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BIOL 1411.152 General Botany (Online)

Instructor: Kristin Bingham, Associate Professor of Biology

Contact me:

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Office Hours:

- Monday - 9:30 am – 11:30 am
- Tuesday - 9:30 am – 11:30 am
- Wednesday - 9:30 am – 10:30 am
- Thursday - None
- Friday - 9:00 am – 11:30 am

E-mail: kbingham@southplainscollege.edu

Office Phone: (806) 716-2308 – leave a message.

- Professor may be unavailable from noon on Friday until 7:45 am on Monday as well as on college holidays.

I am available by appointment outside of these hours – please don't hesitate to email me if you would like to schedule a meeting outside of these

PART 1.

The Fine Print: All the specifics about the course, what you will learn, and what you need for this course.

Course Description: Fundamental biological concepts relevant to plant physiology, life cycle, growth and development, structure and function, and cellular and molecular metabolism. The role of plants in the environment, evolution, and phylogeny of major plant groups, algae, and fungi. Laboratory activities will reinforce these same concepts to ensure comprehension. (ACGM 2021)

Course Delivery:

This section will be delivered entirely online, in an asynchronous format. This means that you work on your own to meet **weekly due dates**. There are no live lectures to attend. I **DO NOT** recommend waiting to do your weeks' worth of assignments in 1-2 days as there is simply not enough time. To be clear – **due dates on assignments are final**, that means if you fail to submit your work by the date and time that it is due, you WILL receive a ZERO for the assignment.

Required Course Materials:

Text: Stern's Introductory Plant Biology with Connect Access code, 15th Edition. Bidlack Jansky. E-book with Connect access code ISBN: 9781260488616

- **Textbook:** The textbook and resources for this course are available in digital format through the Inclusive Access **TextBook** program at South Plains College. That means the e-book edition of the textbook and/or all required resources are provided to students through Blackboard from the first day

of class. The fee for the e-book/resources is the lowest price available from the publisher and bookstore and is included in the student tuition/fee payment. Therefore, **students do not have to purchase a separate textbook or access card for this course.**

- **Opting out of Inclusive Access:** As long as they meet the opt-out deadline, students may choose not to participate in the Inclusive Access program if they have a textbook from another source. Students should check with the instructor for advice before deciding to opt out because Inclusive Access is the cheapest option for most students. Students should also find out whether course work is required in an online platform like *Mindtap* or *Connect*. If so, students who opt out would be required to purchase access to that platform in addition to acquiring the e-book on their own. To opt out of the Inclusive Access e-book/resources, students should visit <https://support.bibliu.com/hc/en-us/articles/12675286467997-How-does-Opt-Out-work> before the census date. Students who need assistance to opt out should contact the SPC Bookstore. **The Inclusive Access fee will be refunded to students who opt out before the census date for their term of enrollment. The census date for fall and spring is the twelfth-class day. The census date for summer terms varies between the second and third class day.** **PLEASE VISIT WITH ME BEFORE OPTING OUT OF CONNECT** – You **WILL NOT** be able to complete the course without this!

Additional Required Materials:

- Reliable, stable access to the internet.
- Computer with a functioning webcam and microphone.
 - **NOTE:** Mobile devices (i.e., phones) should not be used for taking quizzes or exams.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that your device is compatible and up to date for all components of this class, specifically exams.
- Basic computing skills (sending emails, netiquette, attaching documents to emails, uploading files).

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Lecture and Lab components of this course, students will:

1. Compare and contrast the structures, reproduction, and characteristics of plants, algae, and fungi.
2. Describe the characteristics of life and the basic properties of substances needed for life.
3. Identify the principles of inheritance and solve classical genetic problems.
4. Describe phylogenetic relationships and classification schemes.
5. Identify the major phyla of life with an emphasis on plants, including the basis for classification, structural and physiological adaptations, evolutionary history, and ecological significance.
6. Identify the chemical structures, synthesis, and regulation of nucleic acids and proteins.
7. Identify the substrates, products, and important chemical pathways in photosynthesis and respiration.
8. Describe the unity and diversity of plants and the evidence for evolution through natural selection.
9. Compare different sexual and asexual life cycles noting their adaptive advantages.
10. Describe the reasoning processes applied to scientific investigations and thinking.
11. Apply scientific reasoning to investigate questions and utilize scientific tools such as microscopes and laboratory equipment to collect and analyze data. (Lab)
12. Use critical thinking and scientific problem solving to make informed decisions in the laboratory. (Lab)
13. Communicate effectively the results of scientific investigations. (Lab)

PART 2.

The Details: The rules, the guidelines, and the grade information.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RULES

This course will be conducted according to the policies and procedures of the South Plains College Student Handbook and General Catalog.

Online Course Content:

- **Blackboard is the primary source for course information.** We will use additional programs such as Connect (McGraw-Hill), EdPuzzle, etc. for activities throughout the semester but all assignments will be listed on Blackboard and linked from Blackboard.
- **Students need to access Blackboard regularly.**
- Specific course materials available include lecture notes, lecture videos, extra credit reading assignments, messages and announcements from the instructor, study aids, exams, lab exercises, etc.

Communication Policy:

- For individual communication, **I prefer to use Blackboard Course Message.**
- If you are having an emergency and need to email me, please send your questions or concerns, and include:
 - Subject line: A summary of the topic needing attention
 - A greeting – I prefer either Professor Bingham, Ms. Bingham, or Ms. B.
 - In the text of the message, please let me know how I can help you.
 - I check my messages at least once a day Monday – Friday and I generally respond to emails within 24 hours or less except for on weekends and holidays.
- For group communication, I will use **announcements on Blackboard.** I will also copy urgent announcements to your email listed in Blackboard. **Please be sure this is an email that you regularly access.**
- In an online course, communication is critical to your success. Please be timely in your communication in relation to any problems you are experiencing with the course. *I will work to reply to your messages within 24 hours and I ask that you do the same.*

Attendance Policy:

- This is an asynchronous online class. You will work on your own schedule to complete the assignments by the date they are due. Regular and consistent interaction with online lessons, labs, and textbook materials is necessary for satisfactory achievement. There are no extensions for assignments without extenuating circumstances (i.e. life-threatening illness, death, etc. – see my **Make-up Policy** below in the document).
- Course material is arranged in Weeks on Blackboard (Week 1...Week 16)
 - Each Week folder includes lecture and labs as well as supplemental assignments and quizzes. The Exam folder has the dates of that week listed we are working in.
 - For example, Week 1 Material: 8/25/25 to 8/31/25
- You will work on your own schedule to complete the assignments by the due date and time. All times listed are Levelland local times (Central Standard Time).

Our **due day/time** for items this session will be
SUNDAY at 11:59pm (Central Standard Time)
 except for the Final Exam, which is mandated by SPC.
 You are responsible for submitting all work by the time/date due

- Attendance will be measured by a student's ability to consistently log on to Blackboard and COMPLETE the assigned work. Failure to turn in assignments will be recorded as an "absence." The instructor will monitor student statistics throughout the duration of the course and will contact you if your personal statistics deviate from what is "normal" for the rest of the class.
- The student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when they have failed to turn in a total of four (4) graded assignments, quizzes, and/or exams (at any time; for any reason) AND the minimum course objectives cannot be met.
- If I notice that you are not progressing, I will try to reach out to you by course message or email to try and determine what is happening, so that we can resolve it before it becomes too big of an issue.
- Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X."

Know this – I am incredibly dedicated to your success in this course. I want to hear from you and visit with you about the course and anything else you'd like to discuss. I will make every effort to accommodate you, but you must communicate with me. I can't help you if I don't know there is something that isn't working for you.

Course Grade Policy:

- The grade for this course will be based on:
 - Five Exams - 60% of total course grade
 - Extra Credit (5 points per exam)
 - Quiz Average – 20% of total course grade
 - Assignments Average - 10% of total course grade
 - Lab Average - 10% of total course grade

Letter Grade	Course Average
A	90 - 100 %
B	80 - 89.9 %
C	68 - 79.9 %
D	60 - 67.9 %
F	0 - 59.9 %

- The points you earn on each assignment will contribute to each category as detailed above. At the end of the semester, I will use the grading scale (above right) to assign your final letter grade. There are no curves this course.

Exam Policy:

- Exams are assigned and made available as listed in the course schedule and the assignment checklist. You have an allotted amount of time to take exams – typically several days. You are responsible for budgeting your time to find 60 minutes to complete your exams. Waiting until the last moment is a recipe for disaster – be sure you plan ahead and take your exam well before the due date/time.
- Each major exam will cover material from lectures, labs, and supplemental assignments during the unit.
- Material from lectures will include multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, matching, and true or false questions, as well as diagrams to complete. Lab material on exams will include questions asking you to identify structures, label diagrams, name the organism, and resolve classifications.
- Your score is recorded as the number of (points earned/total points possible)*100. This number is the number of points you will have earned for this exam.

- The Final Exam/Exam 5 will be given during final exams week. The final exam for this course **IS COMPREHENSIVE**.

Mandatory proctoring of major exams- Online exams within this course require online proctoring. Students are required to have a webcam (USB or internal) with a microphone when taking an exam. Students understand that this remote recording device is purchased and controlled by the student and that recordings from any private residence must be done with the permission of any person residing in the residence. To avoid any concerns in this regard, students should select private spaces for the testing. Various academic sites on each SPC campus offer secure private settings for recordings and students with concerns may discuss location of an appropriate space for the recordings with their instructor. Students must ensure that any recordings do not invade any third-party privacy rights and accept all responsibility and liability for violations of any third-party privacy concerns. Setup information will be provided prior to taking the proctored exam. **See exam testing procedures below.**

- **Exam testing procedures:** The following table lists conduct requirements for online exams, as well as conduct violations. **In general, behave as if you are taking the exam in a classroom with a live proctor.**

EXAM CONDUCT REQUIREMENT	CONSEQUENCE FOR VIOLATION OF EXAM CONDUCT
Microphone turned on and recording.	A 30% penalty will be given for an exam taken without the microphone being turned on and recording throughout the entire exam.
Sufficient lighting of the testing area.	A 30% penalty will be given for an exam taken without enough lighting for the instructor to assess the testing environment.
Student remains in webcam view during exam.	A student who leaves the webcam view during an exam for any reason will receive a zero for that exam. Additionally, if the student's full face is not visible during the exam will receive a 50% deduction of their score. Take all bathroom breaks, etc. before beginning the exam and make sure to check your webcam view throughout the exam.
No unauthorized materials near desk area.	A student who has any unauthorized materials that provide an unfair advantage during the exam (for example: phone, headphones, another computer, etc.) will receive a zero for that exam.
No talking with others during the exam or playing of music or other audio recordings.	A student who has any music or audio recordings playing during exams, or who talks with any ADULT for any reason during the exam, will receive a zero for that exam.
The exam is taken in an approved proctored environment.	Any exam taken without either the webcam software or in an approved testing center will receive a zero for that exam.

- I will provide a practice exam activity prior to giving you the first online exam so that I can educate students about proper testing behavior. This suspending of consequences is done as service to students to prevent unintentional or honest mistakes during subsequent exams. Consequences will be suspended *only* on that specific activity as it is meant to be a practice for you to familiarize yourself with the secure exam proctor. **I will provide feedback on any violations.**

- **Any student who thinks that a penalty was misapplied can request that the penalty be reviewed according to the Grievance Procedure listed below in the document.**
- If you experience technical difficulties, please contact me immediately. You can also reach out to Blackboard for help if the issue is with the platform. When taking exams, HonorLock's chat function is a life saver – talk to them FIRST! Should issues arise that are out of your control (i.e. Blackboard shuts down indefinitely, total loss of electricity regionally), I will adjust assignment availability and due dates as appropriate.

Other Assignments Policy:

- Assignments include Connect homework exercises, lab submissions, and EdPuzzle videos.
- All assignments will be posted with clear instructions, and each is worth 100 points.
- Lab Submissions:
 - You will be required to submit lab reports at times through this session. These may be in the form of completed worksheets, scanned documents/PDFs, and photos. You must be able to upload a photo/document and submit it for this course.
 - Each lab submission will be graded for completeness, accuracy of information, how well you followed directions, and proper use of the English language.
 - Your Lab Submissions will be combined and averaged and will be worth 100 points toward your overall grade this semester.

SPC Tutors:

- Tutoring is FREE for all currently enrolled students. Make an appointment or drop-in for help at any SPC location or online! Visit the link below to learn more about how to book an appointment, view the tutoring schedule, and view tutoring locations.
<http://www.southplainscollege.edu/exploreprograms/artsandsciences/teacheredtutoring.php>
- **Brainfuse**
 - You also have 180 FREE minutes of tutoring with Brainfuse each week, and your hours reset every Monday morning. Log into Blackboard, and click on the tools option from the left-hand menu bar. Click on the Brainfuse link and you will automatically be logged in for free tutoring. You may access Brainfuse tutors during the following times:
 - Monday – Thursday: 8 pm-8 am
 - 6pm Friday – 8am Monday morning
- **For questions regarding tutoring, please email tutoring@southplainscollege.edu or call 806-716-224**

Make-up Policy:

- If you miss an assignment, fail to upload your lab submission, or miss an exam, you will receive a zero for that assignment. You will not be able to make up or retake the missed item. **NOTE:** If you have an extenuating circumstance (i.e. you're in the hospital, are very ill, etc.) that prevents you from taking an exam or submitting your work on time, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss this. Should you be allowed to submit late work, each late submission will receive an automatic penalty of **-10 points**. Late work will only be accepted by the end of the exam unit in which it was assigned. If you have questions, I encourage you to discuss this with me.

Drop Procedure:

- An official drop initiated by the student before the Last Day to Drop (**December 4, 2025**) will result in a W on your transcript. Any drop initiated by the instructor for excessive absences will result in either an X or F grade on the transcript. See the school policy on drops and the limit placed on “unexcused” drops which

is available in the General Catalog on the school website. Students can drop a course online by completing the [Student Initiated Drop](#) form.

Student Conduct

- **Student Code of Conduct Policy:** Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.
 - A high standard of conduct is expected of all students. It is assumed that obedience to the law, respect for property, authority, personal honor, integrity, and common sense will guide the actions of each member of this class. Any student who fails to perform to the expected standards will be asked to withdraw from the course or will be administratively dropped from the course by the instructor.
 - Students should respect the academic situation and be considerate of others in the virtual classroom. Late arrivals should enter on and without disruption to the discussion. Students should refrain from talking, eating, or any other behaviors that will disturb others, including the instructor. Students should be alert and participating during discussions.
- **Online Course Behavior Expectations:**
 - Remember – You are addressing a professor even though you don't see them.
 - Don't say things that you wouldn't say publicly in a traditional class setting.
 - Don't address comments to individuals unless you want everyone to know what you are telling that person.
 - Don't share confidential information.
 - Read any messages or comments before sending; once it is out there, you can't change it.
 - Access your course messages frequently and read through an entire message before you reply.
 - Reply to messages from Instructor with 48 hours.
 - Because electronic communication does not show smiles and frowns (other than the graphic kind), or employ intonation, humor and sarcasm might be misunderstood. Use these carefully and employ good word choice so that your meaning comes through clearly.
 - Avoid sending unkind messages. Besides angering others and reflecting poorly on you, they may have the effect of shutting down discussion.
 - Aim for clarity and readability in your text. Paragraph often, avoid using only capital letters, and stay away from character symbols and conventions that get in the way of visual comfort.
 - Although electronic communication can be very informal, try for good language usage so that your message comes through rather than your mistakes (use your spelling and grammar checkers). Avoid correcting another person's language, however. Try to be clear, indicating what you are talking about fully instead of presuming that others know which message you are responding to, what chapter or assignment you are referring to, etc.
 - Use of inappropriate or disrespectful language, cyber bullying, etc. will result in a zero for that assignment and will require that the student attend a meeting with the instructor and/or any other appropriate faculty to address this issue.

Academic Integrity (from SPC General Catalog)

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own any work which he or she has not honestly

performed is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences, possibly suspension.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant.

- Plagiarism violations include, but are not limited to, the following:
 1. Turning in a paper that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill;
 2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation;
 3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and citing them; or
 4. Missing in-text citations.

- Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:
 1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
 2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
 3. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps, any secondary device) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
 4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
 5. Taking an examination for another;
 6. Altering grade records;
 7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment;
 8. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.

Grievance procedure:

- If a student is having a problem with the course policies or the instructor, he or she should *first* try and resolve any such problems with the instructor. If the problem is not resolved, the student may proceed to the Biology Department Chair, who can advise the student on how to resolve the problem or direct them to the appropriate office.

Copyright Notice:

- All material presented by the instructor in the course is copyright protected. The material presented by the instructor may not be modified or altered in any way. You have permission to print out one copy of any material presented by the instructor in this course (ex. course information sheet, contact information, and learning module checklists). The one copy must only be used for your personal educational use during this semester. The material may not be altered or modified in any way. The material may not be distributed in any way. You have permission to download the same material to your computer hard drive or other medium in order to print out the material needed. Any material downloaded may not be altered or modified in any way. The downloaded material may not be distributed in any way. If any course material is found on other websites, this becomes an act of academic misconduct and will be dealt with appropriately following the guidelines of the college concerning academic integrity.

Syllabi Statements:

- South Plains College policies concerning Disabilities, Non-discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy and Parenting Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation), Intellectual Exchange, Campus Concealed Carry, COVID-19, and AI (Artificial Intelligence) can be found here: [Syllabus Statements](#).