

AP Biology 2015-2016 Summer Assignment-Dr. Gottfried
Alonzo and Tracy Mourning Senior High Biscayne Bay Campus

Welcome-

I am very pleased to have you as a member of what promises to be an excellent class. I wanted to get in touch with you before we begin so that you could know what to expect and how to get the most out of the AP class. [If you are getting this by mistake and are not planning to take AP Biology next year please let me know! If you know someone who thinks they are taking AP Biology next year and didn't get this, please let me know!]

Advanced Placement Biology is a college biology course taught in high school. On Monday May 9, 2016 you will take a standardized exam which will determine your eligibility for credit in college biology. The exact nature of the credit will in part also depend on the college you attend.

The course, the exam, and everything related to them are all designed to be at the level of a biology course taught to science majors at an elite university. This is not an easy class. **It would not be an easy class in college.**

The course underwent a revision in 2012 and the newly designed exam is different from earlier versions.

The course covers a **vast** amount of material and thus makes heavy demands on even the best organized student. Given the schedule of the Miami-Dade County Public School System we have too little time to properly cover all the material in the course. Of course, there is also the time devoted in Florida to mandatory testing. We cannot afford to waste time additional time.

Class will be conducted at the University level and you are expected to work accordingly. Your success in this class depends on **you** meeting **your** responsibilities. A significant portion of the material will be covered only in readings and allowances should be made for **substantial study time. (I would guess about 7-10 hours a week every week!)**

Generally, in most programs, there are strict **prerequisites** and only students with As and Bs in honors biology and honors chemistry are taken into AP Biology— I have made some exceptions to this, if you find yourself “drowning” don't wait to go down for the third time, but come seek help as soon as you realize you are out of your depth (this also applies to those who did well in biology and chemistry, but, aren't well prepared). There are things you can do to help yourself.

The textbook we will be using is Campbell's Biology 9th Edition. It is also recommended that you purchase one of the AP Biology study guides as soon as possible, since they provide summaries of the material. Talk to the kids who took the class this year or in previous and see which book they recommend (Cliffs and Barrons seem to be the most correlated to the new exam.) You may want to set up a study group and as the group purchase a collection of review books. It can't hurt!

I believe in using computers to keep lines of communication open between students and teachers. I have setup a web page: <http://www.mdgottfried.net/apagenda/apagenda2015-2016.html> which will contain information on the class as it

I encourage you to sign up for text/email reminders via remind.com. Either text @drg-apb15 to 81010 or email drg-apb15@mail.remind.com Standard text rates apply. If you use the email option you can leave the subject and body of the message blank. Link to sign up page: <https://www.remind.com/join/drg-apb15>

Summer-

To overcome some of the time constraints I have in the past given summer readings and significant homework. This allowed us to get started with biology rather than to bog down in some background material. It also covers some material that we rarely have time for during the school year.

This year there are 3 required and 1 optional summer assignment.

A) I want you **all** to read a non-fiction book on evolutionary biology. It should be available in the public libraries as well as at bookstores or Amazon.com. You may be able to borrow a copy from students who took AP Biology in 2011-15; I required them to read it too.

There was a 3 part documentary spring 2014 on PBS based on this book.

This letter is available, with “live” hyperlinks via my web page: <http://mdgottfried.net>

(it may also be available online <http://www.pbs.org/your-inner-fish/watch/>)

I don't know if the 3 hour documentary would replace or only supplement reading the book.

Read: *Your Inner Fish* by Neil Shubin

To go along with the book I have prepared a series of questions which you have to answer. You may want to answer them as you read in a notebook or word processing document. When you have finished the book and all the questions please use my web form to submit your work. You can submit any time before Monday 8/24/2015. (After that, it will be counted late). The web form can be reached directly at, <http://mdgottfried.net/Forms/AP/YIF/YIF.html> or via a link from my main page. A copy of the questions is attached.

B] In addition attached is a Multiple Choice packet (also available on the web <http://mdgottfried.net/apagenda/Test001-2015.pdf>) based on the course pre-requisites (honors biology and honors chemistry) which you can use to make sure your skill and knowledge base is up to the demands of AP Biology. There will be a web form for you to enter your answers and it can be reached at <http://mdgottfried.net/Forms/AP/Test001.html> or via a link from my main page.

C] Lastly, for the summer, I want you to write me a letter introducing yourself. We are going to spend a lot of time together next year, so I would like to get a head start on learning a bit about you. Also, we will use the Internet and the Web a lot next year for this course, so let's get you used to communicating with me via e-mail.

Due BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS 8/24: E-mail me (Dr. Gottfried) a letter of introduction following these rules:

- Use clearly written, full sentences. Do not abbreviate words like you are on texting with a friend (I am well over 50 years old, and I don't know what most of those abbreviations mean :). Use spell check! This is a professional communication like you would have with a college professor, so let's practice for your rapidly nearing future!
- Address it to: <mailto:DrG.ATM@gmail.com>
- Make the Subject: "AP Bio: Introduction to <Insert Your Name Here>"
(Do not include the quote marks or the brackets, just the words)
- Begin the e-mail with a formal salutation, like "Dear Dr. Gottfried,"
- Now introduce yourself (your name) and tell me a little bit about yourself, some possibilities:
 - What do you like to do (hobbies, sports, music, interests, etc.)?
 - Do you have a job or other significant time commitments outside of academics?
 - Was there anything that you liked about your earlier science classes?
 - What was the last book you read for fun?
- You should also include:
 - What are you looking forward to the most in AP Biology?
 - What are you most anxious or worried about in AP Biology?
 - Why did you sign up for AP Biology?
- End the e-mail with a formal closing: "Cordially", "Sincerely", "Warm regards", etc. and add your name as if you signed a letter.

That's enough for now.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gottfried

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