites as possible. • I follow a gluten free diet. GF for life! • My favorite season is fall and holiday is Halloween. And I LOVE a PSL! #iykyk • I am a huge fan of Game of Thrones and Harry Potter. I loooove dragons! My teaching philosophy is "Learn by doing, and collaborate often". Science is an explorative, hands-on subject, and we will embrace that to the core! We will see a large focus on labs, hands-on activities, and collaborative tasks while in the classroom. This philosophy works beautifully in our Project-Based Learning (PBL) environment, so I anticipate this class to be enjoyable for you all. 😊
Required Materials	<u>Required Materials:</u> • 3 Ring binder with a section dedicated to Biology • Pens and pencils • Chromebook • Charger for chromebook • Positive attitude! <u>Optional Materials:</u> • Colored pencils • Highlighters • Correction tape • Scissors
Grading Procedures/ Break-down	<u>Grading Scale</u> South CTA follows the CCSD grading scale: • A: 90–100% (Excellent – 4.0) • B: 80–89% (Above Average – 3.0)

- C: 70–79% (Average – 2.0)
- D: 60–69% (Below Average – 1.0)
- F: 50–59% (Emergent – 0.0)

*Note: In accordance with CCSD regulations, if the quarter or semester grade calculated is below 50%, it will be overwritten to a 50% minimum score on the equitable grading scale.

Gradebook Breakdown

Grades are split into two weighted categories:

- **80% Summative** – Final projects, unit exams, presentations, or key demonstrations of learning
- **20% Formative** – Practice assignments, checkpoints, reflections, and in-progress work

Each quarter must include:

- A minimum of 3 summative assignments
- A minimum of 6 formative assignments

Teachers use standards-based rubrics and intentionally design assessments that align to both academic and pathway outcomes.

Final Exams & Semester Grades

Final exams or culminating products are required in most classes and account for up to 20% of the semester grade.

Semester grade calculation*:

- Quarter 1 = 42.5%
- Quarter 2 = 42.5%
- Final Exam = 15%

**Some subjects may use the 40/40/20 calculation. This will be communicated in the course expectations, and will be consistent within that subject area.*

Final exams may be written, performance-based, or project-driven, depending on the course.

Reassessment Policy

Students may reassess summative assessments within 3 school days of receiving feedback, provided they:

- Complete required formative work
- Show evidence of new learning
- Submit a reassessment request (teachers may use a form or digital tool)
- The new grade replaces the original, not averaged. Students may not reassess to increase an already proficient score unless specified by the teacher.

Late Work & Zeros

- Formative assignments may be accepted late for credit up to a week after the due date.
- Summative tasks must be submitted by the assigned deadline or with prior communication.
- Zeros are used when no work is submitted and no evidence of learning exists. Teachers are expected to follow up and support students, but not indefinitely chase missing work.

Minimum Grade Policy

Per CCSD policy, South CTA applies the 50% quarter minimum:

- Students cannot receive lower than a 50% for the quarter grade, as long as they remain

	enrolled. • This policy does not apply to individual assignments or semester exams. .
Classroom Rules and Procedures	<u>Classroom Rules</u> 1. <i>Respect Everyone and Everything</i> Treat your teacher, classmates, guests, yourself, and all classroom materials with respect. Use appropriate language, listen when others are speaking, and help create a safe and welcoming environment. 2. <i>Take Responsibility for Your Actions</i> Your choices have consequences. Own your behavior, make responsible decisions, and be honest when mistakes happen. Learn from your actions rather than making excuses or blaming others. Extreme caution will be taken on lab days or a loss of lab privileges may be implemented. 3. <i>Take Responsibility for Your Learning</i> You are responsible for knowing what assignments are due, completing your work, studying for assessments, and asking questions when you need help. Your grade reflects the work **you** put into the class. 4. <i>Work Hard and Give Your Best Effort</i> Biology can be challenging, but you are expected to put forth your best effort every day. Participate, stay engaged, persevere through difficult material, and don't give up when something doesn't make sense right away. Students are encouraged to provide input when having discussions and to value everyone's opinion. *Cell phones, personal electronic devices, headphones, and/or other Bluetooth-enabled devices may not be used in class unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. 5. <i>Be Prepared and Follow Classroom Procedures</i> Come to class on time with the materials you need and be ready to learn. Follow directions for entering class, completing assignments, participating in labs, turning in work, and leaving the classroom. 6. <i>Complete and Submit Work on Time</i> Assignments are expected to be completed and submitted by the posted deadline. It is your responsibility to check what you owe and make arrangements when necessary. 7. <i>Communicate When You Are Absent</i> If you are absent, check the calendar and absent work folder for any assignment information when you return to school. Complete missed work and submit within 3 days of returning. Please communicate with the teacher if you need clarification or additional help. 8. <i>Protect Our Learning Environment</i> Keep the classroom clean, use equipment and technology appropriately, and treat lab materials with care. Everyone contributes to making our classroom a place where learning can happen. <i>Academic Honesty</i> There is a clear expectation that all students will perform academic tasks with honor and integrity. The learning process requires students to think, process, organize, and create their own ideas. Throughout this process, students gain knowledge, self-respect, and ownership in

the work that they do. Cheating and plagiarism violate the fundamental learning process and compromise personal integrity and one's honor. Students demonstrate academic honesty and integrity by not cheating, plagiarizing, or using information, including AI, unethically in any way.

AI Policy: The use of generative AI is strongly discouraged unless the teacher explicitly instructs and guides students on proper and appropriate use of AI platforms. Unacceptable use of AI includes but is not limited to:

- Submitting AI-generated work as original work
- Using AI to complete assignments or bypass the learning process
- Failing to disclose AI use when required by the teacher

****If a student is caught by the teacher using generative AI during class when they are not instructed to do so, the incident will be treated as academic dishonesty and subject to progressive discipline. Please see the South CTA student handbook for schoolwide policies via the link found below.****

Classroom Procedures:

- Upon entering the classroom, students should sit in their assigned seat and begin their bell ringer warm up question shown at the front of the room.
- **Restroom use:** Students may use the restroom during class during student work time with teacher permission. Students must sign out using 5-star and take the class hall pass. Only one student may be out to the restroom at any time, unless otherwise given permission by the teacher, or in emergency situations. Students who misuse restroom breaks may lose restroom privileges.
- **Daily Bell Ringer/Exit Ticket Activities:** On a daily basis, students will complete a short warm-up/bell ringer activity to review any needed material or to preview the current lesson at the beginning of class within their science binder. During some class periods, students will submit an assignment which will act as their "Exit Ticket" out of the classroom. The exit ticket will summarize the day's content AND/OR provide written evidence and analysis about whether or not they met the success criteria for the daily content objective (learning intention). *Students are responsible for retrieving and answering their In and Out Activities within their science binder when absent.
- **Classwork/Homework Policy:** ALMOST ALL coursework will be done in class. Any coursework not finished in class will then become homework. If a student needs digital access to handouts due to an extended absence, they can email me at housena@nv.ccsd.net. When emailing, students should include their first and last name and period within their email.
- **Google Classroom:** Students will utilize Google Classroom as the main online website for our course. Rules, Information, certain assignments, etc. will be housed here. *Join codes will be provided during the second week of school.
- **Remind:** Remind is a CCSD platform which facilitates informal, safe, and secure communication to and from teachers, parents, and students. Students should sign up to receive Remind messages from the teacher via text or email. *Join codes will be provided during the second week of school.

***An overview of the schoolwide policies and procedures can be found in the parent/student handbook which can be accessed by visiting southcta.net/studenthandbook*