

What has made the natural sciences so effective at unraveling some of the mysteries of life & the universe?
How does the Theory of Evolution explain the History of Life, Biological Diversity, & the Interdependence of Living Organisms?

the unique features of the natural sciences and the characteristics of living organisms.
the evolutionary processes that have been influential throughout the history of life.
the basic characteristics, classification, & ecology of living organisms.

- Completion of reading, *LearnSmart*,

Most students come to class to learn and I will not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning environment. Come to class prepared to concentrate & pay attention. Since some people may not know what is expected in a college classroom, the following rules should make this clear. If I have to stop class and speak to you about a disruption, I will ask to see you after class, and if it happens more than once you will be told to leave.

1. Attend to your personal needs before class and refrain from getting up during class unless it is urgent.
2. Class will start promptly at 2:00, please have your notebooks open and be ready to pay attention and begin.
3. Once class begins, refrain from side conversations. If you are asking about a word in lecture, make it short & quiet.
4. If a classmate is being rude or distracting you, let them know or say "Shhhhhhhh" loud enough for me to hear.
5. The VSU rules are no eating or drinking in the lecture hall. Water bottles are fine.
6. You are welcome to have your laptops, pads, & phones in class to record lectures, look up terms, and photograph slides. However, this is not an invitation to skype, take calls, or read & send texts. If anyone is bothering you with such behavior, report them to me after class or by email. There will be grade penalties for this type of disruption.
7. Class will end at 3:15, unless you see "THE END" on a slide before, so do not pack up & rustle your packs before this.

Learning Management System - Your VSU Account: This will be used for all class communication, writing assignments, and access to various resources. (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academics/elearning/blazeview-d2l.php>)

Course Management System - This is a complete electronic version of the book and a versatile software product for the graded, adaptive pre-reading *LearnSmart*, practice assignments and pre-tests.

Marielle Hoefnagels -Biology: Concepts & Investigations 4th Ed.(2018) McGraw Hill in the *Connect* Platform (eBook & eLearning)
The Bookstore charges \$106.25 for the same access number that can be purchased directly from publisher for \$85.00 using a credit card on the registration site:

Everyone may sign up for a free 2-week trial until your financial aid money is available or you are sure you will stay in the class. If you want a hard copy, you can purchase a loose-leaf version for \$25.00

In order to encourage you to see the relevance of the topics covered in this course, there will be six essays required as part of the course content. These assignments also have been designed help you to learn, outside the classroom, through your own writing. Writing is an important way to learn because if you can construct sentences about something, it will organize your understanding in your mind or let you know that you need to seek more information about a subject. Papers are also an opportunity to display your knowledge through more than just exams. These assignments also allow you to pursue the connections between your own personal interests and what we cover in class, so you should take pride in them.

Well-crafted writing always has a specific purpose. Decide on a thesis for the assigned topic and a specific case you want to make before you start writing. Even if it is only a paragraph, every composition should have a central idea. Your thesis should directly address the nature of the writing assignment. Write the thesis down and check throughout the writing process to be certain that the work supports it. Starting a paper can be the hardest step, so if you feel blocked, try brainstorming. Take a blank sheet of paper without lines, and just write down any ideas you have or do some reading to get ideas. Look over these thoughts for ideas that go together in the form of a thesis.

Explain the relationship between science and the natural world, in detail.

Define race, clarify how it has been used in a human context, and explain how human diversity has been used to justify racism?

How do you feel about studying Evolution in this class? What have you heard about it, and why has it become socially controversial?

Explain the distinctions between prokaryotes, protists, plants, fungi, and animals.

Using specific examples, explain why the natural world is best described as a dynamic equilibrium.

Compare and contrast the natural world prior to anthropogenic disruption to what we see today.

Before you begin to write, think through how you plan to develop your thesis and use an outline to structure your thoughts with a sequence that makes sense. An Introduction and Conclusion will be the first and last paragraphs, but they can actually be written last. Start paper with something catchy in the first sentence to interest the reader. Make it perfectly clear, in the

Aug 15 - Levels of Organization
17 - Patterns in Nature

22 Scientific Racism p.325
24 - Diversity of Skin Color p.250-255

29

(You can even count up by reading from the bottom if you are a David Letterman fan)

If you want to earn an "A" and/or do well in this course, you need to think about your own approach to studying. You will not even pass unless you work hard so (before you waste your time and someone's tuition money) consider the following:

– The *Connect* chapter assignments are due on specific days, before class when the lectures will begin covering the specific topic. Read the book so that you will come in knowing how to spell words and have some familiarity with key ideas.

– The information in class sessions will not be identical to your book.

The scientific topics will be explained differently and additional information will be covered. Think as we go along, and if you do not understand - ask questions. Clicker prompts are designed to get you thinking, so you can evaluate your own understanding of the subject.

– If you use a spiral for class notes, have another folder where you can assemble all of your papers and outside information in preparation for studying for the tests.

or synopsis of the information covered to be sure that you understand it all. If not, read up on the subject in your text or on the Web or come in for help on anything you do not understand. If you miss something in lecture, leave a space in your notes where you can look it up on the web or come to office hours for an explanation. By going over your notes to be sure they make sense and writing a paragraph in your own words, you will be way ahead when it is time for a test.

– Make contact with a student that sits next to you in class. This is so that

you can