

Midwestern State University Department of Biology  
Course Syllabus for  
BIOL 1023.X2A: Introduction to Global Biology Lab

**Lab materials and lab kit:**

This course uses items that are common at home or in residential environments. We recognize that cost is an issue for many students, and so we will allow up to two students to work together to share costs. Each student must turn in his/her datasheets and lab reports separately. Work in completing the assignment worksheets should remain independent.

**Contact Information:**

Instructor: Dr. Bob Brennan

Office: Bolin Science Hall, room 138

Phone: (940) 397-4198

Email: [robert.brennan@msutexas.edu](mailto:robert.brennan@msutexas.edu)

Office Hours: Mon. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Wednesday 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., Fri. 9:00a a.m. – 11:00 a.m. or by appointment; virtual office hours by appointment on the days and times listed above. To schedule a virtual office visit: Navigate to the course in D2L, then go to the Communication tab, then scroll down to Zoom and click on appointments. Click on the day/time you would like to meet and select Book.

**Class day/time and location:**

Each lab unit will open on Monday, and the normal deadline for assignments is at 11:59 PM the following Sunday. The lab will finish during the last week of classes and there will not be a final exam in the lab portion of the class.

Lab work may be completed at any time during the week; however, please be aware that some observations and datasheets will require more than one day to complete. For single-session labs you should allow at least two to three hours for each lab from start to finish.

**Late Policy:** Sometimes “life happens.” In these instances, you are allotted two flex days for the semester. These days allow you to submit an assignment up to two days late without penalty. You can use these days for any assignment and for any reason. You do not need to provide me with the reason: simply email me and tell me how many of your flex days you would like to use.

Once you’ve exhausted your flex days, then point deductions will occur for any assignment submitted after the deadline. 5% is deducted for each day an assignment is late up to one week. A submission more than one (1) week overdue is assigned a zero in the gradebook. If you experience extenuating circumstances (e.g., you are hospitalized) that prohibit you from submitting your assignments on time, please let me know as soon as possible. I will evaluate these instances on a case-by-case basis.

Item in Lab	Percent of lab grade	Percent of overall grade in 1023 (weighted)
Lab worksheets	70%	28%
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%

**Lab Calendar:**

Dates	Activity	Assignment Due at 11:59PM
Jan. 20-25	Lab 1: Lab Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Safety Contract WS due by 11:59 PM Jan 25
Jan. 26-Feb 1	Lab 2: Intro to Graphing	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Intro to graphing WS due by Feb 1
Feb 2-8	Lab 3: Dichotomous Keys Start Team Photojournalism project	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Dichotomous keys WS due by Feb 8
Feb. 9-15	No lab	
Feb. 16-22	Lab 4: Protists and Fungi	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Protist & Fungi worksheet due Feb 22
Feb.23-Mar 1	Lab 5: Succession (setup Winogradsky Column)	<input type="checkbox"/> Set-up photo of Winogradsky Column due Mar 1
Mar 2-8	Lab 6: Anatomy of a flower	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Anatomy of a flower WS due by Mar 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 1 photo of Winogradsky Column progress due Mar 8
<b>Mar. 9-15</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Mar 16-22	No lab	<input type="checkbox"/> Week 3 photo of Winogradsky Column progress due Mar 22
Mar. 23-29	Lab 7: Characterizing Communities	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Characterizing Communities due by Mar 29 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 4 photo of Winogradsky Column progress due by Mar 29
<b>Mar 30-Apr 5</b>	<b>Holiday Break No Lab</b>	
Apr. 6-12	Lab 8: Invertebrates are Awesome	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: 8 Invertebrates are Awesome WS due by Apr 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Week 6 photo of Winogradsky Column progress due Mon Apr 12
Apr. 13-19	Lab 9: Natures Recyclers	<input type="checkbox"/> Lab: Natures Recyclers due Apr 19

Dates	Activity	Assignment Due at 11:59PM
		<input type="checkbox"/> Week 7 photo of Winogradsky Column progress Apr 19
Apr. 20-26	Finish Lab 5: Succession	<input type="checkbox"/> Week 8 photo of Winogradsky Column progress Apr 26
Apr 27-May 3	Finish Lab 12: Photojournalism Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Photojournal uploaded by May 3

### Lab worksheets

At the end of each lab you will complete a summary worksheet (WS) that you will submit as a PDF files to D2L dropbox. These assignments are described in greater detail in the lab syllabus. **File formats on Apple devices such as .pages (Mac word processor) and HEIC (image files) cannot be read by our computers and therefore cannot be graded.** They must be converted to PDF or JPEG before submission. For instructions on saving files as PDF see the document “How to turn in files for this course”.

Students can sign up for access to [Office 365 web edition](#) for free. Students should contact the helpdesk at 940-397-4680 or [helpdesk@msutexas.edu](mailto:helpdesk@msutexas.edu) if there is any issue getting access.

### Photojournalism project

You will complete a project that involves photographing and identifying organisms, biological processes and ecological structures found in an area. This is a semester-long project. This project is described in greater detail under the D2L section for the Photojournalism project.

### For technical problems while doing assignments

- It is important to do labs and assignments early so that problems will not prevent you from completing the homework before the deadline is up. Since you have at least one week to complete all assignments, *due dates are firm* and will not be moved due to technical problems.
- 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.
- Lab instructions (for example, you do not understand the instructions) or if an assignment does not appear to be available on D2L when it should be contact me, Dr. Brennan at [robert.brennan@msutexas.edu](mailto:robert.brennan@msutexas.edu)
- A problem with D2L or MSU’s website in general (for example, those websites are not working, or you cannot login): Contact MSU’s Information Technology (IT) department Help Desk by phone at 940-397-4278, or by email at [helpdesk@msutexas.edu](mailto:helpdesk@msutexas.edu)

## **Attendance policy**

### In general

Student attendance for this online course is defined by **active participation** in the course. You are required to login no more frequently than daily and at minimum once a week. However, it is not recommended that you attempt to cover a week's worth of assigned material in one day, especially since some lab activities require that you record data over a few days. Your participation can be documented by any or all of the following methods:

- Submission/completion of assignments
- Communication with the instructor
- Discussions

The student is solely responsible for checking updates related to the course. If a student fails to meet the attendance requirements, he or she may be recommended for withdrawal from the course. I will email you before making this decision.

### In lab

While there is not a physical laboratory to attend, it is expected that you will complete all lab assignments. Missing more than two labs can result in an F in the entire course or being dropped by the instructor from the entire course.

## **Important university policies**

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please provide appropriate documentation and we can work on what is required 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 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the [University's Campus Carry policy](#)