About this course

This is a non-science majors' course, which will provide a background for understanding and evaluating contemporary topics in biology and societal/environmental issues. The course emphasizes physiology and anatomy of organisms, ecological and evolutionary concepts, biodiversity, and conservation biology. An understanding of methods, history, and dynamic nature of science will also be emphasized. A case study based approach will be used to learn much of the material in this course. We will apply biological concepts to real-life problems.

Textbook:
Biology: Concepts and Applications, 10th ed., by Starr, Evers, and Starr
(You do not need the MindTap access that comes with the bookstore package, and an older edition will suffice for this course. I can't say the same for your lab.)

Instructor: Miranda McManus
Email: mcmamus@cofc.edu
Office: 65 Coming St., Room 213 (at the top of the stairs)

This class is fully asynchronous online, which means that there are no required class meeting times and all of the content is maintained online for you to work at your own pace within the deadlines. You may contact me with personal questions at any time by email; however, if your questions are not personal, please post on the Course Lounge discussion board on OAKS so that the rest of the class can benefit from the answer. If at any time you would like to meet and talk in real time, email me to set up a time to meet in person or via private synchronous chat on OAKS or a Zoom meeting.

The files in this course are accessible primarily through Google Drive. They are only available using your College of Charleston Google account. To access the files, you MUST be signed into Google using your CofC account information.

Test dates

Test I
**Feb. 2nd – 4th**
This test will be on the material from Module 1. It will cover evolution by natural selection and speciation and macroevolution (chapters 16-17 in the text).

Test II
**Mar. 2nd – 4th**
This test will be on the material from Module 2. It will cover biodiversity, including all of the groups of organisms that we will discuss this semester up through the chordates (chapters 18-23 in the text).

Test III
**Apr. 23rd – 25th**
This test will be on the material from Module 3. It will cover chordate and vertebrate evolution and ecology. We will be learning about ecology using case studies; however particular sections of chapters 39-44 will be useful to you.
Learning outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will demonstrate basic knowledge and understanding in each of the following content areas as is covered in class, as well as demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to real-life situations:

- Evolutionary processes
- Origins of life
- Biodiversity
  - Viruses, bacteria, and archaea
  - “Protist” lineages
  - Plants
  - Fungi
  - Animals
- Principles of ecology

Please read the syllabus addendum posted on OAKS to learn more about how this science sequence (BIOL 101/102 and labs) satisfies the general education requirement.

Required technology

For this class, you will need a computer with high-speed internet access, sound card, decent speakers, a webcam, a microphone (do not attempt to complete this course using your phone). OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.

Prerequisites and Corequisite

This class has required lab, BIOL 102L, that must be taken concurrently. Labs do not begin until the week of Jan. 23rd. BIOL 101 and 101L are prerequisites for this course.

Emergency info

If you have technical difficulties regarding hardware/software, please contact the Helpdesk (843-953-3375 or helpdesk@cofc.edu). If you are having trouble accessing Course Content, please contact me through the Course Lounge discussion board.

If you encounter specific hardware or network problems that prohibit you from completing an assignment on time, contact me immediately via email. Problems with technology are not an excuse for not completing your work! You are taking an online course and are expected to be proficient enough with technology for it not to be a hindrance.

If you experience recurrent technical problems that prohibit you from completing multiple assignments, you may be asked to re-enroll in the course at a future date.
Schedule

Module 1: Jan. 11th – Feb. 4th (Test I available Feb. 2nd – 4th)
Module 2: Feb. 5th – Mar. 4th (Test II available Mar. 2nd – 4th)
Module 3: Mar. 5th – Apr. 25th (Test III available Apr. 23rd – 25th)

No final exam. Final project will be due during the final exam period. Details will be provided in Module 3.

Each module will have a timeline under content on OAKS to keep you on track with lectures. The timeline does not have all of the necessary details for assignments. Full assignments are posted under the checklists for each module. Due dates for assignments, discussions, and tests are not suggested; they are firm.

Tests

Tests will be given online in OAKS. They will be heavily application-based. It is not enough to memorize the material; you must understand it. The tests will be from 75 to 90 minutes in duration. Once you sit down to take the test, you must complete it within the given time frame in one sitting. You will have two full days to take each test, from 12:01 AM the first day until 11:59 PM the second day. There are NO excuses to miss a test. Please make sure you have a reliable computer with a reliable internet connection before you sit down to take your tests—if possible hardwire in to the internet—and make sure you are in a good testing environment where you will not be disturbed!
Sustainability Literacy

This course will be sustainability-focused. We will discuss sustainability in this course as it applies to much of our biological study and will do so with consideration to the five pillars of sustainability, which include not only environmental, economic, and social systems (as part of the “triple bottom line”), where we will focus, but also personal and political systems. Upon completing the course, students should be able to identify policies and practices that have led to unsustainability and be able to synthesize information from two or more of the systems from the triple bottom line to address a sustainability problem.

Science Literacy

In this course, my goal is not only to help you learn the basics of biology, but it is also to help you increase your level of scientific literacy. It is important to understand how science works and what it contributes to our society, and it is crucial that all of us understand how to discern credible sources of information. So throughout this course, we will also spend some time learning what it means to be scientifically literate, and you will have an opportunity to apply some of these concepts through assignments. If you were in my class for BIOL 101, you may opt to pull over your grades for the Science Literacy quizzes and the ‘Is the Data Dirty or Clean?’ assignment from BIOL 101 if you earned a C- or better. To do so, just reply to the thread I have started about this on the discussion board by the time the first Science Literacy quiz is due on Jan. 24th. You lose the option after this date. After I have pulled them over, feel free to complete them again if you want to improve your grade and I will substitute your grade, but once you choose to retake them, the new grade will stand, even if it is lower than your previous grade.

Online discussion

There will be an online discussion board so that you can ask questions as you work through the material in this course called the Course Lounge. This is where you should post any questions or comments from which the whole class could benefit from either the question or the response. I encourage all of you to answer one another’s questions, and I will step in if something is incorrect. You should all subscribe to this discussion board so that you are notified when someone posts. Hopefully, we can generate some good, helpful discussion online. You will also have assigned discussion posts which count as assignments.

Grading

- **A**: 93-100 %   - Assignments (including discussions) will constitute 20% of the final grade.
- **A-**: 90-92 %   - Quizzes will make up 20% of the final grade.
- **B+**: 87-89 %   - The three tests will count 50% total (~16.67% each).
- **B**: 83-86 %    - The final project will count 10%.
- **B-**: 80-82 %   - The instructor reserves the right to adjust the final grade based on lack of participation in group activities.
- **C+**: 77-79 %   -
- **C**: 73-76 %    -
- **C-**: 70-72 %   -
- **D+**: 67-69 %   -
- **D**: 63-66 %   -
- **D-**: 60-62 %   -
- **F**: 0 –59 %    -
Online communication

Instructor response times

Discussion posts: 24 hours
Email: 24 hours

This is what I strive for, but occasionally I might miss or forget to respond to a message. If you have not heard back from me within this time frame, please reach out to me again. And be sure to include the information in your email that I need to answer quickly.

(Except on weekends. Allow until 8 PM on Monday for a response to any communication over the weekend, unless there is a test. I will most likely respond a lot sooner than this though.)

Peer interaction

Interaction with your peers is essential to your success in this course. Some of the tools you will use to interact with me and with one another will not be familiar to you. Therefore, it is imperative that you visit the “Communication Tools and Expectations” section under Start Here in Content on OAKS before you start delving into the course material. This will help you to understand the level of interaction that is expected from you will offer the opportunity to become acquainted with the various tools. Your participation in discussions and interactive activities will be graded.

Netiquette

It is important to remember to be respectful to one another when interacting in an online community. Always reread your post and think how is may be construed by others before you click “post.” Please refrain from typing in all caps as this is the online equivalent of shouting.
Preferred names and pronouns

I will gladly honor your request to address you by the name and gender pronouns of your choice. Please advise me of this early in the semester via your college-issued email account or during office hours so that I may make the appropriate notation on my class list.

Food and housing insecurity

Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are having difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or if you do not have a safe and stable place to live, please contact the Dean of Students for support (http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php). You can also go to http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, you can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need. There are also many resources off-campus. The Dean of Students can help connect you with these resources. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide connections to any resources of which I may be aware and help me to understand the challenges you are facing as a student.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me at least one week before any accommodation is needed.

Academic dishonesty

Guidelines for this course will follow the College of Charleston Undergraduate Catalog policies for Academic Integrity and the Honor Code, Student Code of Conduct, and Classroom Code of Conduct.

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating—this includes collaborating with classmates or other individuals on online tests.

Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz, and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php
### Weekly Schedule and Relevant Readings (schedule is subject to change):

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<thead>
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Day of Week</th>
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Relevant Chapters</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1-12</td>
<td>Class introduction; Introduction to evolution/Darwin</td>
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<td>Natural Selection; Evidence of Evolution; Processes of Evolution</td>
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<td>Speciation and Macroevolution</td>
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No final exam. You have a final project in lieu of an exam. Details will be included in the Module 3 assignment checklist.