

BISC 120Lg Lecture Syllabus, Summer 2020
General Biology: Organismal Biology and Evolution
May 5, 2020 Version

Overview

This 4-unit biology course will present several key topics in evolution, ecology, environment, and the diversity of life. These topics will be covered in a series of four weekly lectures (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) and two weekly laboratory sections (Tuesday and Thursday).

Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, students will:

- know the concept of the scientific method
- understand how the scientific method is applied to key questions regarding the nature of life on Earth
- know the mechanisms of heredity
- know the theory of evolution
- understand how evolution explains the diversity of life on Earth
- know the defining characteristics of the domains Archaea, Bacteria, and Eukarya, with special attention to plants, fungi, and animals
- understand how the environment and organisms contribute to the evolution of ecological relationships
- understand how the environment has changed and continues to change and how this affects the evolution of life on Earth.
- be able to design and conduct scientific investigations
- be able to think critically about how experimental evidence answers a scientific question
- be able to perform biological laboratory techniques

Faculty Instructors Dr. Raffaella Ghittoni, ZHS 256, 213-740-8352, rghitton@usc.edu
Dr. Oliver Rizk, AHF 135, 213-740-4862, orizk@usc.edu

Lab Manager Gorjana Bezmalinovic, ZHS 362, 213-740-6078, bezmalin@usc.edu

Textbooks Lecture
[Campbell Biology 11th ed., 2017.](#)

Laboratory
Summer 2020 BISC 120 Laboratory Manual (PDF available on Blackboard)

Website <https://blackboard.usc.edu/>
(site for course materials, lecture notes, quizzes, additional readings, grades, etc.)

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Lecture times Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 10:00 A.M. – 12:05 P.M.

Laboratory times Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00 – 3:50 P.M.

Office Hours Ghittoni: Monday and Wednesday, 12:05 to 1:00 P.M.

Rizk: Monday and Tuesday, 12:05 to 1:00 P.M.

Exams

The lecture portion of this course will include four exams (two from each professor). All exams may include multiple choice questions, matching questions, fill-in answers, true/false answers, short answers, short essays, definitions, and quantitative problems. Students must take all four lecture exams to complete the course and complete at least 80% of the assigned laboratory activities.

Lecture Quizzes

Five lecture quizzes (each worth 15 points) will be administered online via **Blackboard**. The quizzes will be posted by 2:00 pm on Fridays and will remain available until 9:00 am the following Monday. The first quiz will be posted on **May 22**. Questions will cover **the preceding week's material**. Answers to quiz questions will be posted at the end of each quiz period.

Grading

After each exam, grade point cut-offs will be released. There is not an absolute number of points that predetermines a letter grade of A, A-, B+, B, B-, etc. The final letter grade for the course will be assigned on a curve, determined by the total number of points as given below.

Exam 1	150
Exam 2	150
Exam 3	150
Exam 4	150
Lecture Quizzes	75
Laboratory Assignments	325
TOTAL POINTS IN COURSE	1000

Laboratory scores will be normalized as explained in the laboratory syllabus in order to correct for possible differences in grading between teaching assistants (TAs).

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Schedule of lecture topics

(subject to modification of specific topics and reading assignments*):

Day		Lecturer	Lecture	Readings
Wed	May 20	Ghittoni/Rizk	1 Introduction; The Scientific Method	Course Syllabus, 1.3
		Ghittoni	Genetic Material and Expression	12.1, 16.1, 17.1
			Mendelian Inheritance	14
Thu	May 21	Ghittoni	2 Molecular Basis of Inheritance	15
			The Darwinian Revolution	22
Mon	May 25		Memorial Day – NO CLASS!	
Tue	May 26	Ghittoni	3 Evolutionary Mechanisms	23, 25.6
Wed	May 27	Ghittoni	4 Life on Early Earth	25.1-25.4
			Phylogeny and the Tree of Life	26
Thu	May 28	Ghittoni	5 Prokaryote Structure and Genetics	27.1-4
Mon	June 1	Ghittoni	EXAM 1	
Tue	June 2	Ghittoni	6 Prokaryote Diversity	27.5-27.6
Wed	June 3	Ghittoni	7 Viruses	19
Thu	June 4	Ghittoni	8 Endosymbiosis and Protist Diversity	28
			Fungi	31.1-3, 31.5
Mon	June 8	Ghittoni	9 Plant Evolution 1	29
Tue	June 9	Ghittoni	10 Plant Evolution 2	30.1-3
Wed	June 10	Ghittoni	EXAM 2	
Thu	June 11	Rizk	11 Evolution of Development	32
Mon	June 15	Rizk	12 Animal Diversity – Invertebrates 1	32 & 33
Tue	June 16	Rizk	13 Animal Diversity – Invertebrates 2	32 & 33
Wed	June 17	Rizk	14 Animal Diversity – Invertebrates 3	32 & 33
Thu	June 18	Rizk	EXAM 3	
Mon	June 22	Rizk	15 Animal Diversity – Vertebrates 1	34
Tue	June 23	Rizk	16 Animal Diversity – Vertebrates 2	34
Wed	June 24	Rizk	17 Ecology and Biosphere 1	52-56
Thu	June 25	Rizk	18 Ecology and Biosphere 2	52-56
Mon	June 29	Rizk	19 Ecology and Biosphere 3	52-56
Tue	June 30	Rizk	EXAM 4	

*Additional readings for specific lectures will be posted on Blackboard during the semester.

Course Policies

Policy on Re-grading Exams

If you feel that an error was made in the grading of an exam, you need to do the following: 1) Check the answer key with your TA, 2) Prepare a **printed statement** explaining why you feel your grade was incorrect, 3) Submit your printed statement, Re-grade Request Form (downloaded from Blackboard) and your original exam to your TA **within one week** of the time the examination was returned to you. The TA will either handle the re-grade or consult with the professors. The entire exam will be re-graded and, as a result, your grade may increase or decrease from a requested re-grade. No frivolous reasons will be accepted for requesting grade changes; stated reasons for a grade change must be legitimate (e.g., error in totaling the score).

Policy on Missed Lecture Exams

No make-up lecture exams will be given in this course. If you have to miss a lecture exam due to religious holiday (<http://orl.usc.edu/religiouslife/holydays/absences.html>) or university-sanctioned event (e.g., student athletes with away-games) you must notify the Lab Manager **at least 7 days in advance**. If you miss an exam due to medical illness you must email a valid medical excuse to the Laboratory Manager (bezmalin@usc.edu) **within 48 hours** of the missed exam. The excuse cannot be to attend a dental appointment, a conference, or other similar reasons. The reason for missing an exam must be of a medical nature or totally unavoidable (e.g., a verified automobile collision on the day and time of the examination). Remember that the USC Student Health Center does not provide routine medical excuses. You should notify the Laboratory Manager in writing that you were seen by a doctor, making sure that you include: 1) the doctor's name and telephone number, and 2) a statement authorizing us to discuss with the doctor whether you were too ill to take the examination. We will contact the doctor and decide whether or not you have a valid excuse. If the excuse is valid, your grade for that exam will be pro-rated based on the average of your other comparable exams and the class average for that particular test. An invalid excuse will result in a score of zero for the missed exam.

If you miss the final exam and have provided a valid medical excuse to the Laboratory Manager **within 48 hours of the examination time**, a final course grade of incomplete (IN) will be recorded and you will be permitted to take a make-up final examination during the following semester. **You will receive zero points for an exam if you miss it for an invalid reason.**

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be given for special projects, etc.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with the Office of Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Be sure that the your accommodations letter is emailed to the Laboratory Manager (bezmalin@usc.edu) as early in the semester as possible, preferably **by May 26, 2020**. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The telephone number of DSP is 213-740-0776. If a student's approved accommodation is limited to extra time on examinations, the teaching staff of BISC 120 will provide the accommodation. For any other accommodation, such as a private room, computer, scribe, etc., students must make prior arrangements with the DSP office 2 weeks

before the exam date. For more information please visit the following website:
http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00: <http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>, while the recommended sanctions are located in **Appendix A**. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (SJACS) for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

Website

Students are responsible for logging onto Blackboard (<https://blackboard.usc.edu>) and checking the course website on a regular basis. Postings on Blackboard will be an official source for announcements, course materials, lecture notes, lab notes, score postings and general discussions. Weekly quizzes will also be completed on Blackboard.

Gift Policy

No gifts or presents of any kind are permissible to give to any of the instructional staff.

Final Comments

No exceptions will be made to these policies under most circumstances. If you think that the instructor or TA has granted you **any deviation** from the policies in this document and associated course syllabus, you must obtain their **written agreement** to support that claim.

BISC 120 Laboratory Syllabus

~ still under construction ~

SOME TOPICS MIGHT CHANGE DUE TO SWITCH TO ONLINE LEARNING

Lab Manager: Gorjana Bezmalinovic ZHS 362 Tel/Fax: 213-740-6078
E-mail: bezmalin@usc.edu
Office hours: Open door policy – ‘Zoom chat’ per request

Laboratory Schedule:

Lab #	Date	Laboratory
1	May 21	Laboratory Safety & Microscope
2	May 26	
3	May 28	Evolution
4	June 2	Scientific Methods
5	June 4	Scientific Reading and Writing
6	June 9	Bacteria
7	June 11	Protists
8	June 16	Plants
9	June 18	Animals
10	June 23	Ecology
	June 25	LAB EXAM
	June 30	Biodiversity Presentation

The Lab Manager reserves the right to make adjustments during the semester.

Required Textbook:

[BISC 120 Laboratory Manual, SUMMER 2020](#). PDF will be [posted on Blackboard](#) and printouts must be brought to lab each week.

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LABORATORY POINT DISTRIBUTION

The laboratory portion (**325 points**) will count for **~32%** of your final course grade, distributed as follows:

Lab Quizzes (10 – 5 points each)	50 pts
Homework (3 – 8 points each)	24 pts
Scientific Reading	10 pts
Lab Report (2 – 40 points each)	80 pts
Lab Report 1 Peer review	10 pts
Lab Exam	111 pts
Lab Manual (2 points per chapter)	20 pts
Lab Participation (2 points per lab)	20 pts

LABORATORY PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

You are required to attend all lab sessions. Any unexcused absences will seriously affect your evaluation and lab participation points. Come to lab on time. You are also to remain for the entire lab session or until excused by your instructor. **DO NOT** make any other appointments for the time you are scheduled to be in lab.

You are required to wear closed toe shoes, long pants and a knee-length lab coat. Goggles will be provided in lab.

Before you begin the lab exercise, make sure that you remove all unnecessary materials from your work area. At the end of the lab session, clean and return all supplies to their proper place, clean your work area, and slide your chair under the table. Check with your instructor before leaving.

NO EATING OR DRINKING IS ALLOWED IN THE LABORATORY UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

PRE-LAB QUIZZES

Each student will take a **Blackboard pre-lab quiz** prior to coming to lab. Quizzes will be posted 48 hours prior to your lab. Weekly pre-lab quizzes will consist of multiple choice questions. Questions will test your knowledge of the material you will be covering that day in lab. There will be no pre-lab quiz before your first lab (Lab Safety chapter).

LAB MANUAL

During each lab students need to record their results (drawings, observations, calculations) in their lab manual. Tables need to be filled and all post-lab questions answered. Each student is required to show his/her TA the lab manual before leaving the lab and obtain their signature. Lab manuals will be checked periodically throughout the semester.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

During the semester you will have three homework assignments, based on the data you obtain in your lab experiments. Assignments are explained in the lab manual and more information can be found on Bb.

LAB REPORTS

Two lab reports will be written during the semester. Lab reports must be posted on Blackboard (*Lab Reports* [turnitin](#) link) and a hard copy turned in at the beginning of the lab session. Lab report guidelines will be posted on Bb (<https://blackboard.usc.edu/>) in the beginning of the semester.

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FIRST LAB REPORT PEER REVIEW

Each student will review one of their lab-mates' lab reports. Instructions will be posted on Blackboard once the semester starts.

LAB EXAM

The cumulative lab practical exam will test your understanding of the topics, concepts and exercises covered during the semester.

Missed Lab Exam: *It is your responsibility to be present on the days of the lab practical exams.*

If you miss a lab exam due to a serious illness, you must present a valid excuse to the Lab Manager Gorjana Bezmalinovic (bezmalin@usc.edu) **within 48 hours** of the missed exam. A valid excuse is considered to be an official note from your doctor or the summary of your visit from the USC Engemann Student Health Center. Note that neither you, nor your doctor, need to tell us the nature of your illness; we just want to verify whether you were too ill to take the exam. If you miss an exam for non-illness related reasons, you must provide similarly convincing documentation of the emergency to the Lab Manager. If we judge your excuse to be valid, you will be allowed to take the exam in another lab section that week. If you do not have a valid excuse or fail to provide it within the allotted time, you will receive zero points for the missed lab practical exam.

TIDE POOLS FIELD TRIP

This project is designed to provide you with an opportunity to explore the marine (intertidal) environment, observe animals and plants from a diverse array of phyla/divisions, and learn how animals and plants adapt and interact with each other and their environment. We will go to the beach located between the *Royal Palms State Beach* and *Point Fermin Park* in San Pedro. All the necessary information regarding this field trip will be posted on Blackboard (<https://blackboard.usc.edu/>) at the beginning of the semester.

MISSED LABS

If you miss a scheduled lab **due to illness or emergency**, please contact the Lab Manager (bezmalin@usc.edu) immediately to see whether it will be possible to make up the missed lab.

Students who wish to miss a lab for observance of a religious holy day should be aware of the University's policy on such absences, published at: <http://orl.usc.edu/religiouslife/holydays/absences.html>. Requests for such absences should be made by email addressed to the Lab Manager (bezmalin@usc.edu) at least 2 weeks in advance of the absence. If the absence is approved, the instructors will determine a reasonable accommodation for the student.

Student-athletes who must miss occasional labs for legitimate reasons should bring the SAAS excuse letter to the Lab Manager at least 2 weeks in advance so alternatives can be arranged.

Please note that **no lab make-ups will be allowed** during the week prior to a holiday, and for school-unrelated activities.

LAB SCORES

You can find scores for all of your lab assignments on Blackboard: <https://blackboard.usc.edu>. Your lab scores will be posted under your **LAB SECTION**. Be sure to check for additional postings on a regular basis. It is the student's responsibility to immediately notify his/her Lab Instructor or Lab Manager in the event of any mistakes, so please check your Blackboard scores weekly.

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LAB SCORE NORMALIZATION

The lab scores will be normalized at the end of the semester by the Lab Manager to correct for differences in grading between Lab Instructors (TAs). In this procedure, the mean total score of all students in each lab instructor's lab section is compared to the mean total score of the entire class and each student's score is adjusted.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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