

Midwestern State University Department of Biology

Course Syllabus for

BIOL 1023.201: Introduction to Global Biology

Description:

This course introduces basic principles in evolution, ecology, and environmental biology for non-science majors. Topics include evidence and mechanisms of evolution, diversity of living organisms, plant biology and photosynthesis, interactions between living organisms and their environment, and biological aspects of current environmental issues. A concurrent lab is required. This course meets the general education requirement for a science course in the core curriculum.

Contact Information:

Instructor: Dr. Marcy Brown Marsden
Office: Bolin Science Hall Room 111
Phone: (940) 397-4253
Email: margaret.brownmarsden@msutexas.edu
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 8:00–9:00 am or by appointment

Class day/time and location:

The lecture is face-to-face on Monday and Wednesday 9:00–9:50 am in Bolin 213. The lab is online in a separate course (BIOL 1023.X2A.) Your lab instructor is Ms. Jeanel Georges Insalaco.

Requirements:

Textbook: We use an Open Educational Resource called Biology for Non-Majors II (Waymaker Bundle), \$25.00, ISBN: 9781640872318 Author: Lumen Learning et al. The cost of the book and its associated resources is \$25, which is less than it would be through the bookstore or publisher.

Lab kit: This course includes an online lab that requires an at-home lab kit. This kit is available from Carolina Biological Supply and costs \$100.50 (before taxes and shipping). A separate handout gives information on purchasing the lab kit.

You may reduce costs by sharing the lab kit with one other student. However, you must complete your lab reports independently.

D2L: This course uses Desire-to-Learn (D2L) extensively. You should be familiar with D2L as it will be a primary source of communication regarding assignments, exam materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact MSU's technical support department by phone at 940-397-4278, online at <https://msutexas.edu/distance/oprs.php>, or by email at helpdesk@msutexas.edu.

Evaluation procedures:

I expect integrity from all students. If I suspect that a student is cheating, I will record a zero for that assignment for all students involved and/or drop you from the course. I may report you for academic dishonesty.

Any action suspicious of cheating, attempting to cheat, or helping someone cheat on an exam will result in termination of your exam and a grade of zero. These actions include collaborating with or communicating exam content to other students. For more information about the University Academic Misconduct Policy, see the MSU student handbook.

Lecture counts for 60%, and your lab for 40% of your grade in this course. Percent breakdown is in the tables below.

Item in Lecture	Percent of lecture grade	Percent of overall grade (weighted)
Lecture exam average (4 exams total)	70%	42%
Mini-quizzes (one per chapter; taken on D2L)	30%	18%
Total	100%	60% of overall grade

Item in Lab	Percent of lab grade	Percent of overall grade (weighted)
Lab worksheets	70%	28%
Team Photojournalism project	30%	12%
Total	100%	40% of overall grade

The grading scale is as follows:

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 60%

I round final grades to the nearest whole number (0.5 rounds up, 0.4 rounds down). Grades will not be curved or adjusted for students close to a cutoff between letter grades.

Lecture exams

There will be four multiple-choice exams. I do not drop exam grades, weight exams with the worst exam counting the least, and the highest exam counting the most.

If you miss an exam

- If extenuating circumstances prevent you from taking an exam within the allotted time, you must contact the instructor during the business hours *of the same day* as the exam.
- Failure to contact the instructor within the accepted time will result in a zero for that exam.

Quizzes

The quizzes are available on D2L and are due by Sunday at 11:59 pm. You can take the quizzes twice, and the grade calculation uses the highest attempt.

Lab worksheets

At the end of each lab, you will complete a summary worksheet that you will submit to D2L dropbox.

Team photojournalism project

You will work with a team to complete a project that involves photographing and identifying organisms, biological processes, and ecological structures found in an area. This is a semester-long project, and you will be evaluated both as a team and individually.

For technical problems while doing assignments

If you email an instructor for help with a problem, please document the problem in every way possible (detailed descriptions, the time that the problem occurred, and screenshots are all helpful). Include your name and course information.

- 1) An assignment that does not appear to be available on D2L when it should be or has a grading error.
 - a. For Lab D2L: Jeanel Georges Insalaco (Jeanel.insalaco@msutexas.edu)
 - b. For Lecture D2L: Dr. Brown Marsden (margaret.brownmarsden@msutexas.edu)
- 2) Lab instructions (for example, you do not understand the instructions).
 - a. Check the Lab Help Discussion Board for that lab module on D2L. Your question may have been asked and answered by your classmates or instructor
 - b. If there is no information on D2L, contact Dr. Brown Marsden (margaret.brownmarsden@msutexas.edu)
- 3) There is a problem with D2L or MSU's website in general (for example, those websites are not working, or you cannot log in).
 - a. Contact MSU's Information Technology (IT) department Help Desk by phone at 940-397-4278
 - b. Contact the help desk by email at helpdesk@msutexas.edu

Email policy

Email is the best way to reach me. I will make every effort to respond within 24 hours to e-mails received during regular school hours (8:00 am – 5:00 pm M-F). I respond to emails sent after business hours or during the weekend on the following business day.

Attendance policy

In general

- The only absences counted as excused by MSU are those required for MSU organizations or events. All other absences are deemed excused or unexcused at the instructor's discretion.
- You are responsible for all material, announcements, reminders, and changes to the syllabus (should they occur) discussed in class whether or not you were present.
- Attendance in lecture is recorded every day.
- If you have excessive absences or have missed an exam, you may be instructor-dropped from the entire course. I will contact you by email before I do this.

In lab

While there is not a physical lab classroom to attend, you must complete all lab assignments to succeed. Missing more than two labs can result in an F in the entire course or being dropped by the instructor from the whole course.

Device policy

- If any electronic device is visible during an exam for any reason, I will collect your exam, and you will receive a zero.
- You may use a laptop during lectures. If you are not using it for class purposes, you should put it away.

Important university policies

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please provide appropriate documentation, and we can work on how to accommodate you in class. Please contact the Disability Support Service in Room 168 of Clark Student Center (940) 397-4140 for other support, if needed.

About Campus Carry at MSU

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked according to state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the university's [campus carry policy](https://msutexas.edu/campus-carry/index.php) at the address <https://msutexas.edu/campus-carry/index.php>