

BIO 1408 (4:3:3)

General Biology for Non-Science Majors I

Department of Biology

Division of Arts and Sciences

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE

Levelland Campus

Dr. Eric Niederhauser
Spring 2026 ONLINE

Biology I for Non - Science Majors (BIOL 1408)

Spring 2026 ONLINE

INSRUCTOR: Dr. Eric Niederhauser

OFFICE PHONE: 806 716-2321

OFFICE: S81

EMAIL: eniederhauser@southplainscollege.edu. Please include “**1408 Online**” in the subject. I teach a few courses and the answer to your question will likely depend on what course you are in. I generally try to respond promptly to emails. Evening or Saturday response times may be delayed. I don’t look at work emails on Sunday.

I do not check Course Messages in Blackboard.

OFFICE HOURS in S81: Mon and Wed: 1:00 – 2:00, Tue: 11:00 – 12:00, Thu: 11:00 – 12:00 and 2:30 – 3:30, Fri: 9:00 – 12:00. A visit can be in person or online using Blackboard Collaborate (a little like Zoom). If you would like to schedule a time for me to enter the Collaborate course room at any time, send me an email. If I am in my office, I can easily log in.

Other COMMUNICATION: I will post any general communications in the Announcements section of Blackboard. You are responsible for any information posted in the Announcements section.

I may send emails to your SPC email address. You are responsible for any information that is sent to your SPC email by me or the college. The best way to contact me is by email. I DO NOT check the Messages section in Blackboard.

Course Description

This general biology course is devoted to exploring the properties, structures and functions shared by all organisms with an emphasis on humans. These properties involve: cells, chemistry, energy, genetics, evolution, and interactions. We will also learn about science and the process of scientific discovery. PREREQUISITE: None. CREDIT: Four semester hours

Required Materials

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:

- Computer or laptop with microphone
- External webcam
- Reliable internet access. You will be required to meet all deadlines – no matter what happens to your internet connection. Have a backup plan
- Printer to print assignments
- Camera or scanner to take pictures of completed written assignments
- Chrome with the Honorlock browser extension installed – for quizzes and exams
- Access to McGraw Hill Connect virtual labs

NO REQUIRED TEXTBOOK: To be successful, you should have access to a textbook to read. I usually provide links to an online OpenStax text with the weekly lectures. Many people find printed textbooks very helpful. Most biology texts for college will do. So long as they were published in the last 15 years or so they will be fine for our purposes. You can find and purchase some older additions of most textbooks online or in used bookstores.

Course Implementation and Grading

BLACKBOARD: In addition to all graded items (lectures, labs, quizzes and exams); current grades, other course resources, due dates etc. are posted.

LECTURES: About 75 minutes of prerecorded lectures will be posted to Blackboard at 9:00 am on both Mondays and Wednesdays – About 2.5 hour total each week. Each lecture video has embedded questions which are automatically scored. All lectures will be available to watch after being posted for the duration of the semester. To receive credit, they must be watched by the due-date – Monday of the next week at the end of the day.

LABORATORY: You are required to complete weekly online lab-simulation sets accessed through McGraw-Hill Connect in Blackboard. They will take about 2 hours (some may take a bit more, some much less).

Each simulation set has a short pre-lab reading assignment and a post-lab “homework” assignment consisting of about 20 multiple-choice questions. These are scored automatically. There are a couple of written lab assignments which will be uploaded and graded. Lab activities are posted Monday morning and due one week later at the end of the day on Monday. Understanding of major lab concepts may also be assessed in the exams.

EXAMS: There will be five timed exams given during the course which will cover both lecture and lab. Expect multiple choice, true or false, fill-in-the blank, and short answer questions. The 5th and final exam will be comprehensive.

Exams will be available to take beginning at 9:00 am on the scheduled Friday and due at the end of Monday.

Your identity will be verified and the exams are proctored by Honorlock, a Chrome browser extension.

Do not neglect to take exams. Because of the nature of online courses, and the length of time in which you can choose to take the exam, there are no makeup exams. You will receive a zero for missed exams.

QUIZZES: Each Friday at 9:00 am, except exam weeks, one 5-10 question quiz addressing the week's lecture topics will be posted. Your identity will be verified using Honorlock. Specific instructions and procedures will be provided before the first quiz. Quizzes will be available to take until the end of Monday. After that, any blank quiz grades will be changed to zero. There are no makeup quizzes.

GRADING WEIGHTS

Grade Type	Percentage of Grade
Exams	60 %
Lab Grades/Assignments	15 %
In-Lecture Questions	15 %
Quizzes	10 %

Grading scale: Final semester average 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; <60 = F.

Last Day to Drop the Course: April 30, 2026

Policies, Procedures and Rules

This course will be conducted according to the policies and procedures of the South Plains College Student Handbook and General Catalog.

Attendance is based on your weekly assignment completion. If you fail to complete any assignments for two weeks, you will be counted absent for both weeks and may be dropped from the class. Because this is a lab-integrated course, failure to complete three or more lab activity sets will result in being dropped from the course. Extenuating circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from this course. Students who fail to complete assignments will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php.

Academic Integrity: The attempt of any student to cheat or present as her/his own any work, which she/he has not honestly performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Examples of cheating and dishonesty include (but are not limited to): plagiarism, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized materials during an examination or quiz, obtaining information during an exam from the exam paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry, or unauthorized presence in an office. Your own words must be used to answer any assessment questions. Please refer to the Exam and Quiz procedures in the table below.

Quiz and Exam Procedures: Students must follow all exam conduct requirements listed in the table below. These requirements are strictly enforced. Failure to comply will result in a grade of zero. By beginning an exam, students acknowledge that they understand and agree to comply with all exam conduct policies. An exam begins as soon as the student clicks the exam link and will be assessed for testing violations from that point. NOTE: Students will be informed of policies and requirements at the beginning of the course and penalties will be minimally applied (points may be lost but not full) on the first weekly quiz. After this first lecture-content quiz, penalties will be applied in full.

Exam Conduct Requirement	Clarification of Requirement
A valid photo ID must be shown at the start of the exam.	Acceptable forms include driver's licenses, SPC student IDs or photo IDs from other academic institutions. The name on the ID must match the name used to register for the course. You may cover sensitive info.
The microphone must be turned on and recording for the entire duration of the exam.	Audio must remain on and clear for the entire exam to verify exam integrity. Students are responsible for minimizing background noise. Fans blowing directly on the microphone or excessive computer noise are not permitted.
Webcam placement must provide a continuous side-angle view of the student.	The webcam must be positioned to clearly show the student's face, both hands, and testing surface from a side angle. The camera may not be moved once the exam begins.
Students must complete a room scan as instructed.	A complete work area scan must be performed before the exam. The scan must clearly show the testing area, desk surface, surrounding space, and absence of unauthorized materials. Scans must also show that your ears are free of earbuds.
A clear camera image of the student must be maintained at all times. Both hands and face must be visible the entire time.	A zero will be given for any obstruction of the camera's view or of the student's face or eyes. Hats, sunglasses, excessive hand movements, or accessories that block the eyes are not permitted. Students may not lean out of the camera frame.
The testing environment must be well lit and fully visible.	Lighting must be sufficient for the instructor to clearly see the student's face, hands, and testing surface for the duration of the exam. Lighting conditions may not be altered once the exam has started.
The exam must be taken in a private testing environment at a desk or table.	The student must be alone in a quiet, private space and seated at a desk or table. Exams may NOT be taken while sitting on beds, couches, or floors. If needed, contact me to discuss testing locations if needed.
No unauthorized materials may be present or within reach during the exam.	Unauthorized materials include, but are not limited to: books, phones, smart devices, additional computers, or writing not explicitly permitted. Only materials approved by the instructor may be present.
No talking, music, or audio of any kind is permitted during the exam.	The student may not speak to or interact with any person during the exam. No part of the exam may be read out loud. In other words, it needs to be quiet for the duration of the exam.
Professional and respectful conduct is required at all times.	Students must maintain professional language and behavior throughout the exam. Vulgar, inappropriate, or disrespectful language or gestures are not permitted.
Appropriate clothing is required during the exam.	Clothing must be consistent with standard classroom attire. Also, hoodies, hats, or blankets are not permitted, as they may obstruct visibility or compromise exam integrity.

These policies are shared by all instructors in the biology department.

Technical readiness is the responsibility of the student. Students must ensure a stable internet connection, a fully charged device, and functional microphone and camera before beginning the exam. Technical issues caused by lack of preparation are not grounds for exam resets, extensions, or retakes.

OTHER POLICIES

Student Conduct: Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

For information regarding official South Plains College statements about

- Intellectual exchange
- Disabilities
- Non-discrimination
- Title V Pregnancy Accommodations
- CARE Team
- Campus Concealed Carry

please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Grievance procedure: If a student is having a problem with the course policies or the instructor, they should *first* try and resolve any such problems with the instructor. If the problem is not resolved, the student may proceed to discuss the matter with the department chair, Kristin Bingham and then the Dean of Arts & Sciences, Alan Worley, who can advise the student on how to resolve the problem or direct them to the appropriate office.

Copyright Notice: All material presented by the instructor in the course is copyright protected. The material presented by the instructor may not be modified or altered in any way. You have permission to print out one copy of any material presented by the instructor in this course for your personal educational use during this session. The material may not be altered or modified in any way. The material may not be distributed in any way. You have permission to download the same material to your computer hard drive or other medium in order to print out the material needed. Any material downloaded may not be altered or modified in any way. The downloaded material may not be distributed in any way. If any course material is found on other websites, this becomes an act of academic misconduct and will be dealt with appropriately following the guidelines of the college concerning academic integrity.

1408 Spring 2026 Online Schedule*

Unit	Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Lab Topic/Simulations
Introduction, Building Blocks of Life	1	Mon, Jan 12	Welcome/Intro - What is Life?	Scientific Method
		Wed, Jan 14	Life Organized/Chemistry for Biology	
		Fri, Jan 16	Quiz 1	
	2	Mon, Jan 19	No Lecture	Metric System
		Wed, Jan 21	Chemistry Continued/Molecules of Life: Carbs	
		Fri, Jan 23	Quiz 2	
	3	Mon, Jan 26	Molecules of Life: Lipids	Chemical Composition of Cells
		Wed, Jan 28	Molecules of Life: Protein, DNA	
		Fri, Jan 30	Quiz 3	
	4	Mon, Feb 2	Cell Structure	Microscopes, Cell Structure
		Wed, Feb 4	Cell Finish	
		Fri, Feb 6	EXAM 1 Opens. Due Monday Feb 9, 11:59 pm	
The Working Cell	5	Mon, Feb 9	Cell Division (Mitosis)	Mitosis, Enzymes
		Wed, Feb 11	Cell at Work - Energy and Enzymes	
		Fri, Feb 13	Quiz 4	
	6	Mon, Feb 16	Cellular Respiration	Diffusion and Osmosis
		Wed, Feb 18	Photosynthesis	
		Fri, Feb 20	Quiz 5	
	7	Mon, Feb 23	Carbon and Energy in Ecosystems	Respiration, Photosynthesis
		Wed, Feb 25		
		Fri, Feb 27	EXAM 2 Opens. Due Monday Mar 2, 11:59 pm	
Genetics	8	Mon, Mar 2	Meiosis	Meiosis, Genetic Problems
		Wed, Mar 4	Patterns of Inheritance Mendel	
		Fri, Mar 6	Quiz 6	
	9	Mon, Mar 9	Inheritance - Beyond Mendel	Drosophila and Plant Genetics
		Wed, Mar 11		
		Fri, Mar 13	EXAM 3 Opens. Due Monday Mar 16, 11:59 pm	
Spring Break Mar 16 - 20				
DNA	10	Mon, Mar 23	Structure of DNA	DNA Structure, Protein Synthesis, Mutation, Karyotypes
		Wed, Mar 25	Function of DNA/Viruses/Mutation	
		Fri, Mar 27	Quiz 7	
	11	Mon, Mar 30	How Genes are Controlled	Gene Expression
		Wed, Apr 1	Cloning/Gene Cancer	
		Fri, Apr 3	Quiz 8	
	12	Mon, Apr 6	DNA Technology	DNA Technology
		Wed, Apr 8	DNA Technology Applications	
		Fri, Apr 10	EXAM 4 Opens. Due Monday Apr 13, 11:59 pm	
Evolution/ Ecology	13	Mon, Apr 13	Evolution by Natural Selection	Evidence of Evolution
		Wed, Apr 15	Evolution Evidence	
		Fri, Apr 17	Quiz 9	
	14	Mon, Apr 20	Ecology Case study 1	Natural Selection
		Wed, Apr 22	Ecology Case study 2	
		Fri, Apr 24	Quiz 10	
	15	Mon, Apr 27		Ecologist Technique Sampler
		Wed, Apr 29	Wrap up and Semester Review	
		Fri, May 1	Final EXAM Opens. 8 am.	
		Tue, May 5	Final EXAM DUE 11:59 pm	

*Topic dates are tentative. Exam dates are set.