

**BIOLOGY 111: ORIENTATION TO BIOLOGY
SYLLABUS AND GRADING POLICY**

Fall 2007
(Thursday 3-5pm)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michael Lizotte, Halsey 256, 424-0848, lizotte@uwosh.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Wed. 1:00-1:50pm and 4:00-5:00pm; or by appointment.

REQUIRED TEXTS: John Janovy (“JJ1”). 2004. *On Becoming a Biologist*. U. Nebraska Press, 2nd ed., 160 pgs
John Janovy (“JJ2”). 2006. *Outwitting College Professors: A Practical Guide to the Secrets of the System*, 82 pgs (free download at <http://bsweb.unl.edu/labs/janovy/> with suggested donation on pg. 3).

RECOMMENDED TEXT: Victoria McMillan. *Writing Papers in the Biological Sciences*. (any recent edition).

SCHEDULE:

Week	Topics	Text Readings
Sep 6	Course goals and requirements	
Sep 13	Why are we biologists? Essay due; Top 3 Careers List Due	JJ1 pp. i-xiv, 1-21
Sep 20	How do we become biologists? Assign career groups	JJ1 pp. 21-41; JJ2 pp. 70-74
Sep 27	Biology Careers; UWO Career Services	JJ2 pp. 37-43
Oct 4	Making a Living; Outline due; Bibliography due	JJ1 pp. 93-117
Oct 11	Influences for biologists; citing literature	JJ1 pp.42-68 & 145-153 Wertheim article
Oct 18	Dept. Facility Tours; Career Review Paper due	
Oct 25	Responsibilities; Ethics	JJ1 pp. 118-143; Case study handouts
Nov 1	Presentation Skills; Resume and Cover Letter Writing	JJ1 61-65
Nov 8	Career Presentations	
Nov 15	Career Presentations; Resumes/Letter due	
Nov 22	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Nov 29	Education; Course planning	JJ1 pp. 69-92; JJ2 pp. 44-49
Dec 6	Advising sessions	
Dec 13	Advising sessions; Course Plan due	

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Grade Scale: 91-100% = A, 87-90% = AB, 82-86% = B, 78-81% = BC, 73-77% = C, 69-72% = CD, 60-68% = D, and 59% or less = F. A curve will be used for final grades, if necessary.

Assignment types and their relative weights in determining final grades will be:

Essay = 10%	Career Presentation = 10%
Top three Careers = 5%	Resumes/Letter = 10%
Outline/Bibliography = 5%	Course Plan = 15%
Career Review Paper = 20%	Participation = 25%

Essay: Provide a one-page explanation of why you are choosing to study biology and why you are considering a career in this field. Write prose in complete sentences and paragraphs. I expect you to use the whole page, but not a line more. The goal in essay writing is a concise response with maximum impact. Editing is critical for accomplishing these goals, and a strict page length is one way I can be relatively certain that you are not handing in a first draft.

Top Three Careers List: You will make a list of three different careers that you are willing to research for the review paper and presentation. Write a one sentence description for each. At least one of your career choices must be possible with only a B.S. degree. Depending on how much overlap among classmates, specialties may or may not be considered different. Using a class exercise designed to maximize the variety of careers we will discuss in class, we will determine which of your choices you will report on.

Outline/Bibliography: This is the first stage of research on a biology-related career. The outline will pertain to the Career Presentation, and should demonstrate how you will organize that presentation to cover the careers amongst group members. The Bibliography will be a list, properly formatted, of the applicable print and web-based sources. This assignment is a group project, but the contributions of each member should be labeled.

Career Research Paper: The length will be 2 to 3 pages (plus literature cited and any tables and figures). If you feel the need to include more than 2 pages of tables or figures, see me for advice on selecting or condensing data. The following career issues *should be addressed*:

- ❑ general duties and tasks (e.g. from job descriptions),
- ❑ work conditions (workplaces, stresses, culture),
- ❑ requirements (education; experience; physical, organizational, or other capabilities),
- ❑ potential employers (general sectors, specific examples of companies, non-profits, governments, etc.),
- ❑ job potential (e.g., number of workers or jobs in WI or U.S.A.; future predictions),
- ❑ earnings (wages, salaries, fringe benefits), and a
- ❑ summary (highlighting *advantages* AND *disadvantages* of this career).

Career Presentation: You will work with your Career Study Group to organize a group presentation in a general career area (e.g. health, environment, agriculture, food/fiber/drug manufacturing, education, etc.). You will be graded on topic organization, presentation style, visual aids, and comprehension of the material.

Resumes and Cover Letter: You will construct two resume versions: current and “dream”. The first will present your current qualifications. The second will be a version you need to have for applying for your dream job. The “dream” resume will be accompanied by a cover letter applying to a real job advertisement. To complete the assignment, you will hand in the following: 1) current resume; 2) “dream resume”; 3) copy/text of job advertisement (identifying source and date); and 4) cover letter to accompany your dream resume in applying for this job. NOTE: you are not limited to the career you have been researching.

Course Plan: Write a plan based on your educational goals and the UW Oshkosh degree requirements and course availability. The assignment is to: 1) write a single paragraph explaining your career goals and how you would complete a degree at UW Oshkosh, specifically defending your choices of program (major, emphasis, minor, second major, certificates, etc.) and elective courses; and 2) attach a table showing the courses you would take each semester (past and future) through to graduation.

Participation will be based primarily on your contribution to class discussions. From the assigned readings, come prepared with several questions or comments. Share your writing and research

with the class. Be an active audience member during presentations and facility tours. I will record participation each class.

GENERAL RULES AND ADVICE ON WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: At the top of the page, on a single line, give your name, date, and the assignment (e.g. “Essay”). The formatting should be 1.25-inch margins, 12-point type, double-space. Clarity, brevity, grammar, and spelling always count in communication. Improving clarity and brevity in your writing usually requires editing and rewriting; if you cannot critique your own writing, then find a peer who will. To improve grammar and spelling in your writing, you can use the old-fashioned methods using style books and dictionaries, or you will find grammar and spell checkers on the word processing software provided by the university for your use. The English Department also provides a Writing Center (see www.english.uwosh.edu/wcenter for location, hours and services) that has helped some students in this course make rapid improvement. I also recommend a writing manual by Victoria McMillan (2001) *Writing Papers in the Biological Sciences* (especially Chapters 5, 6, 7, 10) that is used in some biology courses.

MAKEUP AND LATE WORK POLICIES: Written assignments will be accepted late for up to half credit. No work will be accepted after the last day of classes without my permission. I accept revisions of written assignments for up to 90% of full credit. The university recognizes a short list of excused absences (e.g. scheduled academic or athletic contests; bereavement). Determining whether an absence is excused is the purview of the Dean of Students, not me. To be excused for a scheduled class for university activities, you **MUST** provide me with a letter from the responsible advisor/coach at least one week before the event. Requests for deadline extensions based on an excused absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

CHEATING POLICY: Cheating on exams, plagiarizing material, or other academic misconduct described in the UWO Student Discipline Code could result an F grade for the course and other disciplinary action.