Department of Biology Course Outline

SC/BIOL 2050 4.00 Ecology
Fall 2020

Course Description

A study of the interactions between organisms and their abiotic environments, presented in an evolutionary context. Includes processes of evolution, ecosystems and communities, competition, predation, population ecology and current environmental problems such as habitat loss and extinction.

Prerequisites (strictly enforced)

Prerequisite: Both SC/BIOL 1000 3.00 and SC/BIOL 1001 3.00, or SC/ISCI 1110 6.00, or both SC/ISCI 1101 3.00 and SC/ISCI 1102 3.00. Prerequisite or corequisite*: SC/BIOL 2060 3.00.

**you must take BIOL2060 before 2050 or in the same term (i.e. not 2050 in the fall followed by 2060 in the winter).*

Technology Requirements

- **All elements of the course will be conducted remotely. There are no on-campus activities.**
- **The course will run in Toronto time** (i.e. all deadlines, times for synchronous sessions etc. will be in Toronto time).
- You will be asked to submit some assessments to Turnitin and/or Crowdmark.
- Students must have a **laptop or desktop computer** with a microphone (camera recommended).
- Access to reliable high-speed internet is required.
- Some aspects of the course (synchronous) will involve **Zoom** video conferencing software.
- **Some labs involve SimUText software** made by the SimBio company (simbio.com). It is essential that you check you have the system requirements to run this software as it does not work on some devices, including mobile devices and potentially Chromebooks. Please visit https://simutext.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/200170134-Check-Your-Tech- to confirm that the SimUText application will work on your computer, and/or to explore your options if there is a problem.
    - If you have a Chromebook please contact the SimUText support team (below) to determine if your system supports SimUText.
    - For SimUText technical support, including questions about system requirements, please consult the support team at https://simutext.zendesk.com .
    - Purchase of the code to access the SimUText labs should be made directly through the SimBio company at the time of SimUText registration (22 US$ total for the 3 labs). Exchange rate will apply at time of purchase. A credit card is required for purchase. See lab section on Moodle for details.
- I also recommend downloading Office so you can use excel (freely available to students, see: https://uit.yorku.ca/faculty-staff-services/free-microsoft-office-365-education-software/), alternatively you can use google spreadsheets.
- Other software that may be needed/useful in the course (SPSS, PDF X-change PRO) is available for free through myApps: https://uit.yorku.ca/student-services/computer-labs/myapps/#squelch-taas-tab-content-0-0

Course Instructor(s) and Contact Information

Course director: Dr. Birgit Schwarz bsteach@yorku.ca , **please include BIOL 2050 in your subject line.**
I teach several courses and this will allow me to help you more efficiently. Please see email policy below in the course policy section before sending an email.

- Online drop-in hours: TBA

Lab coordinator: TBA b2050lab@yorku.ca (use this email for lab administrative matters e.g. missed labs)

For lab-related academic issues please contact your lab TA (contact info TBA)

We will try to respond to email within 2 working days (not including weekends), but this is not always possible, please be patient. Questions and answers that are of interest to the entire class will be posted on the appropriate discussion board or sent via course announcements if urgent. Please do **not** use Moodle Messenger for contact as this system is not used for this course.
Please remember to exercise email etiquette and be professional in your correspondence:

- **Use your @my.yorku.ca email address** - email from other sources may be filtered out.
- **Please include your name and student ID in your email text, and sign with the name you would like us to use when addressing you**
- Subject Line – Include a brief indication of topic. E.g . "Question about natural selection"

**Please see policy on email etiquette below in course policy section before sending an email*

Schedule

Synchronous sessions (live on Zoom): Mon./Wed. 10-11:30am (access through Zoom link on Moodle page).

- **Weekly, recorded lectures** that introduce content will be provided ahead of time. Please **watch these prior to the synchronous session** and complete the **online quiz** (marked for correctness).
- During the synchronous Zoom sessions we will **apply the knowledge gained from the videos (e.g. to case studies), practice problem solving, address questions**, **work on skills needed for the group project** etc.. Answers to activity questions must be submitted for activity marks (marked for completion only). The synchronous sessions provide a chance for you to interact with your peers and me and get timely feedback on your understanding of the course material. To maintain the proven benefits of interaction and active learning, I highly recommend that you attend the synchronous (live) sessions, but alternative options to submit answers will be available for those that are unable to join.
- Near the end of the week, a **graded 'Question of the Week'** will be posted, which you will need to complete individually to demonstrate your understanding (marked for correctness and clarity, i.e. how well the answer is communicated).

Laboratory Schedule: All labs take place remotely.

Please refer to the university online course information site and the laboratory schedule on the Moodle site for the course. Times for synchronous laboratory sessions and Zoom links vary by lab section and some weeks do not have synchronous sessions. We recommend attending the synchronous sessions to get help from TAs, but we will do our best to provide asynchronous alternatives.

Evaluation

LECTURE:

Reading quizzes (individual)	10%	**Weekly;** Typically released on Tuesday and typically due the following Sunday
Activities (collaborative/individual)	10%	**Weekly;** Typically released on Monday (and/or Wednesday) and typically due on Thursday
Question of the week (individual)	15%	**Weekly;** Typically released on Friday and typically due the following Wednesday
Integrative questions (individual)	5%	**Due Sun. Oct. 18 & Sun. Nov. 15**
Final Integrative questions (individual)	10%	**Final exam period**, scheduled by Registrar's Office
Podcast project (collaborative)	15%	• **Group contract due: Wed. Oct. 7** • **Podcast due: Wed. Dec. 2** (additional deadlines for milestones may apply, see assignment instructions on Moodle)

LABS:

Lab quiz (covers lab 1) (individual)	3%	**Due Mon. Sep. 28**
Lab 2 (part 1) Simbio graded Questions (individual)	4%	**Lab 2 (Simbio Beh. Ecol. Interactive chapter) part 1 due Mon. Oct. 5, 10am**
Laboratory reports (individual, some collaboration permitted for lab 2, part 2)	• Lab 2 (part 2): 14% • Lab 3: 10% • Lab 4: 4%	• **Lab 2 (Beh. Ecol.) part 2 due Mon. Dec. 7** (additional deadlines for milestones may apply) • **Lab 3 (Trees & Simbio disturb.) due Mon. Nov. 2** • **Lab 4 (Simbio Patchy Prairies) due Mon. Nov. 23**

PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE STRUCTURE AND WEEKLY DEADLINES POSTED ON MOODLE! Please note that the course runs on Toronto time, this also applies to all deadlines!

Broadly a typical week would usually consist of the following:

- **Pre-class content**: videos, readings etc. (to be completed prior to the start of the week)
- **Online reading quiz** (typically due Sundays before the Monday class, some exceptions may apply)
- **Activities:** two options to complete *either*
  - During synchronous zoom sessions during scheduled lecture time slot (usually together with class mates as a team) *or*
  - Asynchronously (instructions on Moodle, due Thursdays)
- **Question of the week** (due the following Wednesday)

As indicated in the table above there will also be **integrative questions** (typically answering these questions would require integrating concepts from several topics (weeks) of the course). Detailed information on the podcast project and lab reports will be posted on Moodle.

Reading quizzes:

- Will be time-limited and are **based on the material you are asked to complete prior to the synchronous sessions** – this can be videos, readings etc.
- Most questions will be multiple choice and are **marked for correctness** (some exceptions may apply to certain questions, such as what you found most confusing).
- You have two attempts for each quiz and only the higher one counts.
- When I calculate your quiz grade**, I will drop the 3 quizzes with the lowest percentage points, including 0's.** This also accounts for missed quizzes for any reason, including missing the deadline, technological/internet problems, illness etc.. and means I cannot grant additional exemptions.
- Because quizzes are there to ensure you are prepared for the coming week's activities, they can not be submitted late, therefore grace days can **NOT** be applied to reading quizzes (see course policy section for detailed information on grace days).

Activities grade:

- **Will be marked for participation:** i.e, no penalty for submitting an incorrect answer, but **in order to receive participation points you have to make a reasonable effort at answering all questions. For collaborative team submissions you must have made substantial contributions.** Deductions or no points may be given if little effort was made (e.g. missing answers to some questions etc.)
- Additional activities, e.g. reflections may be posted from time to time (due dates for these may vary).
- When I calculate your activities grade**, I will drop 30% of points (i.e. you only have to reach 70% to get the full activity points)**. This is to account for missed activities for any reason, including missing the deadline, technological/internet problems, illness etc.. This means I cannot grant additional exemptions as participation is a crucial component of this course.
- Grace days cannot be applied to Activities (see course policy section)

Questions of the week and integrative questions:

- These will normally be **short-answer questions** and you will normally have at least a few days from when they are posted to when they are due. Submission will likely be through Crowdmark & Turnitin.
- **Open-book, but the answers MUST be in your own words, you cannot copy anything from anyone else, nor from the internet, textbooks or course slides.** Remember this is an individual assessment!
- No electronic file-sharing: **You are not permitted to show your answers to anyone or post them anywhere** (doing so is considered aiding and abetting and a **breach of academic honesty**)
- If you have discussed the questions with other people from the course (e.g. in your study group) you **MUST** note their names in your submission (but remember not to copy from each other).
- When calculating your question of the week grade, I will drop the three questions with the lowest points, including 0's (i.e. you can miss three weekly questions without penalty). Please note: this does not apply to the integrative questions, these cannot be missed!
- Grace days apply to questions of the week and mid-way integrative questions, but not the final integrative questions (see course policy section)

Podcast project:

- This is a **team project**. Please see assignment instructions on Moodle for details.
- Because it is a team project, grace days can **NOT** be applied.

Labs:

- **Most labs are online labs.** See posted lab schedule for details on synchronous sessions and deadlines.
- For lab 2 and a bonus activity, we encourage you to collect data in your local area, but there will be online alternatives for those that cannot conduct local fieldwork or feel unsafe doing so for any reason.
- Grace days only apply to final lab reports and the lab quiz on lab 1 (see course policy section)

A note on academic integrity:

- **Electronic file-sharing is not permitted.** Some exceptions apply, e.g. sharing within your team to complete assignments/activities that are specifically designated as collaborative or if instructed to do so to receive feedback or for sharing your own notes from synchronous sessions with students currently enrolled in the course who missed the session, or as note-taker for students with accommodations. Outside of that electronic sharing of files (including but not limited to lab reports, assignments, exam questions etc.) is not permitted. If you are unsure check with us before sharing.
- **Use of services (e.g. essay writing/editing or file-sharing websites or private services) that complete your assignments for you or provide "model answers" is strictly forbidden.** It should be obvious that it is never ok to pay someone to complete your course work for you, but some of the commercial providers are sneaky and will try to make it sound legitimate even though it is not – don't fall for it! Please remember: Not only is this unfair to your peers and detrimental to your learning, you are risking academic honesty charges, and leaving yourself open to blackmail for years to come (do you really want this to come back and haunt you when you are starting your career?), potentially even identity theft if you give them your login information as they will be able to access all your student accounts that may include such information as your SIN, birth date, address etc..

Note: While I try to avoid this as much as possible, final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles should this become necessary

Important Dates

Lectures	Start Wed Sept 9, last lecture: Mon Dec 7
Labs	Please see the detailed lab schedule on Moodle. Note that the first due date is Sep. 28.
Weekly deadlines, lab and assignment deadlines	See Evaluation section and Moodle course website
Integrative questions	Due Sun. Oct. 18 & Sun. Nov. 15
Final Integrative questions	Will be due during the fall examination period, Dec. 9-23. The registrar's office schedules these and announces the date and time.
Fall reading week	Oct. 10-16
Drop deadline: Last day to drop course without receiving a grade	Nov. 6
Course Withdrawal Period: (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript)	Nov. 7 - Dec. 8

NOTE: for additional important dates such as holidays, refer to the "Important Dates" section of the Registrar's Website: https://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/fw20

Resources

Required Textbook:

W. D. Bowman & S. D. Hacker 2020. Ecology. **5th edition,** Sinauer Associates; Oxford University Press.
Loose-leaf version: LL ISBN: 9781605359229
Bound version: ISBN-13 9781605359212
e-book rental: e-ISBN: 9781605359236

IMPORTANT: You really need the access code to the online resources for this textbook (5th edition).

The textbook and associated access code to online resources are **required**. Please ensure you purchase the **5th edition**. Two different versions (loose-leaf and bound) are available through the York University bookstore. An e-book rental version is also available (~$60 for 180 days), please be aware that this is a rental and you will loose access after the specified time frame**. Please note that used textbooks and other editions will not allow you to access the online resources which are required in this course**. Please note that this may also affect the re-sale value of this book at York University so I recommend going with the e-book rental (cheapest option) or the loose-leaf version.

Lab materials:

Lab instructions will be available on the Moodle website. **Please read them carefully and start well ahead of the deadlines.** You will have to purchase an access code to three online SimBio activities (22 US$ total for the 3 labs) and download these onto your own laptop or desktop. You can purchase access to the SimUText labs directly through the SimBio company at the time of SimUText registration (22 US$ total for the 3 labs). Exchange rate will apply at time of purchase. A credit card is required for purchase. See lab section on Moodle for details.

Course Moodle Site (http://moodle.yorku.ca):

- Please check this course Moodle site often for important information and updates.
- **Make sure you receive course announcements to your email & check your email often** (daily)
- Pre-recorded lectures, quizzes, non-textbook readings, assignment and lab instructions will be posted on the Moodle site (unless otherwise indicated)

Please note: **ALL course materials are copyrighted**. This includes but is not limited to slides, videos, assignment or lab instructions, quizzes, questions of the week, integrative questions, in-class activities etc.. **You do NOT have the right to post these anywhere or share them with anyone outside of this course**. Please remember to also be respectful of each other's and my privacy and not share any conversations, recordings etc. outside of this course.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain how populations can change over time, differentiating between the different evolutionary mechanisms that drive this change.
2. Explain how natural selection and evolutionary change interact with the environment and ecological processes and how these interactions lead to adaptations.
3. Illustrate how natural selection and trade-offs shape organisms, their life history traits and behaviours, using concrete examples.
4. Describe how and why climatic conditions vary across the earth and analyze how these affect the distribution and characteristics of populations, communities, ecosystems and biomes.
5. Predict how various factors affect population sizes, apply appropriate population growth models and evaluate different ways of estimating population sizes.
6. Describe how ecosystems function, species' roles and interactions within communities and ecosystems, how energy and chemical elements are transferred within ecosystems and how ecosystems can change over time.
7. Explain the concept of biodiversity, including how it is estimated, and the factors influencing species abundances and distributions, and why these matter in a conservation context.
8. Apply ecological principles to contemporary environmental issues, such as loss of habitat and biodiversity, pollution and climate change and make appropriate conservation-related recommendations.
9. Apply knowledge of ecological concepts to real-life examples, case studies, datasets and models, including designing appropriate studies or experiments, making predictions, interpreting data and graphs and drawing conclusions.
10. Effectively communicate scientific concepts and results to different audiences, including the general public.
11. Work collaboratively to solve problems and jointly create a product (i.e. a podcast, answer to a problem, etc.)
12. Find, summarize and critically discuss primary research literature.
13. Apply the process of scientific inquiry to ecological problems, including hypothesis testing, data collection, data analysis and visualization, interpretation of results, and reporting.

Course Content

There are now more than 7.5 billion people on Earth – more than two and a half times the number that existed in 1960. Since people take up space, the rate at which natural habitats are being lost has skyrocketed. Species extinction rates mirror this. At the same time, emissions of greenhouse gases are causing global climate change. What does this all mean and how do we make sense of it?

Ecology is the study of biology at the individual, population, community and ecosystem levels, focusing on interactions of organisms with one another other and with their abiotic environment. Ecologists try to understand what determines the patterns of distribution and abundance of organisms. Ecologists also aim to predict how ecosystems respond to "disturbance". The central ideas, theories and principles of ecology are, therefore, directly relevant to the issues described above.

We will consider: approaches to the study of ecology; the link between ecology and evolution; adaptations of animals and plants; how selective pressures and trade-offs shape life histories and behaviours; properties of populations; population growth; species interactions such as competition, predation and mutualism; community structure and dynamics; factors that influence species richness and biodiversity; energy flux and nutrient cycling in ecosystems; sustainability; the biodiversity crisis; and the impact of climate change on biodiversity.

As in all courses, you are expected to spend time beyond the regular course hours in preparation, review, studying, completing assignments etc., related to the course.

Experiential Education and E-Learning

- Labs: designing an ecological study, collecting, analyzing and interpreting original data. Using computer simulations to test ecological hypotheses.
- Teamwork in activities (e.g. simulations, worksheets, case studies) and podcast assignment
- Online quizzes, videos, labs

Other Information

Labs:

Most labs are online. Lab instructions and/or lab simulations will typically be available in advance of the week they are due in. You are strongly encouraged to look at the instructions as soon as they are available to plan out your time – most labs require significant amounts of time to complete them. We also strongly recommend to complete them early so you have sufficient time to ask your TAs for help in case you need it. One lab (and possibly one bonus activity) can be conducted by doing fieldwork in your local environment. Please follow all safety recommendations posted on the Moodle site and keep your own safety in mind at all times - only conduct fieldwork if it is safe for you to do so and in accordance with all local regulations and laws. Please note that there are online alternatives for anyone who cannot conduct their own fieldwork (for any reason, you do not have to justify why).

You will be working on your independent lab 2, part 2 throughout the term. You will conduct your own small research study, which will take a significant portion of your time for the lab component of this course. I **strongly recommend starting on lab 2 (independent project) as soon as possible** and start collecting your data for part 2 early on as it may be very difficult to do fieldwork and find your study subjects as it gets colder!

About active learning and teamwork

I hope you actively participate in this course. Not only have studies found that active participation is a more effective learning strategy than passive listening, but I have also found that the various activities are the best way to engage my students in learning the material and making it more fun. The podcast as a team project will give you a chance to practice your teamwork skills. Being able to communicate and work with others are important skills that are very much sought-after by employers. Working collaboratively is an official learning outcome for this course so **working in a team for the podcast project is required**, not optional! If you have concerns or would like to give feedback on a particular activity or have any questions – please come and talk to me. I hope we can all work together in a respectful, fun and academically stimulating environment – even if it is online!

What can you do to do well in this course?

My first advice would be not to overcommit. To complete it successfully, this course requires regular participation in the lecture and lab components, including a significant amount of time investment outside of formal class hours. My other advice is to:

- Come with an open mind and prepared for active participation
- Read all announcements, assignment, lab instructions and grading criteria carefully
- Read, prepare, think critically about the material & practice problem solving
- Talk about the course material with others (your peers, TA's, me, even your friends and family) as much as possible. Ask questions, discuss & practice!!!
- Take charge of your learning: consciously plan your steps and reflect on your learning strategies (are they working? Where might you need to modify your approach?)
- Take care of yourself: get enough sleep, eat healthy foods, exercise & take breaks – don't underestimate the difference this makes!
- Get help early if you need it – there are lots of resources and services available at York University, make use of them!
- For more tips check out the resource section that I created on Moodle

Course Policies

I know that this part might seem really boring, but it's REALLY important that you read it ahead of time so that you are familiar with policies now rather than after the fact.

Course Contacts:

- **Dr. Birgit Schwarz: bsteach@yorku.ca** : for matters relating to lectures and lecture assessments
- **b2050lab@yorku.ca** : for lab administrative matters (missed labs, access issues)
- **Your TA** (contact info TBA): for academic questions about labs

Email etiquette:

Meant to help foster a respectful and efficient correspondence, which ultimately benefits everyone!

- Please make sure to use your Yorku email address when emailing me or TA's as other email addresses are filtered out by the university and will not reach us. Don't use the Moodle emailing system.
- Subject line: please begin with "BIOL 2050", followed by a brief, but reasonably detailed, indication of the subject of your email (e.g., "question about lecture 3", "missed lab", etc.).
- If your question is about course material, please post in the forum on Moodle as others may have the same/similar questions, or ask it during a synchronous class session!
- Please remember to include your name and student ID in the text of your email and sign your email with the name you would like to be addressed by (so we know what name to use when we respond!).
- Whether you email me, TA's or classmates, please remember that this is a professional environment, so please be respectful and avoid e.g. all CAPS or text-messaging language, which can also make it very hard to read and understand your message.
- Response time: I will do my best to respond within 48 hours (2 work days, not including weekends), please be patient (remember there are many of you, but only one of me).
    - Please avoid re-sending your email as this just puts it in with the more recent emails, resulting in further delays in responding.
- Before emailing I ask that you consider if you should consult another resource first (e.g. the TA if it is a question related to lab content, or Moodle or the syllabus if it is a technical/policy question) and check the Moodle site to see if your question has already been addressed!

Academic Integrity:

- **Electronic file-sharing is not permitted.** Some exceptions apply, such as for sharing within your team for the purpose of completing assignments or activities that are specifically designated as collaborative or if instructed to do so to receive feedback or for sharing your own notes from synchronous sessions with students currently enrolled in the course who missed the session, or as note-taker for students with accommodations. Outside of that electronic sharing of files (including but not limited to lab reports, assignments, exam questions etc.) is not permitted. If you are unsure whether sharing is ok in your particular circumstance check with us before sharing.
- **You cannot post or share assessment questions or answers anywhere.** Doing so is considered aiding and abetting and a breach of academic honesty.
- **Use of services (including but not limited to essay writing/editing or file-sharing websites, private tutoring companies or private services) that complete your assignments for you or provide "model answers" is strictly forbidden.** Some private tutoring companies claim an affiliation with York University, but this is not true and York University takes any resulting breaches of copyright and/or academic honesty very seriously with serious consequences for the involved individuals – see the official York University statement by the Provost and Vice-President Academic https://vpap.info.yorku.ca/2020/07/statement-regarding-private-tutoring-companies-that-claim-an-affiliation-with-york-university/
- **Your work must be your own: Lab reports, and answers to assessment questions MUST be in your own words, you cannot copy anything from anyone else, nor from the internet, textbooks or course slides.** Copying a sentence, paragraph or more and then just changing some of the words is still considered plagiarism! If you copied from someone else it is not your own work and thought process! Go to the Spark Academic Integrity site if you need a reminder on what is ok and what is not: https://spark.library.yorku.ca/academic-integrity-what-is-academic-integrity/ and https://spark.library.yorku.ca/creating-bibliographies-plagiarism/

- If you have discussed assessment questions with other people from the course (e.g. in your study group) you **MUST** note their names in your submission (but remember not to copy from each other).

Copyright and Intellectual Property:

- Images and material presented throughout the course are subject to Canadian copyright law.
- **Lectures and other course materials are designed for use as part of this course at York University only and are the intellectual property of the instructor. They cannot be distributed without explicit written permission**. **ALL course materials are copyrighted**. This includes but is not limited to slides, videos and lecture recordings, recordings of synchronous class or lab sessions, assignment or lab instructions, quizzes, questions of the week, integrative questions, in-class activities etc.. **You do NOT have the right to post these anywhere or share them with anyone outside of this course**. Please remember to also be respectful of each other's, the TAs and my privacy and not share any conversations, recordings etc. outside of this course. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, photos etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law or permission for their use in this course has been obtained from the copyright holder.
- Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct under York's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty and/or legal consequences for violation of copyright law if copyright law has been violated.

Missed assessments or other course work:

- In designing this course, I have built-in a lot of flexibility to accommodate a multitude of different circumstances (including illness, accidentally missing a deadline, technical difficulties, other obligations) and give everyone a chance to complete this course successfully. E.g. you normally have at least several days to complete quizzes, assignments, labs, assessment questions etc. and most components allow you to miss the occasional assessment without penalty and/or provide grace days for the occasional late submission. As such, **there should be no need for additional exceptions (including for illness) and therefore I will not provide these.** If you feel that there are extenuating circumstances in your case (e.g. you were ill for an exceptionally long time), you must contact me as soon as possible so we can try to find a solution (normally within 2 days of the missed deadline and at the latest as soon as you are capable of participating again). Please note that the format of any make-up assignment can differ from the original format (e.g. instead of a written answer to a question it could be an oral exam).
- **If you miss the FINAL INTEGRATIVE QUESTIONS** you must email me within one week of the date of the final integrative questions with a completed DSA attached (bsteach@yorku.ca), and petition your home faculty for deferred standing. It is the Petition Committee's decision whether deferred standing is granted; if it is, the committee will set the deadline for writing the deferred exam. Denied petitions will result in a zero on this assessment.
    - **The format of the make-up assignment can differ from the original final integrative question format, e.g. it could be an oral exam.**

Religious observance days:

- Should the dates for assessments pose a conflict with a religious observance day for your particular religion, please complete an **Examination Accommodation Agreement Form**, available at https://secure.students.yorku.ca/pdf/religious-accommodation-agreement-final-examinations.pdf and submit it to me **at least 3 weeks before the date of the test.** This should not apply to most coursework since you are given several days to complete it.

Accommodations

- Please email CDS Accommodation letters to me by Sept. 25 (bsteach@yorku.ca), please put "Accommodations" in the subject line.
- I have designed the course in a way that should address many accommodations (e.g. providing lots of time, typically several days, for assessments, and grace days), but some components may need modifications (e.g. timed quizzes) so please make sure to send me your accommodations letter.
- If you feel that there are extenuating circumstances that may interfere with your ability to successfully complete the course requirements, I encourage you to discuss the matter with me **as soon as possible**.

- **Please note:** "Senate policy states that students are expected to monitor their progress in courses, taking into account their personal and academic circumstances, and to make the necessary adjustments to their workload to meet the requirements and deadlines." (from Senate Policy of Students' Responsibilities in the Petition/Appeal Processes). **The drop deadline is November 6, 2020.**
- Students who require reasonable accommodations in resources or evaluation methods are encouraged to consult with the Student Accessibility Services & ensure that requests for appropriate accommodations are arranged with the me early in the term.

Turnitin.com:

- In this course, you will be asked to submit electronic copies of some answers to assessment questions and lab reports to Turnitin.com (likely through the Moodle site). This will ensure that your hard work, once added to the database, cannot be plagiarized in the future by students at any university!

Grading, 'grace' days and late penalties:

- In order to be fair and consistent to the entire class, individual grades and grading schemes are not negotiable and **individual "extra credit" assignments are not provided at any point during or after the course.** Please only contact me about a grade if there is a clear error (calculation, clerical, etc.) within two weeks of the grade being made available to you.
- If you think an assignment was marked incorrectly you must submit a written paragraph detailing your rationale (based on academic grounds*), using the appropriate form posted on Moodle to me no sooner than 2 days and no later than two weeks after receiving your mark for the assessment in question. Emails without the proper form or requests that are not based on academic grounds*, or early/late requests will not receive a response. **NOTE: re-marking can result in the mark being raised, confirmed, or lowered, and marking rubrics are not negotiable.**
- I understand that these are unprecedented and in many ways unpredictable times that call for some flexibility. Life happens, and unexpected things sometimes come up or multiple deadlines in different courses make it difficult to complete things on time. I am therefore offering a total **of 5 grace days for specific assessments** (see below) **in the lecture section and 5 grace days for lab reports.** This means you can submit some assignments late without receiving a late penalty. You have 5 days total for the lecture section and 5 days total for the lab section and can use these as you wish, e.g. for the lecture section you could submit ONE assignment FIVE days late OR each of FIVE assignments ONE day late, or one assignment two days late and another one three days late etc.. The following rules apply:
    - You cannot transfer any lecture grace days to the lab portion or vice versa.
    - For the lecture section **you can use grace days for weekly and integrative questions during the term (and nothing else). They cannot be used for the final integrative questions** due to university regulations.
    - For the lab section **you can use grace days for final lab reports and the lab 1 quiz** (e.g. you cannot use them for part-way milestones deadlines worth bonus points etc.).
    - **Grace days will automatically be applied, please don't email to ask permission to use them.**
    - It is your responsibility to keep track of how many grace days you already used.
    - **I count in calendar days: if you submit e.g. 1 hour late, it still counts as one day, weekend days also count.**
    - You get a total of 5 grace days for the lecture part and 5 grace days for the lab part for the entire term, so once these are used up any assignments that are late will not be accepted or incur the late penalty.
    - **Questions of the week or integrative questions will not be accepted after the grace days have passed or are used up**. If you submit these afterwards they will not be marked and you will not receive points (this is due to our marking schedule and for fairness as you cannot submit once others have received feedback as this would create an unfair advantage. It is also important to keep on track throughout the course.)
- Where grace days do not apply or if you have already used your assignment grace days, **a penalty of 10% per calendar day will apply to all material handed in late**. Since the 'grace' days allow for some flexibility, I will strictly apply the late penalty, so choose wisely and please do not ask me for further exceptions as this would be unfair to everybody else. **Quizzes and activities can not be handed in late** but have another form of flexibility built-in (you can miss some and still get full points, see section on evaluation above). As noted, questions of the week or integrative questions will not be accepted after

the grace days have passed or are used up (i.e. the late penalty for these is 100% once the grace days are used up/have passed).

Online Netiquette and code of conduct:

- We encourage you to participate actively in the course and engage with your peers, me and your TAs in various ways throughout the course, e.g. in synchronous sessions, in the online Moodle discussion forums, etc.. I expect you to keep your discussions polite and respectful. Please follow the rules:
    - First and foremost remember that it is a human being your messages are going to, even if all you are seeing is a computer screen.
    - Please be respectful and professional: We provide space for you to discuss course material with your classmates. Posts containing personal insults/attacks/intimidation/inappropriate language/profanity will be removed. Everyone has a right to be in this course, to feel welcome and to be treated with respect.
    - Please post only material relevant to BIOL 2050/Biology. Other posts are likely to be deleted. Exceptions apply to forums specifically dedicated to socializing.
    - Be kind, even if someone has made a mistake. If you want to give feedback e.g. on someone's answer to a practice question, do it nicely and constructively.
    - While it is appropriate to engage in debate/discourse on biological topics, such discussions should be respectful and evidence-based. Evidence should be from trusted sources—consult with the library or with me if you are not sure. (See: http://www.yorku.ca/webclass/module4a.html)
    - Any posts that appear to violate our code of conduct may be edited, moved to a hidden forum, or deleted at the discretion of instructors/moderators. If posts give indications of violations of academic honesty or the York University Student Code of Conduct (http://www.yorku.ca/oscr/codeofrr.html) further action will be taken.
    - If you notice any inappropriate threads/posts please contact me as soon as possible.
    - You cannot share any materials from the course outside the course without explicit, written permission, this includes posts or other work by your peers.

Disclaimer: While I will attempt to remove/edit objectionable/inappropriate material as soon as it comes to my attention, I may not be able to review every post in a timely manner (remember there is only one of me). Forum posts express the views and opinions of the post's author and not the moderators/instructors (except for posts by these people) and they cannot be held liable.

**Academic grounds means you make an academic argument for why your answer is correct – statements such as "this grade does not reflect my knowledge" or "I really studied hard and I deserve a better grade" are not academic grounds*

University Policies

Academic Honesty and Integrity

York students are required to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and they are subject to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/). The Policy affirms the responsibility of faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to abide by such standards.

There is also an academic integrity website with comprehensive information about academic honesty and how to find resources at York to help improve students' research and writing skills, and cope with University life. Students are expected to review the materials on the Academic Integrity website at - http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/

Important A note from the Faculty of Science Committee on Examinations and Academic Standards: Numerous students in Faculty of Science courses have been charged with academic misconduct when materials they uploaded to third party repository sites (e.g. Course Hero, One Class, etc.) were taken and used by unknown students in later offerings of the course. The Faculty's Committee on Examinations and Academic Standards (CEAS) found in these cases that the burden of proof in a charge of aiding and abetting had been met, since the uploading students had been found in all cases to be willfully blind to the reasonable likelihood of supporting plagiarism in this manner. Accordingly, to avoid this risk, students are urged not to upload their

work to these sites. Whenever a student submits work obtained through Course Hero or One Class, the submitting student will be charged with plagiarism and the uploading student will be charged with aiding and abetting.

Note also that exams, tests, and other assignments are the copyrighted works of the professor assigning them, whether copyright is overtly claimed or not (i.e. whether the © is used or not). Scanning these documents constitutes copying, which is a breach of Canadian copyright law, and the breach is aggravated when scans are shared or uploaded to third party repository sites.

Access/Disability

York University is committed to principles of respect, inclusion and equality of all persons with disabilities across campus. The University provides services for students with disabilities (including physical, medical, learning and psychiatric disabilities) needing accommodation related to teaching and evaluation methods/materials. These services are made available to students in all Faculties and programs at York University. Student's in need of these services are asked to register with disability services as early as possible to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation can be provided with advance notice. You are encouraged to schedule a time early in the term to meet with each professor to discuss your accommodation needs. Please note that registering with disabilities services and discussing your needs with your professors is necessary to avoid any impediment to receiving the necessary academic accommodations to meet your needs. Additional information is available at the following websites:
Counselling & Disability Services - http://cds.info.yorku.ca/
Counselling & Disability Services at Glendon - https://www.glendon.yorku.ca/counselling/
York Accessibility Hub - http://accessibilityhub.info.yorku.ca/

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for an in-class test or examination pose such a conflict for you, contact the Course Director within the first three weeks of class. Similarly, should an assignment to be completed in a lab, practicum placement, workshop, etc., scheduled later in the term pose such a conflict, contact the Course director immediately. Please note that to arrange an alternative date or time for an examination scheduled in the formal examination periods (December and April/May), students must complete and submit an Examination Accommodation Form at least 3 weeks before the exam period begins. The form can be obtained from Student Client Services, Student Services Centre or online at
http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/exam_accommodation.pdf

Student Conduct in Academic Situations

Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy and mutual respect. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the instructor to maintain an appropriate academic atmosphere in the classroom and other academic settings, and the responsibility of the student to cooperate in that endeavour. Further, the instructor is the best person to decide, in the first instance, whether such an atmosphere is present in the class. The policy and procedures governing disruptive and/or harassing behaviour by students in academic situations is available at - http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/disruptive-andor-harassing-behaviour-in-academic-situations-senate-policy/

I wish you great success in BIOL 2050!

If you need any help, please do not hesitate to contact me (or the lab coordinator or your TA, depending on your question).