

Introduction to AP Environmental Science

Instructor: Mr. Levy

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Website: CBSD Teacher Site

Location: Room C216

Text: Living in the Environment by G. Tyler Miller, Jr. (17th edition)

Meetings: Five 90-minute blocks

This course is designed to be the equivalent of a college-level semester course in Environmental Science. Environmental Science is an interdisciplinary field of study, and the goal in this class is to integrate what you know about Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics, Math, History, Sociology, etc., to come to an understanding of the natural world and the forces that affect it. It will follow the curriculum recommended by the College Board, and you are encouraged to take the AP exam offered by the College Board in May.

There are several major unifying themes for this course that cut across the many topics included in the study of Environmental Science (from the College Board Course Description):

Science is a process.

Energy conversions underlie all ecological processes.

The Earth itself is one interconnected system.

Humans alter natural systems.

Environmental problems have a cultural and social context.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS:

1) SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR:

Labs: During lab activities, you may be learning to use new equipment or work with chemical reagents or implement a simulation of an environmental system with simple tools. It is important that you approach your work seriously. Use equipment only as it is intended to be used. At the end of a lab or activity, I will allow time for everyone to clean up equipment, materials, and work area so that the room will be ready for the next class. Please make sure that all is as you found it.

Behavior: The Golden Rule, be respectful, demonstrate integrity and honor.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are not to be out on your desk or used during class unless instructed to do so.

2) ASSIGNMENTS:

Chapter Outlines: Each unit will have outlines from the textbook assigned. I would encourage you to complete the outlines, as they can help you to gain a focus of important concepts and ideas. The outlines MUST be hand written and care should be taken to identify key vocabulary and concepts. You may put these outlines in any format that is best aligned with your learning style and you may use any type of notebook.

Lab Reports: Throughout the year we will be performing labs and activities in class. There will be a mix between formal and informal lab write-ups. There is a specific procedure for formal lab reports, which I will go over in class. These are meaningful reports and need to be typed. If you miss a lab, you are responsible for knowing the procedure, results, and conclusions of the experiment.

Current Events: At the conclusion of every unit you are required to submit a current event article summary. The article must have been published within the last month. It should include your educated opinions on the subject. Due days will be determined and assigned the first week of class. This assignment is worth five formative points for each article. This assignment should be e-mailed to me.

Tests: Unit tests will be given at the end of each unit (see syllabus). They will be comprised of multiple choice and free response questions. They will be written to be as similar as possible to the A.P. exam in order to get you used to this type of exam. The multiple choice questions tend to come from a mix of the reading in the textbook and my lectures, where as the free response questions are based on the labs you perform.

Field Trips: There are several possible field trips in this class. This is a great chance to learn about the environment outside of the classroom setting, and apply what you know.

3) ATTENDANCE AND DEADLINES:

Attendance and grades are strongly correlated, especially in an AP course. The intensive nature and pace of the course make every instructional day crucial to your performance in the class and on the exams. Additionally, we work in lab groups frequently. If one or more members are often absent, this hurts the performance and learning of the whole group. If you must be absent, discuss it with me in advance whenever possible.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get the assignment and any missed notes from a classmate. If you missed a scheduled quiz or test, then you must take the test after school on a test make up day. All missed work is entered into the gradebook as MISSING (0 points) until the work is made up. You will have until the next unit test to make the test up. If there are extenuating circumstances, it is your responsibility to make sure that I am aware of them.

4) CONFERENCES AND HELP:

Even the most bright and eager students have questions and confusion. Please do not hesitate to come in for help. If you need help, stop after class and arrange a time for us to meet. I cannot emphasize enough how coming to see me when you have a question can clear things up and make the concept easier.

5) GRADING:

- **Summative Evaluations-** will constitute 100% of your marking period grade.

It is your responsibility to monitor your own progress in the class. I will update Infinite Campus regularly, but I would strongly suggest that you keep a record of your own grades as well.

Your semester grade is determined from the following structure:

Marking Period 1, 45% Marking Period 2, 45% and Final Exam 10%

I expect complete honesty and integrity from each of you. There will be occasions when I expect you to share information, and I will tell you this clearly. Homework may be done with another student so that you may help each other, but you are not allowed to just copy another student's work. In other words, your work needs to be your own. If someone has missed a test, it goes without saying that you will not share what was on that test with him or her. And yes.... they will get a different version of the exam.

6) AP EXAM INFORMATION:

If you take a conscientious approach to this class, you will be prepared to take the AP exam. I do not, however, consider the primary goal of this course to be exam preparation. Much of what we will be doing is designed to give you an appreciation for the practice of Environmental Science and the natural world. Approximately two weeks before the AP Exam May, I have several afternoon review sections that I strongly recommend that you attend if you are planning to take the test.

The best of luck to you in your Environmental Science studies!