

# AAC BIOLOGY

Biology is an exciting subject that explores the wonders of life. In this course, we will learn about the structure and functions of living things, how they get energy, the various life processes, the incredible diversity of living organisms, and how everything in nature is interconnected. The main goal of this class is to help you see the big picture and understand why the details matter. We'll focus on developing your critical thinking skills, and we'll also do fun experiments in the lab to apply what we learn in real-life situations. By the end of this course, you'll have a deeper appreciation for the living world around us and the role each organism plays in its environment.

## Required materials:

- ✓ Pencil and pen
- ✓ Color pencils
- ✓ Academic Planner
- ✓ 1 inch 3 ring binder
- ✓ Dividers (each labeled by unit)
- ✓ Loose leaf college ruled paper

| Fall Semester                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Spring Semester                                                                                                                                                     |
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| Unit 1: The Nature of Science, Properties of Water, and Biomolecules<br>Unit 2: Cell Structure and Processes<br>Unit 3: Photosynthesis and Cellular Respiration<br>Unit 4: Nucleic Acids and Protein Synthesis<br>Unit 5: Cell Cycle<br>Unit 6: Genetics | Unit 7: Evolution<br>Unit 8: Classification<br>Unit 9: Ecology<br>Unit 10: Plant Systems<br>Unit 11: Animal Systems, Viruses, and Biotechnology<br>Unit 12: Zombies |

## Class Norms and Expectations

Be **responsible** for your actions

Practice science **safely**.

Be **respectful** of space, ideas, questions, *and all living things*.



| Major Grades: 50% of Grade Average                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Daily Grades: 50% of Grade Average                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 3 per 9 weeks</li> <li>Major grades will be in the form of tests or major labs/projects.</li> <li><u>Major grade late work policy</u>: Major grades (other than tests) will be 25 points off each day they are late.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 9 per 9 weeks</li> <li>Daily grades are in the form of quizzes, labs, classwork/homework, and participation.</li> <li>The one lowest daily grade will be dropped at the <b>end of each 9 weeks</b>.</li> <li><u>Daily grade late work policy</u>: Daily grades will be 10 points off per day they are late.</li> </ul> |



## Textbooks:

The Biology textbook is available online. Students will access the book through **1Link → Clever → Holt McDougal/HMH** to get to the textbook website. This information is also posted on **Schoology**.

| Tutorials                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Tips for Success                                                                                                                         |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Struggling students are highly recommended to utilize tutorial sessions in small group or individual settings for better understanding of class information.</li> <li>To make the most of tutorials, students should attempt assignments and study independently first, then come prepared with specific topics/questions they need help with.</li> <li>Check Schoology for tutorial days/times and attend for as long as needed.</li> <li>Any changes to the tutorial schedule will be communicated in class and on Schoology.</li> <li>It's a good idea to inform the teacher in advance if planning to attend to confirm availability.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be proactive</li> <li>✓ Ask Questions</li> <li>✓ Study</li> <li>✓ Do your (own) work</li> </ul> |

## Level Change Requests

- Below a 75 average in AAC Biology allows level down to regular/on-level Biology within 3 weeks (before TBA deadline).
- 75 or higher average students are unlikely to be allowed to level down and must stay in AAC course.
- To level down, follow campus procedure: discuss with student/parent, student/teacher, and parent/teacher (via email or phone), complete official form (online).
- Leveling down requires teacher, parent consent, and administrative approval.

## Academic Integrity:

Each student must do their own work unless collaboration is explicitly allowed. Cheating, which includes plagiarism, copying, forgery, or falsification, will not be tolerated in this course. Honesty and integrity are essential for a successful learning experience.

- Formal Consequences of Academic Dishonesty:
  - Zero for the cheated assignment
  - Parent/guardian notification
  - Further disciplinary action possible as per school/district policy
- Informal Consequences of Academic Dishonesty:
  - Difficulty obtaining letters of recommendation for future opportunities (summer programs, internships, honor societies, college applications)
  - Damage to reputation among peers and teachers
  - Hindrance to academic and extracurricular progress
  - Disadvantage compared to honest peers in the learning and growth process



## Classwork/Homework Grades/Policy

- Classwork/homework, participation, and some in-class activities will be assessed based on a completion-based check system.
- If you participate and have the appropriate assignment completed on time, you will receive a full check.
- If you have most of it complete and on time, you will receive a half check.
- If you do not have it on time or have less than 50% complete, you will receive no check.
- Classwork/Homework checks add up to 1 daily grade per unit.
- Homework Check late work policy: **Assignments given for Homework Checks ARE NOT accepted late.**

**Note:** *In this class, I will evaluate Classwork/Homework based on completion rather than accuracy. I value your active participation and effort more than striving for perfection. My main aim is to foster a supportive learning environment where you feel at ease taking risks and engaging wholeheartedly with the material. Throughout the course, I will carefully select specific assignments to assess your progress fairly. While the focus is on effort, please refrain from submitting nonsensical work, as it will not be credited. I genuinely expect you to try your best and avoid copying someone else's work, as it is not acceptable. The purpose of Classwork/Homework is to deepen your understanding of the topics we cover as we move forward. Completing these tasks will also enhance your performance in quizzes and tests. Let's learn together and make the most of our time in this class!*

## Absences:

- **ALWAYS CHECK SCHOOLGY FIRST FOR MISSING WORK.**
- Please inform the teacher in advance if you anticipate an absence. Regardless of whether it's expected or not, remember to check Schoology and discuss missed assignments with the teacher.
- You have one day for each day of absence to complete and submit the work. Checking Schoology during your absence might enable you to handle the missed tasks before you return.
- For students absent on the day of a test or quiz, make-up exams must be completed upon their return.
- In the event of extended absences, testing arrangements will be discussed between the teacher and the student.
- If you were absent only the day before a test and no new material was covered, you'll be required to take the test as originally scheduled.
- Tests will be announced well in advance, so not knowing about them will not be considered an acceptable excuse.



## Retest Policy:

- Students who score less than 75 on a major grade, whether it be a project or test, have an opportunity to retest.
- To be eligible for retest, students must complete a reteach activity on Schoology (usually with a minimum of 70% accuracy and multiple attempts allowed) as specified by the instructor.
- The retest will be completed on Schoology, and the higher grade between the original test and retest, up to a 75, will be recorded.
- All retesting must be done within 1 week after the original grade is posted, with specific deadlines announced in class and on Schoology.
- *Note: Daily grades, and semester final exams are not eligible for retests.*

### Student Online Expectations:

To ensure a positive online learning experience, students must adhere to FBISD guidelines, follow teacher instructions, use respectful communication, and focus on assignments without accessing games or social media during technology usage in class.

### Technology we will use (websites/apps):

- FBISD uses 1Link, a single sign-on service, to access websites and apps like Schoology, Office 365, Biology textbook, and Gizmos.
- Schoology serves as the main course website, providing the syllabus, class notes, announcements, assignment due dates, helpful links, class expectations, unit schedules, and review sheets.
- Students are expected to maintain their own notes and materials, as not all information will be posted, and complete a mix of paper-based and online/computer-based work.
- To stay updated, students should regularly check Schoology and complete assigned work on time.
- Parents can access Schoology through Family Access on Skyward to stay updated with their child's class activities.
- Please note that official grades and attendance are on Skyward, not Schoology; refer to Skyward ONLY for official assignment and term grades.
- Other apps used are carefully vetted for student security, and activity links will be posted on Schoology.

### Role of Parents/Guardians:

- Parents/Guardians play a vital role in their student's education.
- They are encouraged to initiate contact with the teacher to track student progress.
- Checking Schoology frequently helps parents stay informed about class activities, test/quiz dates, and assignment deadlines.
- Parents are encouraged to check Schoology for assignments, test dates, and monitor their student's progress on Skyward.
- Parents can help with projects or homework and share their knowledge or expertise with their child.
- Schoology provides the current unit schedule with clickable links for easy navigation to each day's lesson folder.

**Note:** You can find helpful information on Schoology. Please use email for communication as it is more efficient for responses than phone calls. If necessary, schedule phone calls or meetings in advance during my conference period, right before school (not before 7 AM), or right after school (concluding by 3:20 PM at the latest), based on mutual agreement and availability.

### Cell Phone Usage Policy



Effective learning requires a focused and engaged classroom environment. To foster academic excellence and ensure students' success, our school has established a cell phone usage policy. While we acknowledge the educational value of cell phones, we also recognize the need to minimize distractions during instructional time. Parents/guardians will be informed of the cell phone policy at the beginning of the academic year, and their support in reinforcing the policy with their children is greatly appreciated. Here are the guidelines for cell phone usage within our classrooms:

#### 1. Permitted Cell Phone Activities:

- Students are allowed to use their cell phones for educational activities when explicitly directed by the teacher. These activities may include research, accessing educational apps, or participating in interactive learning exercises.

#### 2. Restricted Cell Phone Usage:

- Unless otherwise directed: During instructional time, including lectures, class discussions, individual work, and group work, students must keep their cell phones on silent mode or turned off.
- Cell phones should not be a distraction during collaborative group activities, and students are expected to remain focused on the task at hand.

#### 3. Cell Phone Violations:

- First Violation:
  - If a student is found using their cell phone during non-permitted times, the teacher will issue a verbal warning, reminding the student of the policy.
- Second Violation:
  - The educator shall request the student to surrender their mobile device with the intention of mitigating potential distractions.

- The teacher will document the incident, including the date, time, and nature of the violation.
- The student's parent/guardian will be promptly contacted to discuss the repeated violation of the cell phone policy.
- Third Violation
  - If a student persists in defiance, the teacher will issue a disciplinary notice, and further action may be taken by the Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD) administration.
  - The incident will be documented by the teacher, including the date, time, and nature of the violation.
  - The student's parent/guardian will be promptly contacted to discuss the repeated violation of the cell phone policy.

#### **5. Policy Review and Updates:**

- This cell phone usage policy will be periodically reviewed to ensure its effectiveness and may be updated as needed to better serve the educational environment.

By adhering to this cell phone usage policy, we aim to create a conducive learning atmosphere that fosters student engagement, academic growth, and respectful behavior. We believe that this policy will contribute to the overall success of our students and reinforce a culture of responsibility and focus within our school community.



**Anything not covered in this syllabus is subject to the guidelines in the FBISD Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, Austin High School supplement and the teacher's discretion.**