

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
Fall 2026

Course Information
Biology I for Non-Science Majors (BIOL 1408)
Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Eric Niederhauser

OFFICE PHONE: 806 716-2321

EMAIL: eniederhauser@southplainscollege.edu. Please include “1408 001” in the subject. I generally try to respond promptly to emails. Evening or Saturday response times may be delayed. I respond to emails received on Sundays on Monday.

OFFICE HOURS in S81: Mon and Tue: 11:00 - 12:00, Wed and Thu: 1:30 - 3:30, Fri: 8:30 – 10:30.

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.

Course Implementation:

PREREQUISITE: None. CREDIT: Four semester hours

RECOMMENDED TEXT: Campbell, *Essential Biology with Physiology*, 6th Ed. by Simon, et al.

REQUIRED LAB MANUAL: Download from Blackboard and print. You must bring it to lab.

Blackboard: Current grades, course information, lecture notes, links etc. will be available on Blackboard, accessed through <https://southplainscollege.blackboard.com>. You are responsible for checking Blackboard regularly.

Email: I may send emails to your SPC email address periodically throughout the semester. You are responsible for any information that is sent to your SPC email by me or the college, so please check it regularly.

Grading:

EXAMS: Five exams are given during the semester covering both lecture and lab. The exams are announced in advance and primarily cover lecture material but may include information from lab. The exams are primarily multiple choice but may include fill-in-the blank, short answer or essay questions. The final exam is comprehensive.

Do not miss exams. Their dates are set. Failure to take an exam at the scheduled time will result in a zero for the exam. Exceptions will be made for documented emergencies only. A doctor's appointment is NOT an emergency - do not schedule them for exam times. If you miss an exam due to an emergency, you must contact me within 24 hours for a makeup exam to be considered.

IN-CLASS QUIZZES: Most lectures will begin with a quiz. If you are late for class, you will not get credit for questions missed. There will be no in-class quiz makeups but three of the lowest in-class quiz grades will be dropped. Students with 3 or more absences (for any reason) will NOT have the lowest quiz grades dropped. Quizzes will use a remote clicker system.

LAB GRADES: This is a lab-integrated course - lab attendance and completion of the lab exercises is required to receive credit for the course. Failure to attend 3 or more labs will result in withdrawal from the course. There are no lab makeups. Understanding of the lab material is also assessed in the exams.

ASSIGNMENTS: Graded assignments may be assigned. I will not accept them late.

GRADING SUMMARY

Grade Type	Percentage of Grade
Exams	60 %
In-Class Quizzes	20 %
Lab Grades/Assignments	20 %

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: Dec 3, 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 Policy: This course is designed to be an in-person course. Punctual and regular class attendance is mandatory. The class is scheduled to meet for lecture twice each week. Once a week, class meetings consist of lecture period AND a lab period; consequently, failure to attend lecture OR lab will count as an absence and any work missed will receive a grade of zero. Students are responsible for all information discussed during absences from class - regardless of the reason.

If you intend to withdraw from the course, please see me first – do not just stop coming to class. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from this course. Students who fail to attend will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Grades are kept up to date, and guidance will be provided throughout the term to help students decide whether they need to drop the class. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php.

Tardy Policy: Arriving to class late is disruptive. If you are late, please come in quickly and quietly take your seat. A student who is consistently tardy will be withdrawn from the class. Let me know if there is a problem or if you know you will be late. Barring emergency, there is no excuse for being tardy to lab. If you are late for lab, you will lose participation credit for the lab.

Classroom Conduct: To create an effective learning environment, respect must be shown to your fellow students and to the instructor. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

Disruptive and disrespectful behavior includes:

- Cell phone use.
- Earbuds in your ear during lecture or lab.
- Use of other electronic devices including laptops. Research shows that taking notes by hand is more effective. Tablets or laptops that can be used horizontally on the table for note taking with a stylus are OK. I reserve the right to allow laptop use on an individual basis.
- Leaving class during lecture. **If you will need to leave early let me know.**
- Sleeping in class or lab.
- Eating in lab. Discrete food consumption in lecture is tolerated.
- Failure to follow general instructions.
- Talking out of turn, cursing, inappropriate gestures etc.

You will receive a zero for the day's quiz for disruptive behavior and may be asked to leave the classroom. If the poor behavior is deemed excessive the student may be withdrawn from the course.

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 notes or texts 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.

You must use your own words on exams.

Lab Safety: Each student will be informed/trained on the "Chemical Hygiene Plan (CHP) for Laboratories at South Plains College" during the first week of the semester. Each student will be required to acknowledge receipt of this information and be required to follow all procedures outlined by the instructor and/or staff of South Plains College.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS): These data sheets detail any potential hazards associated with the chemicals used in the laboratory. The MSDS notebook is located in room 146 of the science building. All students are encouraged to read about the chemicals used in the lab in the MSDS notebook. Please ask the instructor if you need assistance.

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/>

1408 Fall 2026 Tentative Lecture Schedule				
Unit	Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Lab Topic
Introduction, Building Blocks of Life	1	Mon, Aug 24	Welcome, Intro - What is Life?	Microscope Intro, Experimental Design, Daphnia on Drugs
		Wed, Aug 26	Life Organized, Chemistry for Biology	
	2	Mon, Aug 31	Chemistry for Biology	Safety, Metric System, Data Analysis
		Wed, Sep 2	Molecules of Life: Carbs, Lipids	
3	Mon, Sep 7	Labor Day	Molecules of Life: Protein, DNA	Organic Molecules, Lecture Finish/Review
	Wed, Sep 9			
4	Mon, Sep 14	EXAM 1	Cell Structure and Function	Diffusion and Osmosis
	Wed, Sep 16			
The Working Cell	5	Mon, Sep 21	Cell Division (Mitosis)	Cells, Mitosis
		Wed, Sep 23	Cell at Work - Energy and Enzymes	
	6	Mon, Sep 28	Cellular Respiration	Respiration, Photosynthesis
		Wed, Sep 30	Photosynthesis	
Genetics	7	Mon, Oct 5	EXAM 2	Mitosis vs Meiosis, Karyotypes, Drosophila Start, Genetic Problems
		Wed, Oct 7		
	8	Mon, Oct 12	Meiosis	Genetic Problems
		Wed, Oct 14	Inheritance - Beyond Mendel	
DNA	9	Mon, Oct 19	EXAM 3	Drosophila Count
		Wed, Oct 21		
	10	Mon, Oct 26	Function of DNA, Viruses, Mutation	Protein Synthesis
		Wed, Oct 28	How Genes are Controlled	
11	Mon, Nov 2	Cloning, Cancer	DNA Extraction	
	Wed, Nov 4	DNA Technology		
	12	Mon, Nov 9	DNA Technology Applications	TBA
		Wed, Nov 11	EXAM 4	
Evolution, Ecology	13	Mon, Nov 16	Evolution by Natural Selection	Genes in a Bottle, Micropipette Use
		Wed, Nov 18	Evolution Evidence	
	14	Mon, Nov 23	Ecology Intro. Ecosystems	No Lab
		Wed, Nov 25	Thanksgiving Break	
15	Mon, Nov 30	Ecology Case study 1	DNA Fingerprinting, Natural Selection	
	Wed, Dec 2	Ecology Case study 2		
		Comprehensive Final Exam: Wed Dec 9, 8:00 AM		