

Class Policy

Introduction. This policy lays out the rights, expectations, rules, and responsibilities that pertain to you and to me. Naturally, elaborate policy statements are boring, but nevertheless are far preferable to confusion. A policy statement ensures that each participant will be treated equitably and predictably. Thanks for reading the policy carefully. You will be asked to sign a statement that you have read the policy. Submission of your signed statement will be your first-day attendance record (i.e., you will be marked absent every day until the signed statement is turned in). **If you have a question about the conduct of the class, consult the Policy first. Probably the answer to your question is explained.**

The purpose of this course is to provide an appreciation for plant life and other non-animal life forms. Obviously, this is a big order for the few hours that we will spend together in lecture. Let's put this job into perspective:

(A) Photosynthetic organisms have a very long history on earth—about 3.5 *billion* years (ca. 75% of the lifetime of Earth). (In contrast, man has been around only 2–4 *million* years or ≤ 0.1 % of the lifetime of Earth, and modern man evolved only about 200,000 years ago.)

(B) There are enormous numbers of different kinds of plants—perhaps 250,000 so-called “flowering plants.” This number does not include many kinds of plants you are accustomed to (e.g., pine trees, which are not flowering plants). Moreover, this classification sometimes groups plants that at first glance seem distinct (e.g., cauliflower, broccoli, and cabbage are all the same *single* kind or species).

(C) Each student comes to this class with a different background. Therefore, what may be old for some will be new for others. It is important to recognize that **this course will be taught at a level consistent with the prerequisites without review.**

(D) Finally, a note to the newcomers: As you no doubt inferred from items (A) and (B) above, the enormous diversity of life may express itself in bizarre ways. Although clearly no physical principles can be violated, the generalities that we assign to various processes are never perfect. Therefore, when a general biological principle is discussed, the prudent listener will always insert such qualifiers as “in most ways” or “generally” or “one explanation is” It is not desirable to discuss the exceptions—even if time permitted. One shouldn't leave a course feeling that time was spent on fuzzy distinctions. We will also eliminate real complexity, as we must (e.g., treatment of flowering plants as simply monocots and dicots, coverage of fungi in two lectures, use of modern-day examples out of an evolutionary context to explain principles).

At any rate, the job will be approached in the following way:

General Information. BOT 3015 (Plant Biology) is required for biology majors. The four 2000-level core courses (BSC 2010, BSC 2010L, BSC 2011, BSC 2011L) are prerequisites. In turn, CHM 1045 is a co- or prerequisite for BSC 2010. Please do not request exceptions to these departmental requirements; *one must not take this course this semester if one has not met the requirements.* **These are not *pro forma* requirements; students should expect to be tested on cell structure and energy pathways (glycolysis, TCA, photosynthesis) at the level of BSC 2010 without review.** The purpose is to build on previous courses, not repeat them. If one elects to skip the introductory courses based on test scores, he or she will still be responsible for the contents. Similarly, if one transfers from another institution, he or she should ensure that he or she is prepared in the context of Florida State (rigor and breath). (This *should* not be a problem with transfers from other Florida public institutions because of the common course-numbering system.) To assess your level of preparation, peruse lecture summaries used in BSC 2010 at Florida State by going to http://www.southernmatters.com/plant_biology/BSC_2010_FSU_Elling_PS.pdf and to http://www.southernmatters.com/plant_biology/BSC_2010_FSU_Elling_C_Met.pdf . With all due respect, I urge you to drop this course if you cannot accept that the prerequisite requirement is genuine. It is heart-breaking when a student fares poorly and becomes discouraged in biology because he or she was not prepared. Take education step by step, as it was planned. If you have questions, consult the handbook, which can be accessed through <http://www.bio.fsu.edu/undergrad/>.

Insurance and Health. It is *VERY, VERY IMPORTANT* to understand that one must have accident insurance. It is my understanding that one may get low-cost insurance, e.g., through Thagard Health Center, if he or she is not already covered by another policy. FSU does not pay medical or other costs associated with a student's accident even if that accident occurs when the student is engaged in an FSU-sponsored activity (such as a laboratory) and even if the student is not negligent. *Implicit in your remaining in this course is an understanding that you are insured adequately*, because I cannot help you recover any costs (medical, coincidental, consequential, or others) that you might have as a result of attending any of my classes. My experience is consistent with the notion that FSU analyzes liability only from a financial perspective and makes restitution only when the opportunity for successful litigation is absent. Sorry. (The insurance situation at FSU is fluid now, so consult FSU's current policy.)

Please inform me if you have life-threatening allergies. In one class, peanuts are used as demonstration material and, from time to time, I bring in various other kinds of samples for demonstration.

Course Logistics. BOT 3015 is a lecture and demonstration course. Lectures will be given as indicated on the syllabus. The lecture "schedule" is a goal that will be modified according to lecture progress. Somewhat more time is allocated to the lecture schedule than is necessary, so some help

sessions (indicated as optional sessions on the schedule) may be held during regular class times.

The dates for lecture exams are fixed and will not be changed except under extraordinary circumstances such as an FSU closure on an exam date or other closure that substantively affects lecture progress.

An optional complementary laboratory course (BOT 3015L) is taught and graded separately. BOT 3015 is a co- or prerequisite for BOT 3015L; therefore, BOT 3015L is independent of BOT 3015.

This course cannot be used to satisfy the Gordon Rule. Class time will not be relinquished for any nonpertinent topic, such as political announcements. Please do not ask.

Exams and Objectives. A goal of BOT 3015 is to survey all non-animal organisms on Earth. The natural history of selected species will be discussed in some detail. Treatment of topics will be in an evolutionary context. Written sets of specific lecture objectives are included in the lecture booklet. *Most questions for lecture exams are based directly on these objectives.*

Importantly, this course is not simply a taxonomic survey course. The relationship between form and function will be stressed. Whole sections will be devoted to physiology, biochemistry, and molecular biology.

These written objectives are not to the exclusion of other objectives that class experiences give. Examples of other course objectives include perspectives gained from class discussions on plant uses for food, fiber, and shelter; evolution; medicinal plants; ecology; and so forth. In addition, demonstrations allow students an opportunity to see, feel, touch, and even taste plant materials; these, too, irreplaceable components of the experiences that this course provides.

Topics found on standardized professional examinations are uniquely taught at FSU in BOT 3015. In addition, many other topics addressed in BOT 3015 are on these examinations. Therefore, another **objective of BOT 3015 is to prepare students for examinations necessary for career advancement.** (That objective should perhaps be stated differently—our goal at FSU is to offer a standard, comprehensive curriculum that would meet the expectations of employers, mentors and so forth. BOT 3015 does not “teach to the exam.” We teach to professional expectations, which are what exams hope to measure.)

For the reasons given above, BOT 3015 can be considered a keystone in a biology major’s education.

The FSU faculty handbook stipulates that evaluation of teaching will be done in relation to the written objectives for the course.

Lecture Attendance and Performance. It is FSU policy that students attend class¹.

Professors are *required* to document the attendance of certain students (e.g., scholarship athletes, students who receive certain kinds of federal financial aid through loans and grants², and other students who receive federal assistance and who do not successfully complete BOT 3015). To expedite this procedure, each student is asked to sit in the same seat each day. A sign-up sheet will be passed around during the lecture; the TA will check the filled-in slots on the sign-up sheet against the corresponding real seats (not the other way around). **The sign-up sheet will be the official record; if a student fails to record his or her name in the proper place on the sign-up sheet when the sheet circulates; an absence is recorded.**

No exceptions at all for any reason whatsoever will be granted. (*Please note that it would be a violation of the Honor Code to sign the sign-up sheet except when it passes one's seat during circulation.*)

The liberal policy of permitting four absences without penalty is designed to compensate for the chance that one might be marked absent even when he or she may have attended a portion of a lecture. In other words, a tardy entry or an early departure might be scored as an absence. *Use of cell phones, reading newspapers, sleeping, putting one's head on the desk, carrying on private conversations and the like will be scored as an absence.* A cell phone is particularly rude and should be turned off before entering the classroom.

I strongly encourage and expect you to attend every lecture. Do not compromise your position. One cannot predict unsettling experiences, such as car theft, illness, a court appearance, incarceration and so forth. These experiences are the reason that a limited number of absences do not incur penalty. One should not think of unpenalized absences as “days off.” Days off are holidays, weekends, and semester breaks.

I am required to report the performance of certain students. When I am called upon to report on certain students, **any poorly performing student** is also reported to the Dean of Undergraduate Students (for freshmen and sophomores) or to the Dean of the student's college (for all other students). If the student is not attending class, there may be financial-aid ramifications, as discussed earlier.

Attendance is a criterion in making border-line grade decisions. Specifically, students who have perfect attendance will be awarded a bonus of 1.5 points on the final average. Students who are marked absent for 1 or 2 days will receive a bonus of 1 or 0.5 points, respectively. Students who are marked absent for 3 or 4 days will receive no grade adjustment, and **students who are marked absent for more than 4 days will be assigned an F for the course.** There is no leeway (“excused

¹ From the FSU Faculty Handbook, Chapter 8.6, “Class Attendance”:

The faculty member is expected to check attendance in all classes. The faculty member is expected to make some allowance for absence occasioned by illness, by trips for the University, or by authorized field trips. Any arrangement to make up work because of class absence is the responsibility of the student. The effect of absence upon grades is determined by the instructor; at the beginning of the term the faculty member explains the grading policy to the students. . . .

² N.B. Students who receive certain types of Federal Title IV Financial Aid and who do not attend class may

absence”) on the issue of bonus points for attendance. BOT 3015 is not a correspondence course; the minimum expectation is that students attend every class, arrive on time, participate and contribute. In truly extenuating and exceptional circumstances to be decided at the discretion of the instructor, extra assignments may be given to make up for an absence in excess of four to avoid assignment of an F. In this case, the student must document *every absence* (not just the absence in excess of four) at the time that the student petitions in writing for an exception. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate any contact with regard to excessive absences within one week of accumulating more than four absences.

Documentation must be complete and follow the guidelines laid out later for missing an exam. This is a simple expectation and it is unlikely that circumstances will arise that merit a further exception.

Documentation should be as described for missing an exam.

Depending on my other responsibilities at the semester’s end, the attendance roster might be completed a few days before the end of class (i.e., absences for the last class meeting(s) might not be recorded).

Academic Honesty as a matter of Class Policy and as a matter of FSU’s Honor Code. FSU faculty are required to remind students at the beginning of each term that they are bound by the Academic Honor Code, which is found in the *Student Handbook* (<http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/>)³.

be required to return funds.

³ **A letter to students that is posted on the FSU Dean of the Faculties website:** (The original source of the letter is William M. Taylor of Oakton Community College, Des Plaines, IL 60016. I have made slight modifications for ease of reading and to make certain points relevant to this class. Those changes are noted, except for obvious spelling and grammatical errors that were on the posted document.)

“Here at the beginning of the semester I want to say something to you about academic integrity.

“I’m deeply convinced that integrity is an essential part of any true educational experience, integrity on my part as a faculty member and integrity on your part as a student.

“To take an easy example, would you want to be operated on by a doctor who cheated his way through medical school? Or would you feel comfortable on a bridge designed by an engineer who cheated her way through engineering school? Would you trust your tax return to an accountant who copied his exam answers from his neighbor?

“Those are easy examples, but what difference does it make if you as a student or I as a faculty member violate the principles of academic integrity in a psychology course, especially if it’s not in our major?

“For me, the answer is that integrity is important in this course precisely because integrity is important in all areas of life. If we don’t have integrity in the small things, if we find it possible to justify plagiarism or cheating or shoddy work in things that don’t seem important, how will we resist doing the same in areas that really do matter, in areas where money might be at stake, or the possibility of advancement, or our esteem in the eyes of others?

“Personal integrity is not a quality we’re born to naturally. It’s a quality of character we need to nurture, and this requires practice in both meanings of that word (as in practice the piano and practice a profession). We can only be a person of integrity if we practice it every day.

“What does that involve for each of us in this course? Let’s find out by going through each stage in the course. As you’ll see, academic integrity basically requires the same things of you as a student as it requires of me as a teacher.

“I. Preparation for Class [ed: boldface added]

“What Academic Integrity Requires of Me in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to coming prepared for class, the principles of academic integrity require that I come having done the things necessary to make the class a worthwhile educational experience for you. This requires that I:

“Read [edited: relevant material],

“Clarify information I might not be clear about,

“Prepare the class with an eye toward what is current today (that is, not simply rely on past notes), and

“Plan the session so that it will make it worth your while to be there.

“What Academic Integrity Requires of You in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to coming prepared for class, the principles of academic integrity suggest that you have a responsibility to yourself, to me, and to the other students to do the things necessary to put yourself in a position to make fruitful contributions to class discussion. This will require you to:

“read the text before coming to class,

“clarify anything you’re unsure of (including looking up words you don’t understand),

“formulate questions you might have so you can ask them in class, and

“think about the issues raised in the class discussion or class materials.

“II. In Class

What Academic Integrity Requires of Me in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to class sessions, the principles of academic integrity require that I take you seriously and treat you with respect. This requires that I:

“show up for all class sessions, unless I’m simply unable to do so,

“come to class on time, and not leave early,

“not waste class time, but use it well to fulfill the objectives of the course

“do my best to answer your questions,

“honestly acknowledge when I don’t have an answer or don’t know something, and then go out and get an answer by the next class [ed: if it is possible],

“both encourage you, and give you an equal opportunity, to participate in class discussions,

“contain you if your enthusiasm for participating in the discussions makes it difficult for others to participate,

“assume that you are prepared for class and that I won’t embarrass you if I call on you, even if your hand isn’t up,

“respect the views you express and not make fun of you or of them,

“not allow others to ridicule you or your ideas, or you to do the same to them, and

“make clear when I am expressing an opinion, and not impose on you my views on controversial issues.

“What Academic Integrity Requires of You in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to class sessions, the principles of academic integrity require you to take both your fellow students and me seriously and to treat us with respect. This requires that you:

“show up for all class sessions, unless you are truly unable to do so,

“come to class on time and not leave early,

“make good use of class time by being engaged in what’s going on,

“ask questions about anything you don’t understand, and not just for your own sake but “because other students might not realize that they also don’t understand,

“participate in the class discussions so as to contribute your thinking to the shared effort to develop understanding and insight (remember that even something that’s clearly wrong can “contribute to the discussion by stimulating an idea in another student that she/he might not otherwise have had),

“monitor your own participation so as to allow for and encourage the participation of others,

“respect the other students by not making fun of them or their ideas, and by not holding side-conversations that distract them (and me) from the class discussion.

“III. With Regard to Exams [ed: Boldface]

“What Academic Integrity Requires of Me in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to exams, the principles of academic integrity require that I:

“do my best during class time to prepare you for the exams,

“be available during office hours or at arranged time to work with you individually to help you get ready for the exams,

develop exam questions that will be a meaningful test not only of the course content, but also of your ability to [ed: assimilate and synthesize content from different units],

“carefully monitor the exam so that honest students will not be disadvantaged by other students who might choose to cheat if given the opportunity, and

“give due and careful consideration to your answers when evaluating them and assigning a grade.

“What Academic Integrity Requires of You in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to exams, the principles of academic integrity require you to:

“come to class having done your best to prepare for the exam, including seeking my help [ed: on a timely basis after you have tried to help yourself] if you need it,

“make full use of the time available to [ed: choose] the best answers you can,

“accept your limitations and not try to get around them by using cheat sheets, copying, or seeking help from another student,

“not giving help to other students, or making it easy for them to copy off of you.

“IV. With Regard to Written Assignments [ed: Boldface]

“What Academic Integrity Requires of Me in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to written assignments, the principles of academic integrity require that I:

“devise meaningful assignments that grow out of and further the work done in the classroom,

“provide you with a clear description of that assignment so that you know what is expected of you and what I’ll be looking for when I grade it,

“give due and careful consideration to your paper when evaluating it and assigning a grade, and

“confront you if I suspect that you have plagiarized or in other ways not handed in work that is entirely your own.

“What Academic Integrity Requires of You in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to written assignments, the principles of academic integrity require you to:

“start your [ed: preparation] early enough to ensure that you have the time you need to do your best work,

“hand in a paper which you yourself have done specifically for this course and not borrowed from someone else or recycled from an earlier course,

“not be satisfied with a paper that is less than your best work,

“seek only appropriate help from others (such as proof-reading, or discussing your ideas with someone else to gain clarity in your thinking), and

“give full and proper credit to your sources.

“Let me expand on this last point, since it applies to both you and me.

“By its very nature, education and the accumulation of knowledge is a shared enterprise. None of us has the time, let alone the background knowledge required, to learn everything on our own. Virtually everything we know has come to us because someone else has taken the time to think about something, research it, and then share what she/he’s learned with us in a class lecture or, more likely, in an article or book. This is every bit as true for me as a teacher as it is for you as students. I’d have very little to teach if all I could talk about is what I’ve learned solely on my own.

“In a class lecture it would be too disruptive if I stopped to cite all of my sources, but I know, and you need to know, that I am sharing with you the things I’ve learned from hundreds of different authors. What I contribute is the way I bring their ideas together into a coherent whole so that it makes sense to you.

“If this is true for me, how much more so for you. I have many more years of education and reading behind me than you do. I don’t expect you to do original research [ed: for lecture exams]. Instead, I expect you to read <delete>. Therefore, it’s essential for you to cite your sources <delete>, and to allow me to look at them if I needed to find out if you have properly understood what the author was trying to say.

“But at a practical level, citing your sources is a way to show that you’ve done the assignment. If your paper contains no citations, the implication is that you have done a piece of original research, but that wasn’t the assignment [ed: in lecture]. Citations (along with the bibliography) show that you have consulted a variety of resources as the assignment required. They’re also an acknowledgement of your indebtedness to those authors.

“So don’t feel you need to hide the fact that you’re drawing from one of your sources. That’s what it’s all about.

“V. With Regard to Your Final Grade [ed: Boldface]

“What Academic Integrity Requires of Me in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to your final grade, the principles of academic integrity require that I carefully weigh all of your grades during the course, as well as the other factors that affect the final grade as spelled out in the syllabus, before assigning a final grade.

“What Academic Integrity Requires of You in This Area [ed: underlined]

“With regard to your final grade, the principles of academic integrity require that, if you feel I’ve made a mistake in computing that grade, you have a responsibility to come to me as soon as possible prepared to show why you think I’ve made a mistake.

“VI. Failures to Live up to Our Responsibilities [ed: Boldface]

“In all of the areas listed above, I will do my best to live up to my responsibilities. If you feel I’ve failed to do so, you have every right to call me on it. If you do, I have a responsibility to give you respectful consideration. If you feel that I do not do these things, you have the right (and I would say the responsibility) to bring this to the attention of my supervisor.

“At the same time, I have a right to expect that you will live up to your responsibilities. If I get a sense that you’re not doing so, I consider it a matter of my academic integrity that I call you on it.

“Indeed, in certain circumstances (such as cheating or plagiarism) I may be required to charge you with a violation of [ed: FSU’s] Code of Academic Integrity. [ed: FSU] is every bit as committed to academic integrity as I am.

“You should familiarize yourself with that Code. You can find it in [ed: the url in the text]. “Be sure to notice that there’s a procedure that’s designed to protect your rights. But that procedure might also result in one or another sanction being imposed on you if you’re found guilty of violating the Code of Academic Integrity.

“Which brings me to the most difficult question with regard to academic integrity; what if you become aware of a fellow classmate

I am bound by the regulations enforced by the Office of the Dean of the Faculties (<http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm>). The code calls for the coordinated efforts of faculty members, TAs, *and* students to uphold academic integrity and combat academic dishonesty. The most serious violations of the honor code become part of a person's permanent record at FSU. Less serious violations are maintained for several years and in the past were accessed by professional schools and potential employers. **Violation of the Honor Code could jeopardize your future⁴**. Steer clear and stay straight.

Examples of Class Policy Violations and Honor Code Violations—which will result in a sanction—are (1) reference to any unauthorized materials during an exam. Unauthorized materials include another student's exam or possession of any written or electronic device on your person. Make sure that all unauthorized material is stowed away, off your person, out of sight. (2) falsification of attendance records or documents relating to attendance. (3) gaining or providing information about exam contents before an exam. An example would be directly or indirectly accessing material from a student who previously took an exam (during the current semester or previously). (4) plagiarism. I check for plagiarism. (5) intellectual assistance with work on an individual assignment. (6) submission of any work, task or project that was not done originally by you for the particular assignment in this class. (7) intention to commit any of the offenses above (even if the attempt is unsuccessful), and (8) complicity, for example, placing your exam so that it could be viewed by another. (9) behaving in a manner that is a plausible mechanism for violating the code. For example, one should not communicate by any means with anyone during an exam except the instructor or his delegates. He or she may simply be asking to borrow a pencil from a peer, but the behavior is plausibly a mechanism to cheat. As another example, one's eyes should never be covered (by a hand, a cap bill) because eye concealment is plausibly a mechanism to cheat. As another example, one's exam space should be completely clear—no beverage containers, no tissues, no wrappers, no clothing. Bring three sharp No. 2 wooden pencils (not a retractable writing device) to each exam; they alone should be on your exam space. Students who do not have pencils as specified are not prepared for the exam and will not be allowed to take it. Tissue, if needed, will be provided.

who is not living up to the principles of academic integrity, but you sense that I'm not aware of it? What should you do? I'll give you the answer, but I'll acknowledge up front that it's a hard one. <delete.. The answer is that you should say something to that student, and if worse comes to worse, you should tell me. But why? [ed: FSU's Honor Code requires you to report the violation of another if he or she does not report him- or herself].

"Academic integrity, as with so much in life, involves a system of interconnected rights and responsibilities that reflect our mutual dependence upon one another. The success of our individual efforts in this course, as with so much in life, depends on all of us conscientiously exercising our rights and living up to our responsibilities. And the failure of any of us—even just one of us—to do what is required will diminish, however slightly, the opportunity for the rest to achieve their goals. That is why it's essential for all of us in this class to practice academic integrity, in both senses of the word practice. For practice today will lay a solid foundation for practice tomorrow, and the day after that, and the day after that, so that through daily practice integrity will come to be woven throughout the fabric of our lives, and thus through at least a part of the fabric of society."

All the enumerated items in the preceding paragraph are also violations of FSU's Honor Policy, too, and, as mentioned, could result in a severe university-imposed sanction. Knowledge, truth, honesty and the ability to synthesize and predict are the essence of science. Often only a single person will make a particular observation. That single observation could form the basis for a therapy or for a policy that permits or restricts development. In these working environments that we prepare students for, it is essential that honesty be emphasized. Thus, in addition to the university requirements, this class requires that you report any knowledge of another's dishonesty to the instructor. Moreover, there are no second chances. Action is taken on the first violation. I personally have written referrals for as many as three students in one semester. I will be honest and fair with students and expect the same in return.

Supplemental Material for Lectures. As mentioned, exams will cover only material given in lecture, or on the Powerpoint presentations, or in the class notes. There is a **required** textbook⁵ (see syllabus). If you are a visually oriented learner, the text will be especially useful as it is exhaustively illustrated. The lectures are not designed from this text, but the text can be used to clarify or expand some subjects. In some cases, the approach will differ somewhat from that of the text (e.g., BOT 3015 identifies five broad trends in floral evolution whereas the text identifies only four). The lecture takes precedence over the text in such cases.

The book is expensive; I wish it were not so. Only after serious thought and experience did I list the text as "required." Students who have immediate access to the book are more likely to use it routinely and thus should score better; on this basis, it is a good value.

You must take notes. Some exam questions may not be taken directly from the class manual, as mentioned above. Nevertheless, the class manual is useful as a lecture workbook and study aid. Making this supplement (and the Powerpoint presentations, mentioned later) available to you is the most efficient way that I personally can help you. The packet also contains study charts and detailed objectives for each exam. **It is particularly important to recognize the extremely high value of the objectives contained in the class notes.**

Royalties are collected for the class manual. (These material falls under a definition of "a locally published textbook uniquely suited to the course." Officially, a "course packet" is much more limited than the class manual.) The royalty payment is made directly to the FSU Foundation. I use the royalties in various ways to improve my courses (e.g., acquisition of demonstration items,

⁴In the most tragic case in my own experience, a student violated the Honor Code on the date of his/her final exam in BOT3015. That was to have been his or her last semester and he or she had been accepted into medical school for the upcoming semester. Of course, that unfortunately did not come to pass.

⁵ This textbook is also used for BOT 3015L. As mentioned, BOT 3015 is a co- or pre-requisite for BOT 3015L. If you plan to take BOT 3015L in the future, keep your text. These class notes are also used for Outlaw's version of BOT 3015L, so if you plan to take the lab in the future, you should also keep the notes, too.

(photo)graphics, and computing) or in other educational ways. Importantly, I do not personally receive the royalties, and I do not personally gain from them.

Some companies offer so-called note-taking “services” for selected courses. They provide copies of class notes prepared by a student who is currently enrolled in the course. Because I make my own notes available to you, these company services are both inferior and redundant. Said differently, class notes prepared by someone else for my courses simply plagiarize my class notes. Thus, a student's selling class notes to a company is an ethical violation. Said differently, you cannot sell what you do not own (e.g., one cannot video-tape football games and sell the tapes or record a concert and sell the music). . . . and, of course, one should not buy pirated notes. Feel free, of course, to record my lectures; I want you to do whatever you can and must to master the material.

Finally, Powerpoint presentations will be made available (http://www.southernmatters.com/plant_biology/) and are packed with the class notes. You are expected to purchase the text because the presentations contain some copyrighted graphics from the text.)

In summary, all three supplemental components—textbook, class notes, and Powerpoint presentations—are required as each uniquely complements the lectures. (You may wish to print out the slides and bring the print-outs to class for the sake of notes. Before printing, you might wish to edit some slide out as a savings measure. Having print-outs prepared for you was prohibitively expensive.

Exams. *Expect the exams to be difficult.*

Each exam will be cumulative and will be composed of 25 multiple-choice questions. The multiple-choice questions count equally, 4 points each. You will not be penalized for incorrect answers, but if you fail to enter your name properly on the exam sheets, a 4-point penalty will apply. Each response is generally multipart, and one needs to know the facts and concepts well in order to achieve a high mark. Carefully constructed multiple-choice questions are ideal for probing how completely one understands concepts and relationships, and how well one can transfer a concept from one context to another.

The 25-question exam will cover materials as indicated on the syllabus unless it is announced otherwise during lecture **or** by class email. This portion of the exam will be graded by computer and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that each question is answered unambiguously *on the bubble sheet* by use of wooden non-retractable No. 2 pencil. Those answers (and only those answers) will be considered.

A student should never miss an exam without prearrangement if such prearrangement is at all possible. **It is obviously far better to determine whether an excuse will be accepted before missing an exam because without an acceptable excuse, a make-up will not be given and a zero**

will be recorded. BOT 3015 will, of course, be bound by FSU policy on final examinations⁶. If one misses an exam without prearrangement, he or she will be expected to document fully the reason (illness, accident, etc.) in writing as soon as possible. For illnesses, two kinds of documents are required: (1) discharge papers or a bill that explicitly show that your diagnosis was in a clinical setting and show the date of the diagnosis, and (2) statement by a physician that explicitly explains your inability to take an exam. Usually, submitted documents will be verified, so your documentation must include the *direct phone number of the relevant official* (usually your doctor) *who will be willing to answer questions*. Nothing short of these documentation requirements for missing an exam without prearrangement will be considered. Unfortunately, experience makes it necessary to mention that excuses cannot be honored if they come from a person who has a conflict of interest (such as a parent or sibling). (From Sec. E-8.19 of the American Medical Association's Opinions on Practice Matters: "Physicians generally should not treat themselves or members of their immediate families.") At the discretion of the instructor, the excuse will be judged to be adequate (in which case, a make-up exam will be given) or inadequate (in which case, a make-up exam will not be given and a zero will be recorded for that exam grade). If there are any irregularities or discrepancies in the documentation, a make-up exam will not be given and a zero will be recorded for that exam grade. Make-up exams must be taken as soon as possible (**i.e., the first day that the student does not have valid reason to be absent**); the time and place will be at the discretion of the instructor. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to set the time for the make-up exam. If the student causes an unnecessary delay, a make-up exam will not be given and the student will be assigned a zero for that exam. A valid reason for missing an exam is not a valid excuse for postponing the exam to a time chosen by the student. If prearrangement to miss the exam is possible but not done, the make-up exam will not have bonus points.

⁶ **University Final Examination Policy:** 1. Final examinations in all undergraduate courses are discretionary within any given department. If a department chooses to give a final exam, the exam schedule must be followed as published. 2. All students enrolled in a course having a final examination, including graduating seniors and graduate students, are required to take the exam at the time scheduled. 3. Scheduling a final examination or a test in lieu of a final exam at any time other than the regularly scheduled final exam period is a violation of University policy. 4. A test covering a portion of the semester's work, which is given in lieu of a final examination, e.g. a unit test, must be given in the regularly scheduled examination period.

Courses meeting every day at the same hour and classes meeting for more than one time period will hold examinations according to the time and day of the first scheduled class meeting of the week. For example, a class meeting for the first period on Tuesday and for the first and second period on Thursday will hold its examination at the time scheduled for the first period on the Tuesday, Thursday class listing.

Exceptions to the Examination Policy for an Individual Undergraduate Student: Approval by the appropriate academic dean is required for an individual undergraduate student seeking an exception to the examination policy. The student must first receive written permission from the instructor if he/she is willing to give a make-up exam at a specified time within the exam week. The student must then petition the dean, giving the reason for the requested exception, and supported by the instructor's written permission. The dean will then notify the instructor in writing if the approval is granted.

Make-up examinations are permitted for an undergraduate student when justified by illness, conflicting examinations, four or more examinations within a twenty-four (24) hour period, or for certain emergencies. Arrangements should be made prior to the scheduled exam.

If a student leaves his or her seat (e.g., to be excused), the exam for that student is cancelled.

A make-up exam will be arranged following the procedure described above for missing an exam entirely.

Exams will not be returned to you. Of course, a TA (designated during lecture) will be happy to review your exam with you. I personally will not review the exam with you until you have reviewed it with the designated TA. A strict schedule for review will be established especially for each semester, but will include at least three different weekdays, different times of the day and a total of several hours. For particulars of the schedule, see the inside of the front cover of the class manual. Of course, if a student has an FSU conflict for all of the scheduled times, he or she can make special arrangements with the TA. **One is not allowed to transcribe an exam or portion of an exam during a review, however.** When you review the exam, you may bring one sheet of paper and one ink-based writing instrument. Very brief comments (e.g., “review driving forces for diffusion”) may be recorded for your use. After you have completed your exam review, the TA will check your notes to ensure that they align with class policy. Reviewing an exam *soon* after it is taken is an excellent way to learn from one’s mistakes. **Therefore, access to exams is restricted to specified review periods during the one-week period following the reporting of grades for that exam. Final exams may be reviewed by appointment as late as the end of the first week of the following semester, provided the student requests to review the final exam within one week of its administration.** Rarely, circumstances might prevent a student from reviewing during the week period. In such case, the student may submit a documented petition, which will be carefully reviewed. (FSU policy requires an instructor to keep records for one year, but does not require an instructor to review exams with the student. The grades will be recorded, of course, but the exams themselves will be destroyed immediately after the review period.) Unfortunately, experience indicates the need to prohibit students from having pencils or erasers during the review. (As mentioned, ink-based writing instruments are ok.)

Footnotes. Footnotes in the class notes provide interesting asides about organisms that are being studied. These footnotes **alone** will not be the basis for any of the regular 25 multiple-choice questions on exams. (Subjects discussed in class or that appear in the regular narrative of the class notes or that are on Powerpoint presentations constitute legitimate sources for regular exam questions regardless of their appearance in footnotes and the textbook, of course.) I reserve the right to add to each exam relatively simple bonus question(s) covering footnoted material or peripheral-to-topic class discussions or class emails. These questions will come from the more recent material and will extend to the end of the unit shown on the syllabus, regardless of whether the lecture material has been covered to that point, unless announced otherwise. Of course, your focus should always be on the objectives, the lecture, the main text of the class notes and the Powerpoint presentations. Students who

participate in this extra-credit activity (bonus points) do so with the knowledge that grading will be rigorous and the responses cannot be challenged (except, of course, in the case of math errors). Note that it is possible to complete BOT 3015 with >100 average, even without bonus points from these questions.

Conflicts. You will, of course, be excused if an important religious observance relevant to your belief system falls *on* a scheduled exam day. You will not be penalized in any way if arrangements are made in advance. Arrangements for all predictable conflicts must be made in advance or a make-up will not be given, regardless otherwise of the reason for the absence. Generally, a social opportunity will not be considered a conflict. All arrangements should be done by email, providing documentation.

Grades. Any student with unsatisfactory participation will receive a failing grade. Unsatisfactory participation includes, but is not limited to, more than four lecture absences, recorded as described above. In any case, experience indicates that only very exceptionally (meaning only few instances in the 30 or so times I have taught this course) does a nonattending student perform satisfactorily on exams. Again, it is exceedingly important to recognize that this course has many objectives, including the development of a perspective that only can come from your active participation in class.

Given satisfactory participation, the five lecture exam grades (which include the final, if given) will contribute to one's course grade according to the percentages listed on the syllabus. Therefore, one should be able to calculate his or her precise standing at any moment, according to the following scale: A > 93, A⁻ > 90, B⁺ > 87, etc. The grading scale is absolute—it will not be curved up or down. You are not in competition with any of your classmates. Help them; get help from them. Extra assignments to bring up grades will not be given. For your convenience, a grade calculator is found on the Plant Biology website. This calculator uses the same algorithm that my grade spreadsheet does. For all intents and purposes, the calculator provides the grade and the case is closed. As mentioned elsewhere, grades are assigned against a standard and without adjustments for a particular student, which would usually be unethical for me, so please do not ask.

The right to offer incentives based on regular-exam performance to demonstrate minimum mastery of subject matter (C-) is reserved, though rarely applied. (In other words, circumstances may arise in which I find it compelling to elevate a grade to a C-, but the incentive or standard, if any, will apply to all those who would benefit.)

Except in the most extreme of circumstances, an "I" will not be assigned⁷.

⁷ From the FSU Faculty Handbook, Chapter 8.9, "Grades and Grading Practice":

The grading system of the University is explained in the academic requirements section of the General Bulletin. Once the final grade in a course has been reported by the instructor to the Registrar it cannot be changed except in cases of error in recording. A final grade may be changed only by permission of the department head and the dean of the college or school. The grade of "I" (Incomplete) is used only in those exceptional cases when a student for reasons beyond his or her control has failed to complete a well-defined portion of a course.

The goal is to enable you to earn the grade that you want and are willing to work for. If you feel that your course grade is inequitably awarded or is a gross violation of the standards laid out here, you have the right to appeal the grade. See the Associate Chair of Biological Science for Undergraduate Studies.

Note that each exam counts more toward the course grade than the previous exam. The reasons for this weighting are: (1) Each exam is cumulative. Thus, part of the higher weighting on later exams reflects knowledge acquired earlier. In broad terms, each unit of time in lecture counts for about the same amount toward the final grade. (2) The low weighting on the first exam provides inexpensive acclimation to the course. (3) Importantly, the higher weighting of later exams provides a built-in means of rewarding improvement.

Class Communication. E-mail is the preferred means of communicating outside class. It is your responsibility to make sure that your account is valid, that your mail is not forwarded to an inactive account, that you do not have the autoreply feature in your mail application activated, and that you check your e-mail each weekday. I also communicate individually with students via the official e-mail link. An archive of class emails is maintained at the Plant Biology website. Sometimes when a student asks a question of interest to others, I send the reply to the class.

I filter email accounts that result in “bounces.” That is, if an email bounces, that address is permanently removed from my alias. The student then would depend exclusively on the archives on the Plant Bio Website.

Obviously, whole-class email capabilities are a privilege. Use should be reserved for legitimate relevant purposes. Abuses of the privilege will be reported and the email account will be removed from my class alias.

Class Decorum. My respect for students is one of the most durable substances known. I expect reciprocity. Class time is very expensive and we all have the responsibility to keep on track so that everyone will be able to achieve his or her goals efficiently. Treat class as a business meeting—arrive on time, focus, and prepare to depart after the session is over. Function as a member of the class and not as a distracting embedded element.

Posting of Grades. Grades are posted by PIN in an e-mail to the entire class. The default value for your PIN is the last four digits of your SSN; however, I will use a PIN of your choice if you request it. Usually, grades are available within 24 hours after an exam, but I am at the mercy of the grading center and sometimes ACNS. If the grades have not been posted, they are not ready. On each exam, you may check a form and deny me permission to post that test grade and subsequent grades (including the final grade for the course). If you do not wish to have your grade posted, an exam grade will be given to you at the next class period after the grades are posted, and a final grade will be available from

the registrar's office. (Grades cannot be given over the phone, by e-mail, at my office or to a third party. This policy conforms to my sense of ethics and is required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. . . . no exceptions.)

Several manipulations of grades are required before they can be posted. Every effort will be made to ensure that the posted grades are correct, but one should consider the posted grades to be unofficial. Students may come to my office to review his or her official record (which takes precedence over posted grades). You may have confidence, however, in knowing that I have never made a mistake in posting grades.

ADA Statement. During the first week of class, students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (a) register with the Student Disability Resource Center and (b) present a letter to me from them indicating the need that is to be accommodated. Then, the student will propose a written contract that indicates how instruction and testing will deviate from that of the general student population. When an agreement is made, both of us will sign.

Office Hours. Many routine course matters will be handled by the teaching assistant(s), who is well qualified. The e-mail contact for the TA is given on the Plant Biology website and on the inside of the front cover of the class manual.

Any communication between us, except for numerical or letter grades, will not be considered privileged unless you explicitly request confidentiality during the conversation or in the subject line of an e-mail. Of course, teaching assistants and others, on an official need-to-know basis, have access to all university-related information on a student.

Students may see me after class, call 644-4020, or e-mail me for an appointment. Otherwise, come to BIO 306 during office hours (see syllabus) and I will try to work you in. There also will be **help sessions** before each exam as indicated on the schedule. (Please note the place, which *may* be different for different sessions. Importantly, also **verify the time and location** as these are sometimes changed because of scheduling conflicts that develop after the beginning of the semester (such as creation of additional sections of other classes.)) I will be available to assist you to the extent necessary for you to master the course objectives and I am pleased to handle many routine matters on a very timely basis by e-mail, as long as it is polite and not anonymous.

As indicated in the above, the TAs and I are always eager to assist in all ways possible in this course. Reciprocity is expected. If one fails to honor an appointment without notification or cause, he or she will not be given another appointment. Of course, office hours are available to everyone, regardless.

In some cases, an office appointment will result in a particular agreement (e.g., date and circumstances for a make-up exam). **To complete the agreement, the student must email the**

essence of the agreement within 24 hours so that I can verify that our understandings are identical. If the email is not sent within 24 hours, the agreement becomes null.

Classroom. FSU policy prohibits food and drink in general-purpose classrooms. The Provost and local administrators have taken a strong position on this matter in order to keep our physical plant in top-notch condition.

Agents and Delegates. Surrogates are not permitted. No one may act for a student in any way whatsoever. Nobody cannot take an exam for a student, or authorize another person to obtain a grade, deliver a document, sign up for an event, vouch for attendance and so forth. Students delegating authority or acting as a surrogate violate class policy and the honor code. (Of course, exemptions to this policy will be granted on an *ad hoc* basis, for example, for note takers as required.)

Summary. If you have a problem concerning this course, see me. It is my job and my pleasure to assist you with this course in any way possible. Together, we can become a formidable learning team!

From the Horse's Mouth . . .

(Peer advice is the very best, and I have edited a selection of comments from former students ("Voices of Experience") that are intended to give you a jump start on developing methods to perform well in this course. In addition, I have included an essay below from a student who scored a perfect 100 points on each of the first four exams.)

On class days, either before or after class, I read the portion of the class notes to be covered that day. (I don't always get around to this, but it doesn't take long. I read the footnotes at the same time.) I try to read the appropriate selections from the textbook as we go, but I more often start reading them about a week before a test, and I don't always read all the textbook material too closely, although I will if it interests me.

A couple of days before a test I look over the PowerPoint files (which I do read very closely). I then take the model exam in the green packet [Lecture Manual]. If I miss a question, I think about which of the Objectives it pertains to and review that material. I also carefully go over any life cycles and charts in the green packet before the test, making sure I understand them thoroughly and can reproduce them at least in outline. The night before the test, I carefully read all the footnotes a second time in order to get all the bonus points.

I always answer every question and I read each of the choices carefully and think about whether it's a true statement. If I don't see one clearly true choice and three clearly false ones, I cross out any choice that I know is false (perhaps because I can think of a specific counterexample), mark one of the remaining choices, and circle the question to come back to it. Often I think of something relevant while I'm taking the rest of the test. I think it's particularly important in this class to read the question and all the choices very carefully, because often they aren't simple to understand with a quick skim. After I'm done I check my answers.

It's impossible to overstate the importance of learning from particular examples and being able to put information in context.

I think anyone could probably meet their grade goal by taking similar measures.

Updated by WHO Aug 09, 2006