

## WEISS HIGH SCHOOL AP BIOLOGY 2019-2020



**Teacher Name:** Alfred Kapa

**Room Number:** D251

**Conference Periods:** 4<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>

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**Study Hall and Tutoring Time:** Mornings: by appointment only Afternoon: Monday - Thursday 4:30PM – 5:00PM

In Biology, students conduct field and laboratory investigations, use scientific methods during investigations, and make informed decisions using critical-thinking and scientific problem-solving. Students in Biology study a variety of topics that include: structures and functions of cells and viruses; growth and development of organisms; cells, tissues, and organs; nucleic acids and genetics; biological evolution; taxonomy; metabolism and energy transfers in living organisms; living systems; homeostasis; ecosystems; and plants and the environment.

Science is a way of learning about the natural world. Students should know how science has built a vast body of changing and increasing knowledge described by physical, mathematical, and conceptual models, and also should know that science may not answer all questions.

### Required Materials:

3 Ring Binder	1 blue or black pen	5 dividers
Notebook paper OR large spiral	Pencils	2 Red pen for grading

### Lab Expectations:

Each unit will have lab activities. During lab time students **MUST** follow all lab rules to ensure the safety of all students. Students will be asked to wear necessary safety clothing and gear during labs. This is not optional.

There can be absolutely **NO** horseplay during laboratory class time. If a student does not act accordingly and follow the lab rules, they will be removed from the class, and will need to complete the lab outside of school hours or receive a zero.

PfISD Laboratory Safety Rules will be **strictly enforced** at all times. (Students will have to pass a Safety test before they may begin lab activities; and BOTH student and their parents/guardians will need to sign a safety contract.) A safety contract must be signed and kept on file for each student.

### Safety is our first priority.

**Grading:** Please note that grades are assigned to the categories listed below at the discretion of the teacher.

80% - **Major Grades (Assessments)**

50% Tests and 30% Quizzes

20% - **Minor Grades (Notes, Labs, Homework, etc.)**

15% Lab write ups and 5% homework, daily, note checks

### Concept Based Grading:

College Board breaks the AP biology class into in eight units:

Unit 1 – Chemistry of Life

Unit 2 – Cell Structure and Function

Unit 3 – Cellular Energetics

Unit 4 – Cell Communication and Cell Cycle

Unit 5 – Heredity

Unit 6 – Gene Expression

Unit 7 – Natural Selection

Unit 8 – Ecology

Daily work and Note Checks will be the simplest form of content gathering and practice. Students are **strongly** encouraged to use all practice materials that are provided and complete chapter notes **before** discussions over the materials in the class. Choosing to not do the practice work and notes almost always results in failing grades on quizzes, due to lack of information.

Daily work will be collected after an announced due date. If an assignment is not turned in, it will be entered into the grade book as a 0. Students may then do a separate, new assignment to correct that 0 to a 70. **There is no late work in my AP class because it simply does not exist.** We will be covering 3 – 5 chapters every three weeks. AP class sequence moves very fast and turning in an assignment 3 weeks late would be considered useless work, as ALL labs, quizzes and tests have been taken without that knowledge. If students want to succeed they must turn in work and notes by the due date or they will not have the knowledge to get a passing grade on labs, quizzes or tests.

Labs and write ups will allow students to practice explaining the content gathered from daily work and notes. Lab content will be included on all assessments.

The assessments in this AP biology class will be comprised of Unit tests, Chapter grouped quizzes, and Lab write ups. Students will have a couple of opportunities to show mastery of each assessment.

Quizzes will be multiple choice, with an occasional short free response included. The knowledge gained from practice and notes are necessary to pass the quizzes. If a student does not meet the passing criteria, they will be given an opportunity to either just correct based on grade, or correct and retest if they are below minimum grade requirements. Quizzes will cover the same chapters as the unit tests and will be giving roughly 2-3 class period before the test, so that students can address misconceptions with the instructor before they are expected to show mastery on the tests. A student who chooses not to correct/requiz on failing quizzes usually fails the corresponding unit test.

Unit tests will allow students to show mastery of biology content. The test usually consist of roughly two to five chapters' worth of content from the book. If a student does not meet the grade requirements to pass the unit assessments they will be given one opportunity to fix their grade through either corrections only or corrections followed by an oral retest, depending on the original grade. We will be using a sliding correction scale throughout the year that encourages students to work harder as we approach May, and the AP exam.

#### **Sliding Assessment Correction Scale:**

1<sup>st</sup> quarter: Assessment scores need to be 40% or better to be allowed corrections that return 50% of missed points. Assessments of 39% or lower will have to do corrections and take an oral retest to score a max of 70%.

2<sup>nd</sup> quarter: Assessment scores need to be 45% or better to be allowed corrections that return 45% of missed points. Assessments of 44% or lower will have to do corrections and take an oral retest to score a max of 70%.

3<sup>rd</sup> quarter: Assessment scores need to be 50% or better to be allowed corrections that return 40% of missed points. Assessments of 49% or lower will have to do corrections and take an oral retest to score a max of 70%.

4<sup>th</sup> quarter: Assessment scores need to be 55% or better to be allowed corrections that return 35% of missed points. Assessments of 54% or lower will have to do corrections and take an oral retest to score a max of 70%.

**Final Exemptions will follow district policy for that term.**

**Students must earn at least a 70 OVERALL YEAR AVERAGE in the course to be awarded credit.**

#### **Student Progress**

Students will bring home an official IPR (individual progress report) every 3 weeks.

It is **REQUIRED** that every student have on-line access to monitor their grades through Skyward. Grades may be accessed through the "Parent" tab from the PISD website.

**Please note that students have their own Skyward account and this does not alter the parent settings.**

**Class Guidelines:**

1. Students are required by Weiss HS policy to have IDs on at all times, and will be marked tardy if they cannot/do not show their ID to enter the classroom before the instruction bell rings.
2. Students will be prepared with class materials before the instruction bell rings.
3. All students will treat others with respect.
4. Students will sit in assigned seat during instruction.
5. Students are NOT allowed to sell items for fund-raisers in class without permission first...otherwise you will forfeit your goods and have to pick them up from your Principal.
6. Students will follow WHS policies of personal electronic devices such as phones, cameras, music devices.  
\*\* Computers are welcome and encouraged for use of note access in class, but not required.
7. Due to district policy regarding safety, wearing of ear-buds or headphones inside the class room is **not allowed**.
8. Students will follow all instructions given and stay on assigned task.

**Do your notes and every assignment fully, turn it in on time, and you will succeed in AP biology.**

*A message from Mr. Kapa:*

In college, I was told "The only time *success* comes before *work*, is in the dictionary."

If you, current student of AP biology, want to succeed in my advanced biology classes, you will have to put in the appropriate work. To make sure you can do this, I make myself available A LOT! I have an open classroom mentality. If my classroom is open and I'm here on campus, you can come in to ask questions, get help on work or just say hi. Please take advantage of the opportunities your teachers are offering for help. High school is practice for your post-secondary school life. That could be college, vocational school or just working a job and interacting with coworkers. Practice those skills now, so that your life is easier later. I look forward to exploring science with you this coming year.