

Instructors

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Course Questions

If you have general questions about the course that are not answered by reading the syllabus or Canvas, please submit them to the Course Questions Forum on the Canvas so that questions and responses can be read by all students.

Course Website: University of Minnesota Canvas (<https://canvas.umn.edu>) BIOL 1806: Nature of Life, Year One

Course Meeting Time: Section 001 Fridays from 12:20-1:10pm; Section 002 (by permission only) Fridays from 2:30-3:20pm

Course Meeting Location: Guild meeting locations are posted on Canvas

Learning Goals

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

- Engage with questions of identity, motivation, and aspiration (e.g. Who do I want to become? How will I get there? Who can help me along the way?);
- Develop skills in critical reflection and metacognition;
- Develop social and professional networks at the U; and
- Explore and expand your interests by using resources and experiencing events at the U that align with your goals.

Required Materials

- BIOL 1806: Nature of Life, Year One Canvas Site: <https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/33104>
- Your individual BIOL 1806 GoogleDoc (will be shared with you)

Course Grading Criteria and Workload

Nature of Life is a two-year course sequence (BIOL 1805/1806 & BIOL 2905/2906) awarding 2 credits total. You will earn .5 credit after passing each semester. Each course is graded on a Satisfactory/No Credit (S/N) basis.

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

Because BIOL 1806 is .5 credits, you should expect to spend an average of 1.5 hours per week on the course, including Guild Meetings, which are held for 50 minutes on Fridays from 12:20-1:10pm (2:30-3:20pm for section 002). Some weeks you may spend a bit more time on work for 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 1806 Canvas Site

The BIOL 1806 course Canvas website is where you will find all important and current information about the course. In the first week of the semester, you should review it thoroughly and refer to it regularly as the semester progresses. You should note these sections:

Guild Meeting Dates and Locations - The dates and locations for the eleven required Guild meetings are posted on the Canvas site on the "Guild Meetings" page under the heading "Guild Meeting Dates and Locations."

Course Calendar and Deadlines - A week-by-week course calendar with deadlines for all written work is posted on the Canvas site on the "Course Information" page under the heading "Course Calendar and Deadlines."

Course Components

Category	Description
<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 BSW Benchmark <p>Full details and reflection prompts for each Writing Deadline are located in your BIOL 1806 GoogleDoc.</p>	<p>1. Fall Back, Spring Ahead + BSW Benchmark #1 – Due Sunday, January 28 by 11:59pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> As second semester gets underway, prepare yourself to succeed by taking some time to reflect on your first semester at the University. What went well? What needs improvement? What resources can help you? Complete the Fall Back, Spring Ahead Snapshot Survey (link in your BIOL 1806 GoogleDoc and on Canvas) to prompt your reflection and then write a brief metacognitive essay focused on your experiences last fall and your goals for this spring. <i>BSW Benchmark #1:</i> Your BSW team will receive your Focus Scientist match on 1/26. For this benchmark, enter your scientist’s name, position in the lab (e.g. PI, Postdoc, grad student) and a brief description of their lab.</p> <p>2. Major Inspiration + BSW Benchmark #2 – Due Sunday, February 25 by 11:59pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> When you make decisions, like declaring your major, aligning your choice with your interests, values, and goals means that you can’t make a wrong move! In this assigned writing, think about an aspect of science that fascinates you. Describe what it is and why it interests you, and you’ll have taken a snapshot of least one signpost along your road to declaring a major. <i>BSW Benchmark #2:</i> By now, your BSW team should have held your first meeting with your Focus Scientist. For this benchmark, write a brief reflection on the experience of that meeting.</p> <p>3. Conversation with a Professor + BSW Benchmark #3 – Due Sunday, March 25 by 11:59pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> Forming connections with your professors helps you take advantage of one of your primary resources here at the University: your faculty and instructors. Use this assignment to have and reflect on a conversation with one of your current professors or instructors. <i>BSW Benchmark #3:</i> You have jumped right in to the teamwork that will be a big part of your academic life in CBS and beyond. What have you learned as a result? This BSW Benchmark will help you reflect on your areas of strength and opportunities for growth in a team situation.</p> <p>4. And My Major Is... + BSW Benchmark #4 – Due Sunday, April 22 by 11:59pm <i>Assigned Writing:</i> Throughout the first year of NOL, you have reflected on your goals, your interests, and your strengths, and you have learned about the majors that CBS offers. If you haven’t already declared your major, now is the time! <i>BSW Benchmark #4:</i> You have completed the BSW project – congratulations! In this BSW Benchmark, assess your own achievement of the project’s learning objectives.</p>
<p>Attend each Individual-Guild and All-Guild meeting and help your team complete the Biology Saves the World project.</p>	<p>The CBS Guilds help you chart your path in CBS by building connections with the CBS community. Throughout the semester, Individual-Guild meetings and All-Guild meetings will take place on Fridays from 12:20-1:10pm (Section 002 Fridays from 2:30-3:20pm).</p> <p>You are expected to attend each of the 11 Guild meetings (we meet just 11 of the 15 weeks in the semester) and work collaboratively with your Project Team to complete the Biology Saves the World project. For more information on the course attendance policy, see page 3 of the syllabus.</p>

Biology Saves the World

The CBS Mission is: “to improve human welfare and global conditions by advancing knowledge of the mechanisms of life through breakthrough discoveries and to prepare today’s students to create the biology of tomorrow.” You will create the biology of tomorrow, and you’ve chosen to attend a Research I institution where the biology of tomorrow is being discovered today.

Throughout BIOL 1806, you will be working with a group to complete the Biology Saves the World project challenge. You and your fellow team members will be matched with a Focus Scientist to learn about their scientific work and professional path, and create a presentation to communicate this information to your entire Guild. The BSW Focus Scientists are PIs (Principal Investigators, who are the head of a research lab), Postdocs (professional researchers who have earned their PhD) and PhD candidates (graduate students pursuing their PhD) who have volunteered their time to participate in this project.

BSW Project Learning Objectives (i.e., by completing the BSW project, you will):

- Learn about the scientific work being conducted by one particular scientist and understand what they do, why it matters, and how it might impact or change the world;
- Build your communication skills by developing and delivering a presentation that explains the value of your Focus Scientist’s work to your peers and other CBS community members;
- By listening to the presentations of your fellow Guild members, gain exposure to research in biology at the U and learn why it is important, how it happens, and how to get involved;
- Create connections with your fellow Guild members while building your teamwork skills and expanding your self-awareness about your role in a team;
- Gain experience with the thought and project development process you’ll use throughout your time in CBS;
- Exercise and expand your curiosity about the life-changing possibilities inherent in studying biology.

The project will launch at the first Individual-Guild meeting at the end of January, when you’ll receive your Focus Scientist match and begin researching their work, continue through February and early March when you will meet with your Focus Scientist twice, and conclude at the end of March, when you deliver your presentation to your Guild. At each of the four Writing Deadlines in the course, you will complete BSW Benchmarks to earn credit for your work on the project.

Full information and instructions for the BSW Project are located on the BIOL 1806 Canvas.

Opportunity Weeks

Opportunity Weeks in BIOL 1806 are an optional way for you to continue establishing a strong foundation for yourself in CBS and at the U. During each of the Opportunity Weeks during the semester, NOL will work with campus partners to offer topical and skill-based workshops.

Similar to Choice Weeks in BIOL 1805, you will receive an email at the start of an Opportunity Week announcing the workshop titles and providing a link to RSVP.

If you have an idea for an Opportunity Week workshop you would like NOL to offer, please send your idea to nol@umn.edu.

Course Completion Requirements

To earn an “S” in BIOL 1806 you must earn the minimum number of points in each of the two coursework categories (Writing Deadlines and Guild Meetings) listed in the chart below. 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	Minimum Points Required to Pass Course
Writing Deadlines	Each Writing Deadline is worth 20 points total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned Writing - 10 points/submission BSW Benchmark - 10 points/submission 	80	70
Guild and BSW Focus Scientist Meetings	11 meetings @ 10 points/meeting	110	100 (+ a completed BSW project from your team)

Writing Deadline Grading Rubrics

Each time you enter a writing submission (an Assigned Writing or a BSW Benchmark) in your 1806 GoogleDoc, your SGL will read it and give you written feedback related to your entry in your GoogleDoc. Your SGL will also enter a point-value grade for each writing submission in the Canvas gradebook. The points you earn are based on the following criteria:

Completion and Quality of Submission	Points
Work is completed by posted deadline and submission represents a “good faith effort” by adhering to the word count recommendation, 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
Work is completed by posted deadline, but 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; responses are short, incomplete, or lack obvious effort. OR Work is completed within one day after the posted deadline. Please note: in order to earn half-credit, late work must meet the “good faith effort” standards listed above.	5
If no work is submitted, you have earned zero points for that writing deadline component.	0

Guild Meeting and Focus Scientist Meeting Attendance Requirements

Guild and Focus Scientist meeting points are attendance-based. When you swipe in for attendance and participate in the duration of the Guild meeting, you earn 10 points. You are expected to attend each of the 11 Guild meetings (we meet just 11 of the 15 weeks in the semester, and the meeting calendar is available at the start of the semester) and work collaboratively with your project team to complete the Biology Saves the World project.

Because circumstances outside students’ control sometimes arise (e.g. serious illness, family crisis or death, etc.), course attendance requirements permit you to miss one meeting and still be able to earn the number of Guild and Focus Scientist meeting points required to pass the course. If you must miss a Guild or Focus Scientist meeting, regardless of the reason, you receive 0 points for that meeting.

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 subject to the terms of the Scholastic Dishonesty code below.

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.

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 to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- 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 (UM Twin Cities - 612.626.1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
- **If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in this course.**
- Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.
- If you are registered with the DRC and have questions or concerns about your accommodations please contact your access consultant/disability specialist.

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 those conflicts (e.g. athletics travel letter, activity participation verification) to course instructors as soon as possible and complete make-up work for the meetings missed beyond the single allowable absence.

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 you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the full Student Conduct Code, please see: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

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>.