

Instructor

Nature of Life Program Director, Frances Wood – fkwood@umn.edu
Moos Tower 5-220 (Department of Biology Teaching and Learning) – office hours by appointment

Course Basics

- **Course Website:** University of Minnesota (U of M) Canvas (<https://canvas.umn.edu>)
- **Course Meeting Time:** CBS Common Time (Fridays, 12:20 – 1:10 pm)
- **Course Meeting Locations:** Guild Meeting and Choice Week workshop locations are posted on Canvas
- **Course Questions:** If you have general questions about the course that are not answered by reading the syllabus or Canvas, please email them to nol@umn.edu

Learning Objectives

Nature of Life is designed to aid the success of each student entering CBS. Throughout this four-semester course series, you will:

- Engage with questions of your identity, motivation and aspirations (e.g. What matters to me? Who do I want to become? How will I get there?);
- Develop skills in critical reflection and metacognition;
- Build social and professional networks at the U of M;
- Explore and enrich your undergraduate experience using resources and experiencing events that interest you.

Required Materials

- BIOL 1805 Canvas Site: <https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/127612>
- Your individual BIOL 1805 GoogleDoc (will be shared to your Google Drive by course administrators)

Course Workload

Nature of Life is a two-year course series (BIOL 1805/1806 and BIOL 2905/2906) awarding 2 credits total. You will earn 0.5 credits upon passing each course in the series. Each course is graded on a Satisfactory/Non-Satisfactory (S/N) basis (also known as Pass/Fail).

Each course in the NOL series has been designed to align with the University of Minnesota's workload formula of 2 hours of outside-class work for every 1 hour in lecture (e.g. a 3 credit class = 9 hours total spent in lecture and studying per week to earn a passing grade; students who earn higher-than-average grades typically spend more time on task than that).

Because BIOL 1805 is a 0.5 credit course, you should expect to spend an average of 1.5 hours per week on the course, including attending Guild Meetings, which are held for 50 minutes on Fridays from 12:20 – 1:10 pm. Some weeks you may spend a bit more time on the course; some weeks you will spend a little less. Always, the amount of time you spend on the course will be proportional to its impact. In other words, **you will get out of Nature of Life what you put into it.**

BIOL 1805 Canvas Site

The BIOL 1805 Canvas site contains all important and current information about the course. In the first week of the semester, you should review it thoroughly and refer back to it regularly as the semester progresses. In particular, please note these sections:

- **Guild Meetings:** The dates and locations for the nine required All and Individual Guild meetings are posted on this section of Canvas, as well as an explanation of the various people who help lead Guild meetings.
- **Course Schedule:** A week-by-week course calendar with deadlines for all written work is posted on the Course Schedule section of Canvas.

Course Components

Category	Description
<p>Complete NOL@Itasca (or NOL@Cedar Creek).</p>	<p>Participate in all program activities and complete exam at Lake Itasca Biological Station and Laboratories (or at Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve).</p>
<p>Attend CBS College Day during Welcome Week.</p>	<p>Participate in CBS College Day activities on Thursday, August 29, 2019.</p>
<p>Meet all four Writing Deadlines during the semester.</p> <p>Each Writing Deadline consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Assigned Writing • A Choice Point Reflection <p>Details and reflection prompts for each Assigned Writing are located in your BIOL 1805 GoogleDoc.</p> <p>To complete Choice Points Reflections, you must attend an event or activity offered during a Choice Week (or something you select from the menu on Canvas), and write a brief reflection about the experience. See the "Choice Points" tab on Canvas for full details.</p>	<p>1. My Personal Values in Action + Choice Points Reflection A Due Sunday, September 22 by 10:00 pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> Your values are central to who are you are and who you hope to become. This assignment helps you clarify your values and articulate how they can help you overcome challenges you will encounter during college. <i>Choice Points Reflection A:</i> Choose and complete an activity, and enter your reflection.</p> <p>2. Time Management Plan + Choice Points Reflection B Due Sunday, October 13 by 10:00 pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> Time is a precious resource. How are you spending yours? This assignment helps you examine and improve your own time management skills for maximum academic and personal success. <i>Choice Points Reflection B:</i> Choose and complete an activity, and enter your reflection.</p> <p>3. First-Year Checkback Writing + Choice Points Reflection C Due Sunday, November 3 by 10:00 pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> Good planning and clear goals are keys to success; CBS academic advising can help you with both. This assignment helps you maximize the benefit of your First-Year Checkback advising appointment and gives you practice using Graduation Planner, an important tool for your academic planning. <i>Choice Points Reflection C:</i> Choose and complete an activity, and enter your reflection.</p> <p>4. SGL 1:1 Meeting Reflection + Choice Points Reflection D Due Sunday, November 24 by 10:00 pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> As a part of BIOL 1805, you're matched with a Sophomore Guild Leader who responds to your written work in the Nature of Life courses and offers support to you during your first year in CBS. For this assigned writing, you'll meet individually with your SGL to check in about your transition into CBS and reflect on themes in your conversation. <i>Choice Points Reflection D:</i> Choose and complete an activity, and enter your reflection.</p>
<p>Attend All-Guild and Individual-Guild meetings held during Common Time.</p>	<p>The CBS Guilds help you build your experience in CBS by connecting you with fellow students, faculty, and staff. Throughout the semester, Individual-Guild meetings and All-Guild meetings will take place during Common Time (Fridays from 12:20 - 1:10 pm). You are expected to attend each Guild meeting during the semester.</p>

How to earn an “S” in BIOL 1805

Earning an “S” in BIOL 1805 is straightforward: you must **earn the minimum number of points in each of the two coursework categories** listed in the chart below: Writing Deadlines (Assigned Writings *and* Choice Point Reflections) and Guild Meetings. It is your responsibility to monitor your progress in the course and ensure that you are on track to earn an S.

Coursework Category	Number of Items and Points Value	Maximum Points Possible in Category	Minimum Points Required in Category to Earn an “S”
Writing Deadlines	Each Writing Deadline is worth 20 points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned Writing @ 10 points/submission Choice Point Reflection @ 10 points/submission 	80	70
Guild Meetings	9 meetings @ 10 points/meeting	90	80

How are points for Guild Meetings determined?

Guild meeting points are attendance-based and you are expected to attend every meeting held during the semester. When you attend a Guild meeting you earn 10 points (you need to swipe in with your U-Card at All-Guild meetings). If you must miss a Guild meeting, regardless of the reason, you receive 0 points for that meeting. If you are more than 10 minutes late to a Guild meeting, you will also receive 0 points for that meeting.

How are points for Writing Deadlines (Assigned Writings + Choice Point Reflections) determined?

All written work for BIOL 1805 will be completed in your individual BIOL 1805 GoogleDoc, which will be shared with your GoogleDrive by course administrators during the second week of classes.

Each time you enter a Writing Deadline submission in your 1805 GoogleDoc, you will receive written feedback in your GoogleDoc from the Sophomore Guild Leader (SGL) who reads and responds to your work. Your SGL will also enter a point-value grade for the writing in Canvas based on the criteria below:

Completed	Quality of Submission	Points
By posted due date	Submission represents a “good faith effort” by answering all questions in the reflection prompt and demonstrating thoughtful engagement with the topic. Writing aligns with the process of metacognition: 1. What? (What happened? What did I do? What did I expect, and what was different?) 2. So what? (Why does it matter to me? Why does it matter to others involved? What is the significance?) 3. Now what? (What am I going to do as a result of what happened? What did I learn and how will I apply it?)	10
By posted due date	Response does not represent a “good faith effort” because it does not address all questions in the reflection prompt; answers seem rushed and not carefully thought through; and/or responses are short, incomplete or lack obvious effort.	5
Nothing entered*	If nothing is entered by the due date, you will receive zero points for that writing deadline. * An important note about Writing Deadlines: you must meet all four Writing Deadlines in the course in order to pass BIOL 1805. Deadline management is fundamental to your success as a CBS student; the structure of each Nature of Life course reinforces this critical skill.	0

Course and University Policies

Academic Integrity in Nature of Life Courses:

As in all your academic courses at the University, your work in BIOL 1805 is governed by the Student Conduct Code. Your honesty and academic integrity is expected and is subject to the terms of the Scholastic Dishonesty policy stated here (Section IV, Subd. 1):

Code Subd. 1. Scholastic Dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, misrepresenting, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Student Conduct Code:

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University of Minnesota you are expected to adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. Please see here to review the full Student Conduct Code:

http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

Disability Accommodations:

The University of Minnesota views disability as an important aspect of diversity and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities (seen and unseen, permanent and temporary) to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- **If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please notify the Nature of Life Program Director, Frances Wood, early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in this course.**
- If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the DRC office on your campus (U of M Twin Cities - 612.626.1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

Students Participating in University-Sponsored Activities and Events:

If you must exceed the number of allowable Guild meeting absences because you are participating in a University-sponsored activity (e.g. intercollegiate athletic events, University system governance such as the Student Senate, student group competitions such as the Varsity Debate Team or Mock Trial), you must provide written notice of conflicts (e.g. athletics travel letter, activity participation verification) to Nature of Life Program Director, Frances Wood, as soon as possible plus complete make-up work for meetings missed beyond the single allowable absence.

Mental Health and Stress Management:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.