



Honors Earth/Environmental Science Course Syllabus

Course Name: Honors Earth/Environmental Science (EES)
Teacher(s): Fritz Robinett (fritz.robinett@acsgmail.net)

Textbook: Earth Science (NC Edition - McDougal Littell)

Course Overview

The Earth/Environmental Science (EES) curriculum uses the [NC Standard Course of Study](#) as a framework to focus learning on the function of the earth's systems. Emphasis is placed on Earth in the Universe, Earth's systems & Structures, Environmental awareness and the Cycles that Circulate Energy and Material throughout the earth system. Honors Earth/Environmental Science course focuses on the functions of the earth's systems in an in-depth, detailed, and demanding perspective. Special emphasis is placed on collaborative, hands-on learning, data analysis and interpretation, as well as application of concepts to the challenges of the 21st century. The areas of inquiry include: energy in the earth systems, biogeochemical connections, origin and evolution of the universe, predictability of a dynamic earth, and human interactions with the earth's geologic, hydrologic and atmospheric systems.

As an honors-level EES class students will be expected to understand and contribute to their learning using North Carolina's framework for [advanced learning indicators](#). These include the following: intentional differentiation, inquiry & connections, depth & complexity, collaboration, and an increased pace when compared to the standard course. This means students should be prepared for 1-2 hours of time outside of class each week to review information or complete work.

Earth science class works best when every student has the opportunity to read, write, think and talk about the content every day. This requires us to create a culture of mutual respect and understanding. To that end we will develop our class norms (guidelines) as a group during the first week of class. At least once every other week, EES students will conduct a "Friday Circle" that will allow us to get to know each other, explore areas of mutual interest, discuss a pertinent reading, or simply check in with each other and play a fun bonding game.

Essential Questions to Spark Student Inquiry

- UNIT 1 (The Celestial Sphere): *How does our understanding of Earth's place in space shape human perspective and interactions with the natural world?*
- UNIT 2 (The Atmosphere): *How does Earth's atmosphere make life possible, and how do human activities affect its balance?*
- UNIT 3 (The Hydrosphere): *How does water move through the hydrosphere and connect Earth's systems?*
- UNIT 4 (The Geosphere): *How do Earth's internal and surface structures and processes shape the planet we live on?*

Assessment

Each unit will contain lab work, homework (completion), classwork, and a UNIT test. We will also be doing a few small projects.

Formative

Ongoing formative assessment to check for student learning, work completion, and class participation will be conducted on a daily basis. These formative assessments for all four UNITS of study will include:

- Labs/Data Analysis (completion and collaboration with others)
- Classwork (models, pause discussions during notes, video questionnaires, as well as contributions to others' learning)
- Homework (2-3 short assignments per week for completion)

Summative

Summative assessments of student learning will take place at the end of a UNIT or lesson and will be graded for accuracy. Students are encouraged to prepare for summative assessments beyond what is provided for review in class as these assignments will often be weighted significantly. Summative assessments and their range of possible points for all four UNITS of study will include:

- UNIT Test (50-70 points)
- Lab Reports or Data Analysis C-E-R (15-30 points)
- Notebook Check (20 points)
- Models or Products (15-20 points)

Grading

Grades are based on the point system. Students' grades are a percentage of the available points that have been earned. For example, if you earned 15 points out of a 20 point assignment, your grade is $15/20 = 75\%$. Term grades will be calculated by determining the percentage of earned points with respect to possible points.

Work towards a student's grade will either be submitted in person to the teacher or via Canvas for feedback. Not everything assigned and collected will count towards a grade, but students should expect that if they turn in work it will be counted toward the grade. As this course is aligned to the College Board framework and pacing, punctual completion of all assignments is essential.

Students will receive feedback via Canvas or in written or oral communication from the teacher. Review of this feedback and resubmission of any non-test assignment is possible for students who clearly communicate the need and do so in a timely fashion.

Attendance

This class will adhere to the district & state requirements for attendance. Please review the student handbook with regard to attendance and tardy policies.