COURSE SYLLABUS

Welcome!

Biology Honors 9th

Welcome to the course! I'm Mr. Davila and I'll be your 9th-grade science teacher. I am very excited to get to know all of you. Through this course, we are going to be learning about a lot of topics, some of which may be old to you, while others are going to be brand new to you. We are going as far as the tiny molecules that make us up, to how the ecosystem and how the world works. I hope you all enjoy this class just as much as I do, let's learn great things together!

Why you need to read the rest of this syllabus...

You should consider this syllabus as a contract between you (the student) and me (the teacher). It includes all of the policies and procedures you need to know to complete this course successfully, as well as the behavior that I expect of all of my students. For my part, I will honor all of the specifications laid out in this document. No changes will be made without notice being given in the Course News area. Students with documented IEPs or 504 plans will be given accommodations appropriate for their individual plans. Contact the school's Special Education department for more information.

Contacting the Teacher

It is your responsibility to contact me with any questions you may have. Don't wait until the last minute--when a question arises, ask it early. When you have questions about course content or assignments, notify me immediately via the Remind app, if it is not an emergency then please email me.

If technical difficulties prevent you from contacting me online, please call the Virtual Academy front office .

Course Activities

Course activities may include

- Reading online text and transcripts
- Viewing moving and static images and streaming video
- Listening to audio recordings and pronunciations

- Watching linear and interactive animations and simulations
- Completing hands-on and virtual activities
- Participating in threaded discussions with teachers and fellow students in a section, cohort, or group
- Reading or listening to teacher announcements
- Completing online self-check exercises
- Reading and completing teacher-created instructional materials

Graded assignments may include

- Online or paper-based worksheets and practice sets
- Quizzes
- Exams (unit, semester and final)
- Threaded discussions
- Essays, research papers, and other writing assignments
- Presentations

All graded assignments are either automatically scored by the K12 Learning Management System, or they are teacher-scored, which means scored by me or by a teaching assistant.

Course Policies

Attendance and Activity

Students are expected to log in to this course daily. While the length of time that students spend working on assignments may vary, the expectation is that you will spend approximately 60 to 75 minutes on coursework each day.

Daily Student Responsibilities

Every time you enter the course and before completing any classwork,

- **Read any announcements** I posted since the last time you entered the course.
- **Review the Calendar** to see what lessons and assignments you are to complete that day.
- **Complete all lessons and assignments** (both graded and nongraded) as indicated on the Class Plan before the end of the day.
- **Submit assignments to me through Google Classroom**. Assignments sent by e-mail will not be accepted unless you've made prior arrangements with me.
- **Post questions in Remind or the assignment itself via google classroom.**

Before you log out of the course,

- **Make sure you have completed all of the work** for the day, including the nongraded lesson work.

Getting Help with Classwork

This course is going to be challenging. When you encounter difficulty with course content,

- **First,** visit the Raise Your Hand area in the course. Check to see whether another student has asked the same question and whether I've already answered it. If not, then post your question and check back later. I will answer any questions
- **If it is urgent or private,** send me an e-mail or via Remind

Communication with Teacher and Classmates

Although you won't be able to send e-mails to other students, you will be communicating with other students through threaded discussions within the course. In addition, students often form friendships while in the course together.

Some things to keep in mind when communicating with other students:

- Respect the privacy and wishes of your fellow students.
- Flaming, spamming, bullying or other unwanted contact, including inappropriate message content or attachments, will be considered a breach of this policy. Infractions may result in disciplinary action by the school administration.

Teacher Availability and Communications

After the first two weeks of school, you'll have a lot more freedom in your daily schedule. This goes for teachers as well! This means that, although we're both working on the course every day, we may be working at very different times of the day. When you and I happen to be online and working at the same time, I might not be immediately available. Most of my day is spent responding to student questions in the Raise Your Hand area, grading and returning assignments, and answering e-mails and phone messages. Feel free to contact me when needed, but please understand that I might be in the middle of one of these tasks, or helping another student at the time. You may need to leave me a message if you call, or wait for a short time to receive answers online. Of course, I am always available via Remind

If you would like to schedule time for a private conference, please make the request at least three to five days before the day you are available. The more notice you provide me, the more likely I can be available at a time that is best for you and/or your parent/mentor.

Due Dates

The Class Plan will list which lessons and assignments you need to complete each day. You'll also find assignment due dates in the Course Details area of your student landing page. It is important that you stick to the course schedule indicated on the Calendar and in the Weekly Announcements, as well as the due dates for each assignment. Staying on a schedule allows

you to learn along with your classmates. It is especially important as we all learn together through the threaded discussions in the course.

Late Policy--PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Graded assignments--whether teacher scored or computer scored--must be completed and submitted no later than midnight on the due date.

- For every day that your assignment is late, your grade on the assignment will be reduced by 10% and up to a total of 50%.
- Zeros will be entered roughly a week/week and a half
- You will be able to submit late assignments (beyond five days) to convert zeros to 50%, but be advised of the following cut-off dates: For computer-scored tests that are late, your mentor will need to contact me before you will be allowed to retake the test.
- I am always willing to discuss the late submission of work past the above-listed deadlines. Please contact me directly as soon as possible to find out if late submission is an option.
- I will grant due date extensions on assignments under some circumstances. **You should never assume that I will automatically grant these requests, however.** Due date extensions must be requested before the due date of the assignment and on a school day. Requests received on the due date, past the due date, or on a nonschool day will most likely not be granted.

Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)

Students who submit work as their own, when it is not wholly and completely their own, are guilty of cheating and/or plagiarism and will receive a grade of zero on the entire assignment.

Assisting other students in cheating or plagiarism is also considered academic dishonesty, and students who do this will receive a grade of zero on their assignment as well.

The first time students fail to cite the source of information in an essay or research paper, they will be advised of proper citation methods. Further infractions will result in the students receiving a grade of zero on the assignment.

Students who are found guilty of cheating or plagiarism more than once will be referred to the school administration for breach of the school's Behavior Code.

I may use technology that helps prevent cheating for some tests. Before these tests, you will be prompted to install software on your computer. You will be required to install this software before taking the assessment. Once you access the test, you will be unable to copy, paste, or open new browser windows or programs during the assessment. If you experience any difficulty, contact K12 Customer Care for assistance. Contact me immediately if Customer Care cannot resolve your issue.

Attendance

Regular and daily attendance is required.

- You must log in to the course and complete the scheduled work every school day.
- Unless otherwise specified, course log-in is required even when assignments occur offline, as you are expected to review any updated announcements and threaded discussion responses daily.
- You should expect to spend 60 to 75 minutes each day reading, responding, and completing other activities, both online and offline.
- If you know you will not be able to log in to the course on any given day, please contact me immediately by e-mail. If you encounter technical difficulties, contact me by phone. If you do not contact me before missing an activity, you can expect to hear directly from me.
- Students who continually fail to enter the course and show progress will be referred to the school administration.
- Camera should be turned on at all times in order to be counted present in the course

Submitting Assignments and File Types

Names of files you submit

Files you submit to me through the Dropbox tool should have a filename that indicates which assignment it is, followed by your first initial and last name. You may wish to use "U" and "L" to indicate which unit and lesson it is, or simply shorten the actual title of the assignment. Some examples include "U4L3RSmith" (unit 4 lesson 3 for Robert Smith) or "PersuaEssyRSmith" (Persuasive Essay for Robert Smith).

Always use the Google Classroom

I will only accept teacher-graded assignments submitted through Google Classroom. Assignments sent to me through e-mail will be returned to be submitted through Google Classroom. If for some reason you are unable to submit assignments through Google Classroom, or assignments you submit are not being returned to you, contact me immediately. We will make alternate arrangements for you to get the assignments to me for grading.

Expectations of Difficulty, Participation, and Time Commitment

Students often find that going to school online takes longer and is more difficult than going to school in a traditional setting. Be prepared for this course and online schooling, in general, to be a little more difficult than you might expect. If you are not spending at least 60 minutes on this course each day, you're probably not doing enough to pass. If this is happening, make an appointment to meet with me or visit me during Office Hours so we can review what you are doing each day. If you need help in working out a personal schedule, staying motivated, or

creating an effective home learning environment, contact your adviser. This person is an expert at helping students with these concerns.

Grading Policy

You will notice that some types of assignments are worth more points, overall, than others. For example, it is very possible to take only computer-scored quizzes in this course and get an A on each one but still fail the course. This would happen because computer-scored quizzes make up a small percentage of the total points in the course..

I will grade and return all teacher-scored assignments within a week (sooner whenever possible). When these assignments are returned, you are expected to open them and read the feedback I provide. Use this feedback to improve your work on future assignments.

The weights of the different assignments are as followed:

Classwork/Homework:60%

Assessments: 40%

Semester Exams:25%

Grade Reporting

Your Gradebook will always display points earned vs. points possible, as well as percentage grades.

Assignments will be graded and (in most cases) returned to you in three school days. Grades will appear in your online Gradebook, and feedback on your work will most often be included directly in the files returned to you.