



# Course Syllabus

## Course Title

BSC 1005 / CRN 83228 / Fall 2026

Credit Hours/ Contact Hours: 3 / 3

Pre-requisites/Co-requisites: None; at college reading level recommended

## Contact Information

### Instructor

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### Natural Sciences Division Chair

Name: Dana Hutchinson  
Title: Chair of Natural Sciences;  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
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### Division Administrative Assistant

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## Course Information

### Catalog Description:

This is a basic general education course designed to give the student an understanding of the (1) cellular basis of life, (2) genetics and inheritance, (3) evolution and diversity, and (4) ecology. Concepts that support these areas of study are integrated throughout the course.

### Syllabus Policy

For any syllabus posted prior to the beginning of the term, the instructor reserves the right to make minor changes prior to or during the term. The instructor will notify students via e-mail or Canvas announcement when changes are made in the requirements and/or grading of the course.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

STUDENTS WILL EVALUATE DATA REGARDING VALIDITY. • STUDENTS WILL READ AND INTERPRET A VARIETY OF SCIENTIFIC DATA. • STUDENTS WILL DESCRIBE THE NATURAL WORLD. • STUDENTS WILL ARTICULATE AND PRACTICE THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD

### N-1: Nature of Science Outcomes

- 1.1 critically examine, evaluate, and/or design scientific observation, hypothesis tests, and model construction.
- 1.2 identify reputable/credible sources for biological information
- 1.3 apply scientific and biological knowledge, concepts and principles to solve real-world problems.

### N-2: Biological Science Outcomes

- 1.1 define/discuss basic biological concepts and theories, such as Cell Theory, DNA Theory, and the Theory of Evolution
- 1.2 describe the organization and interconnectedness of biological organisms.
- 1.3 apply their knowledge of DNA Theory and cellular processes to investigate questions and problems in topics such as inheritance, evolution, and forensic science.
- 1.4 explain flow of energy and nutrients through ecosystems and the biosphere
- 1.5 discuss anthropogenic effects on ecosystems and the biosphere such as human population growth and sustainability

## Course Materials & Resources:

Biology: The Core, 3rd Edition/2020, by Eric Simon; Required for Reading Assignments  
Soft/Bound Edition - ISBN 10: 0-134-8915-11; ISBN 13: 978-0-134-89151-4  
Looseleaf Edition - ISBN 10: 0-135-27165-7; ISBN 13: 978-0-135-27165-0  
eBook - ISBN-13: 9780135832646

## Delivery Method:

This is a web-based course. All online courses at GCSC utilize the Canvas Learning System. Students should read all information presented in the Canvas course site and should periodically check for updates--at least every 48 hours. Remember: This course is not one in which students may work at their own pace. Each week, there are learning modules, assignments, online lectures, online discussions, and/or online exams with due dates. Refer to the schedule within this syllabus for more information.

Everything you will need for class will be posted on Canvas. The study tasks and materials made available to you on Canvas will provide a framework for understanding the concepts presented in this course. PowerPoint® files and/or videos with accompanying note guides as well as other study materials and exercises will be posted on Canvas for your use.

Instruction will be delivered as Units and Core Issues and will consist of a mixture of lectures/videos for note-taking and reading assignments from the textbook that accompany the lectures. Assessment will include exams and quizzes. The quizzes for each chapter will be timed, open-note/open-book of which the highest of three (3) attempts will be recorded.

Options for testing:

All exams are in electronic format on the Canvas LMS unless otherwise discussed with instructor. Unit exams are allotted 75 minutes. Final Exam is allotted 120 minutes.

You may test using our Testing Center or by using Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor.

You must provide picture identification and all in-person proctored exams are password protected for the testing center. In order to use Respondus, you MUST have a webcam and use the Monitor.

GCSC Testing Center – Proctors at the testing center will unlock the exam with a password for you. You must register to take exams through the Register Blast at least 72 hours before you intend to take the exam. You can choose any time that fits your schedule and fits within the normal operating hours of the GCSC Testing Center on Campus during the exam time listed. To schedule an exam: Go to GCSC Testing Center webpage. Please read the testing center information carefully. On the left side click on Register Blast and follow the instructions. NOTE: Students living outside Bay or Gulf County may make arrangements for the exams a minimum of two weeks in advance of the test date with the Distance Education Office by email at [testingcenter@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:testingcenter@gulfcoast.edu) or call (850) 769-1551 / (800) 311-3685, ext. 5807. You will be required to submit an Off-Campus Proctor Form.

Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor – This option allows you to take the exam remotely. You must have the Respondus application and a webcam to do so. Your test will be recorded and that video made available to me within 24 hours. I WILL review the report for “red flags” and, if any issues arise, I will handle the situation appropriately. Be sure that no one comes into the room or speaks to you while you are testing. You may not leave the room once the exam starts. If you deviate from these instructions, your score will be null and void. If you experience technical issues, such as dubious connectivity, you will have only one opportunity to retest at my discretion. After that, YOU will be expected to remedy your situation to prevent any subsequent problems. This may require you coming to campus or to a location with more reliable equipment or a physical proctor. IMPORTANT: Be sure that the technical side of your course is ready if you are taking the exams remotely using the Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor. To test this, you should take the "Syllabus Practice Quiz" on the Quizzes page well before each exam (week prior). Don't confuse this with the Start Here Quiz which is for a grade and does not require the lockdown browser.

Your instructor. If none of these options will work for you, please contact me.

Missing Exams: You will receive a zero if you miss a test. The lowest test score will be dropped, so missing one test is manageable. However, if you miss a second test, you will receive a zero without a substitution or make up.

Tests will be open for review two (2) weeks prior to the Final Exam. You will need the lockdown browser (not a webcam) to view your graded exams.

## Student Expectations

In this course, communication and feedback will occur through various channels, including GCSC email, Canvas Inbox, Canvas Announcements, Canvas Discussions, Microsoft Teams or Zoom, assignment

feedback, and instructor office hours. Review the statements below so that you understand the expectations for communication.

As a student at Gulf Coast State College, you are expected to:

- **Adhere to Course Guidelines:** Follow the guidelines detailed in the course syllabus, along with any additional instructions provided by the instructor. This includes understanding and complying with the course objectives, grading criteria, and academic policies.
- **Maintain Regular Contact:** Keep in touch with your instructor and classmates via your GCSC email or other designated communication channels. Regular contact helps clarify doubts, share ideas, and foster a collaborative learning environment.
- **Active Participation:** Engage actively in class discussions and submit assignments on time. Your active participation is crucial for your academic success and contributes to a vibrant learning community.

As your instructor, my commitment to you is to:

- **Provide Timely Feedback:** I will review and provide feedback on your assignments and submissions promptly. My goal is to help you understand your strengths and areas for improvement, which is crucial for your academic growth.
- **Respond Via Canvas Inbox:** I will respond to your emails or messages within 24-48 hours (excluding weekends), unless otherwise noted. I understand the importance of clear and timely communication in addressing your questions and concerns.
- **Post Regular Announcements:** To keep you updated and help you manage your time effectively, I will send out weekly reminders via announcements. These reminders will include important dates, upcoming assignments, and any changes to the course schedule.
- **Maintain Weekly Office Hours:** I will maintain regular weekly office hours, but I can also be available by appointment. This is to ensure I'm available for any questions or concerns that may come up during the week.

Course Schedule		
Week	Topics Covered and Readings	Assignment
1	Welcome & Syllabus; Unit 1, Chapters 1 & 2	Chp 1 Practice Quiz & Homework
2	Unit 1, Chapter 3	Chp 2 Practice Quiz & Homework
3	Unit 1 Exam	Chp 3 Practice Quiz & Homework; Exam
4	Unit 2, Chapter 4	Chp 4 Practice Quiz & Homework
5	Unit 2, Chapter 5	Chp 5 Pt 1 Practice Quiz & Homework
6	Unit 2 Exam	Chp 5 Pt 2 Practice Quiz & Homework; Exam
7	Unit 3, Chapter 6	Chp 6 Practice Quiz & Homework
8	Unit 3, Chapter 7	Chp 7 Practice Quiz & Homework
9	Unit 3 Exam	Exam
10	Unit 4, Chapter 8	Chp 8 Practice Quiz & Homework
11	Unit 4, Chapter 9	Chp 9 Practice Quiz & Homework
12	Unit 4 Exam	Exam

13	Unit 5, Chapter 10	Chp 10 Practice Quiz & Homework
14	Unit 5, Chapter 12	Chp 12 Practice Quiz & Homework
16	Unit 5 Exam	Exam
17	Final Exam	Exam

## Grading

### GCSC Grading Scale

A = 90 – 100%

B = 80 – 89%

C = 70 – 79%

D = 60 – 69%

F = < 59%

### Calculation of Grades

Unit Exam Average = 60%

Coursework Average = 10%

Project = 10%

Final Exam = 20%

### Incomplete Grades

Grades of Incomplete in any course can only be assigned to students who have an emergency arise during the last two weeks of the course. To receive an Incomplete, students must:

- Submit a written request to the instructor prior to the last face-to-face class meeting. For online courses, a written Incomplete request must be received no later than the week before the Final Exam period begins.
- Have completed no less than 60 percent of the course requirements and be passing the course at the time the request for an Incomplete is submitted.

**Important Note:** The Incomplete option provides 30 days from the date grades are due to make up any missing work; if work is not submitted during this period, the grade will automatically change to an “F” in Lighthouse.

## Course Policies

### Accessibility Statement

Gulf Coast State College supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must register with Student Accessibility Resources. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the student. Please visit [GCSC's Student Accessibility Resource \(SAR\) webpage](#) to

learn more. For information regarding the registration process, email [sar@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:sar@gulfcoast.edu) or call 850-747-3243.

## Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance and/or participation are significant factors that help to promote success in college. Students are expected to attend all class meetings of all courses for which they are registered.

You are expected to know the instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus for each course. In the event of absence, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible to indicate the reason and to inquire whether make-up work is possible. (Make-up work is offered solely at the discretion of your professor.)

If your absences in a class become excessive, as stated in the course syllabus, your professor may contact you, indicating that further absence may result in your withdrawal from the course. Your professor can withdraw you from a course for excessive absences without your permission.

Instructors will monitor attendance at the beginning of each semester. If you are not in attendance during this period, you may be withdrawn from the course. You will be financially responsible for the course and a "W or NS" will appear on your transcript. Withdrawal from a course may also have implications for financial aid.

A student must show academic activity in CANVAS for this course within first two weeks of the semester or they will be reported as a "No Show" and withdrawn from the course. Emails do not count as academic activity, nor does Canvas Activity. Participation by submission will be required. Expect to hear from me if you do not get started right away or begin to fall behind the pace as the semester progresses.

### Make-Up Work Policy

Late coursework will be accepted with deduction of 10% per unit past due.

If a student misses an exam without communicating with the professor within 24 hours of the test time and date, nor has documentation to excuse it, the student will not be allowed to make up the exam.

## Withdrawal Policy

Two withdrawals are permitted per credit course. After that, a grade will be assigned. Please be concerned about withdrawals. When admitting students into certain programs, universities may calculate withdrawals as grades. It is your responsibility to verify the effects of enrollment and/or withdrawal upon your financial assistance (financial aid, scholarships, grants, etc.). There are two kinds of withdrawals---student and administrative.

- *Student Withdrawal (W1)* - Students wishing to withdraw must complete the online Student Withdrawal Form before the scheduled withdrawal deadline as published in the College catalog. Student withdrawals initiated prior to the scheduled withdrawal deadline will be recorded as a grade of "W." The withdrawal deadline for an off-term or condensed term is one week after midterm.
- *Administrative Withdrawal (W2)* – A faculty member may withdraw a student up to the published withdrawal deadline for violation of the class attendance policy in which case the

student will receive a grade of "W." The withdrawal deadline for an off-term or condensed term is one week after midterm.

Students cannot withdraw from developmental studies courses (college-preparatory classes) after the drop/add period without written permission from their instructor and/or their academic advisor.

## Academic Integrity

Honest participation in academic endeavors fosters an environment in which optimal learning can take place and is consistent with the college's mission. Academic misconduct, including cheating or plagiarism, is destructive to the spirit of an educational environment. GCSC professors report every instance of student academic misconduct to the college for inclusion on the student's records. Most course syllabi include an academic honesty policy and the consequences for violating this policy. Familiarize yourself with course policies regarding authorized or unauthorized use of AI to avoid the pitfalls of academic dishonesty.

Respondus Monitor may be used for remote testing. Failure to provide the requested background scan/video, student ID, or to follow the appropriate exam protocols laid out by the Testing section of this syllabus will result in invalidation of a test score (and likely a zero).

The following definitions will apply:

### "Cheating"

includes but is not limited to use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; the acquisition without permission of tests or other academic materials belonging to a member of the College's faculty.

### "Plagiarism"

includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment as well as the purchase of papers or projects. It can also include overuse of an editing program like Grammarly or submitting work written by an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generator like ChatGPT. Make certain to consult your course syllabi for your instructor's guidelines of AI material.

### "Self-plagiarism"

occurs when a student submits the same or considerably similar document to fulfill requirements in different classes. For example, if a student submits a term paper in Religion they originally wrote for an English class, this is self-plagiarism. Once a paper receives a grade in one class, it cannot be submitted again for another class.

### "Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)"

is technology that uses machine learning to create new content, such as text, images or code, based on user input. These systems are trained on vast amounts of data, including large language models and image or code generators. Common examples include ChatGPT, GitHub, Copilot, Google Gemini, Perplexity, and the Grammarly AI function.

Sanctions for incidences of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incidence and/or its repetition, may range from receiving an F grade (or 0) for the test, assignment, or activity, to failure of the course, to suspension or dismissal from the college.

## Classroom Recording

In accordance with federal and state privacy laws, students may record class lectures for their own personal educational use, in connection with a complaint to the college, or as evidence in internal or external legal proceedings. Students may not publish or upload the recordings or any components thereof without the knowledge and written permission of the faculty member. Failure to obtain permission to publish could lead to the students' having to pay damages, attorney fees, and court costs. For more information about what can be recorded, please see the guidelines in the GCSC Student Handbook.

## Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of generative AI tools in academic work requires clear guidelines to maintain academic integrity. Please review the policy selected for this course regarding the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI features, and similar platforms for assignments, research, and other coursework.

See the student handbook for further information. Students with questions about acceptable use should consult their instructor. Review the three AI policy statements provided. Choose which policy best matches your teaching approach, then delete the two unused statements, keeping only the one that reflects your course's AI guidelines.

Limited Assistive Use Only

*Students may use basic assistive technologies for spelling, grammar, and formatting (e.g., PaperRater or SpellCheckPLUS); however, the use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI function, etc.) for generating, rewriting, or enhancing content is not permitted. All work must reflect the student's original ideas and writing. Representing work created by AI as one's own is a violation of academic integrity and may result in penalties, including a zero on the assignment and additional disciplinary actions as outlined in the college's academic integrity policy.*

## Anti-Discrimination Policy

Gulf Coast State College does not discriminate against any person in its programs, activities, policies or procedures on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, marital status, religion, age, gender, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. All questions or inquiries regarding compliance with laws relating to non-discrimination and all complaints regarding sexual misconduct or discrimination may be directed to Amanda Reed, Executive Director of Human Resources/Title II/504/Title IX Coordinator and Employment Equity Officer, Gulf Coast State College, 5230 W. US Highway 98, Panama City, FL 32401; 850-769-1551, ext. 3516. Rules, policies, fees, and courses described in this catalog are subject to change without notice.

## Student Support Resources

Gulf Coast State College is committed to providing you with the resources you need for success as a student and beyond. View all the academic and student support resources provided at GCSC on the [Student Services web page](#).

### Course Technology & Support

To successfully participate in this online course, students must have basic computer and digital information literacy skills and meet the following technology requirements:

- **Computer:** Up-to-date web browser that supports the Canvas learning management system; please refer to the system requirements for compatibility and information on using the Canvas app on mobile devices.
- **Internet Speed:** Minimum bandwidth of 8 Mbps upload/download speed to effectively engage in online activities and access multimedia.
- **Office 365 software:** Available for free download through GCSC Information Technology Services (ITS).
- **Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor:** Available for free download through GCSC Information Technology Services (ITS); required for remote testing.

If you need technical support, contact the ITS Help Desk, available 24/7 at (850) 913-3303.