Biology 2103L Spring 2026 Syllabus

Course at a glance
Introductory Biology lab, section 501
Thursdays, 12:00-2:45
Valencia Arts and Sciences room 135

Welcome to Introductory biology laboratory! This course is an overview of biological principles and laboratory techniques important for students to gain an understanding of science and the living world around them.



Instructor: Ben Flicker, Ph.D.

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Email and Canvas mail are the best contact methods for me.

Drop in hours*:
Mondays: 10:30-12:30
Tuesdays: 12:00-2:00
Wednesdays: 10:30-12:30
Thursdays: 9:30-10:00
*And really, anytime my door is open outside of these times.

Course Learning Objectives:

1.) Students will employ critical thinking skills to judge the validity of information from a scientific perspective (Lab 1, 12).

2.) Students will use the scientific method to formulate questions and develop testable hypotheses.

3.) Students will be able to use laboratory equipment to collect relevant, quality data.

4.) Students will recognize biodiversity in different ecological habitats and communities of organisms.



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Course Webpage:
We will be using the Canvas platform this year, canvas.unm.edu. Our class will make some use of this, though there will not be any required information or assignments provided only there. You will be able to find documents like the lab activities and exam study guides in the 'files' tab. Grades will be posted here as well. Finally, the syllabus with schedule will be found here.

Textbook:

There is **No** lab manual for this class. The weekly lab activities will be provided for you by your instructor. Digital copies will also be made available on the course Canvas page.

Course Materials: You are required to bring a notebook of unlined paper to keep as a lab notebook. You will turn this in for your participation points, so if you obtain one with perforated pages you can submit your work without submitting your entire notebook. I also recommend you work in your notebook primarily in pencil. I will bring colored pencils if you want to get fancy (optional).



Hi all,
Welcome to biology 2103L! I am a molecular and evolutionary biologist, specializing in plant evolution and systematics. Currently, my research interests include systematics of Piñon pine in New Mexico as well as the microbial diversity in the Middle Rio Grande. When I am not working, I love music and running. I am excited to work with you all this semester!

Tips for Success in this Course:

-Take time with your drawings. The details matter. If you can draw the material, you will understand it.

-Read over the appropriate lab exercises as well as your results to prepare for the exams.

-Communicate with instructor in the case of absence.



Accommodations: UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact the UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at sjclawson@unm.edu. Or the UNM-Albuquerque Accessibility Resource Center (https://arc.unm.edu/) at arcsrvs@unm.edu or by phone at 505-277-3506

Course Grading Policy: Your grade in this class will be made up of the following:

50 points: Participation (10 lab exercises @ 5 points each)

50 points: Notebook

100 points: Earth Day Project

50 points: Exam

100%=A+, 92-99=A, 90-91=A-, 89=B+, 82-88=B, 80-81=B-, 79=C+, 72-78=C, 70-71=C-, 69=D+, 62-68=D, 60-61=D-, <60=F.

Course Graded Assignments:

Exams: **1** exams will be given during the term, a final exam covering the material from the course. This will be worth 50 points It will be a mixture of practical and written elements.

Notebook: In most labs you will be generating drawings as well as data. Your notebook will be a collection of those drawings you make in the labs throughout the semester. It will be at the end of the semester. Your notebook will be graded based upon accuracy, detail, and completeness. It is worth 50 points

Class Participation: Actively participating with your group is essential to this course. As such, 96 of your points possible in the course will come from class participation. These points will be allotted based on: Regular attendance, being engaged in lab work, actively, and accurate completion of the lab activities.

Earth Day Project: This is a group project we will work on throughout the semester, with multiple parts due during that time with an ultimate presentation at the campus' Earth day. The combined parts of this project will be worth 100 points.

Laboratory Policies:

1.) No food or drink is allowed in the lab at any time.

2.) No chewing gum in the lab.

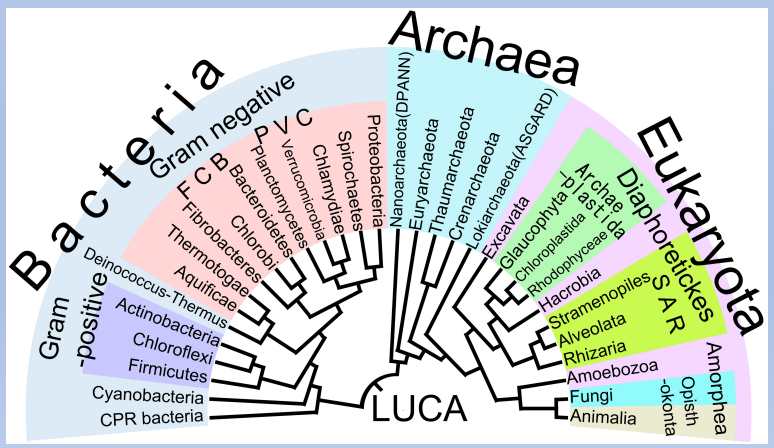
3.) Absolutely no horseplay will be tolerated.

4.) Come on time and prepared for the lab activity and quiz for that day.

5.) Treat all lab equipment carefully and with respect.

Title IX: UAP 2720 and 2740. Our classroom and university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. If you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access campus support resources. These include confidential services at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the LGBTQ Resource Center. The University of New Mexico prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including gender, sex stereotyping, gender expression, and gender identity). UNM faculty and graduate teaching assistants are considered "responsible employees." "Responsible employees" must communicate reports of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence to Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, reporting, and reporting for "responsible employees," please see UAP 2720 and UAP 2740.

If you are pregnant or experiencing a pregnancy-related condition, you may contact UNM's Office of Compliance, Ethics, and Equal Opportunity at ceeo@unm.edu. The CEEO staff will provide you with access to available resources and supportive measures and assist you in understanding your rights. Pregnancy and Parenting Support information is available here.



Date	Lab Exercise	Assessment
1/22/2026	Course Introduction	
1/29/2026	Cells and Microscopy	
2/05/2026	Scientific Method	
2/12/2026	Enzymes	
2/19/2026	Cellular respiration	
2/26/2026	Photosynthesis	
3/05/2026	Mitosis	
3/12/2026	Sexual and asexual reproduction	
3/19/2026	**Spring Break**	
3/26/2026	Genetics 1	
4/02/2026	Genetics 2	
4/09/2026	Plant morphology and evolution	
4/16/2026	Earth Day Prep	
4/23/2026	Earth Day	
4/30/2026	Wild Card/Exam review	
5/07/2025	**Final Exam**	Notebooks due