Swift Creek Middle School Course Syllabus

2012-2013

Mrs. Ashley Murphy

**Biology: 2000-3200**

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**Curriculum**

This is a high school course and will be taught at the high school level. Students will be taking part in inquiry-based lessons, projects, and presentations that require higher-order thinking skills. This course counts towards your student’s **high school GPA** and includes three exams: a mid-term, a final given by Mrs. Murphy, and an End of Course Exam given by the Florida Department of Education.

**Content Overview**

The purpose of this course is to give students a solid foundation in biology that can be applied to other high school science courses, including Advanced Placement Biology. Biology is the study of living organisms, but it is divided into many specialized fields. This year, your student will receive a brief overview of many of those fields. We will begin the year with **Ecology**, learning about the relationships that all organisms share with each other and their environments. We will then learn about **Cells**, specifically we will cover the types of cells and their functions along with some basic chemistry that is necessary to understand these structures and functions. We will use our knowledge of cells to explore **Genetics;** we will investigate inheritance, DNA, and technology scientists use in this field. We will then begin our unit on **Biological Diversity**, examining the history of life, evolution, and the organization of life. All of this information will prepare us to explore life on Earth by taxonomic categories, from least to most complex. We will begin with **Bacteria, Viruses, Protists, and Fungi**, move on to **Plants**, then to **Invertebrate Animals, Vertebrate Animals**, and finally, the **Human Body**.

**Standards**

This course is designed in compliance with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for Biology.

<http://www.floridastandards.org/Courses/PublicPreviewCourse69.aspx>

Integrated into these standards are Common Core standards for Language Arts and Mathematics. These standards emphasize writing, reading, and reasoning in all courses. In this course, we will use reading, writing, and mathematic reasoning to understand, explain, and evaluate scientific topics.

**Book**

We will be using the Florida Glencoe Biology textbook. Each student will receive a textbook to use at home, we will have a class set to use during school hours. There may be supplemental material available via the internet at a later date.

**Grading**

Student grades will be based on a total point scale. In order for students to receive full credit, work must be **turned in on time**.

 Grades will be based on the following categories: Assessments, Classwork/Labs, Homework Projects, and Bellwork. Students scoring **lower than a 70%** on a TEST in the assessments category have one chance to retake the assessment. The highest grade will be used. **The final grade shall not exceed a 70%.** This does not apply to mid-terms and finals. To use this opportunity, students must fill out an Academic Opportunity for Improvement form obtained from Mrs. Murphy.

**Scale**: A: 100-90%, B: 89-80%, C: 79-70%, D: 69-60%, F: Below 60%

If a student’s grade remains at a C or lower for longer than two weeks, the parent/ guardian will be notified. Grades are taken very seriously in this course as they will follow the student to high school and to college applications. Students should not accept C work from themselves in this course.

**Rules**

Each student will receive a copy of classroom rules to keep in his/her science binder. Rules will also be posted in the classroom. Should a student violate one of these rules, disciplinary action will be taken. Students will record offenses in the Discipline Log which is used to track student behavior. Consequences for violating rules may include loss of “Howl Out” privileges, detention, or a discipline referral. Students’ citizenship grades reflect their behavior and participation in class, this includes whole class, group, and individual work. Students who wish to receive a 4 for citizenship must go above and beyond “good” behavior by helping others, cooperating, not speaking out of turn, and making positive contributions to the classroom learning environment.

1. Respect everyone
	1. Work to solve problems constructively, without violence or abuse
	2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to self
2. Begin Bellwork immediately upon sitting down, NOT after the bell rings
3. Follow instructions the first time given
4. Participate positively in class
5. Stay on task
6. Do your best work

**Students must also follow general Swift Creek rules:**

1. Cell phones, backpacks, and gum are not permitted in the classroom.
2. Students must have hall passes (in planner) to leave the classroom
3. Please see the planner for additional school rules