

# Mrs. Dinh's Biology

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to Biology! I am Ms. Dinh and your Science teacher this year. Biology is a 10 credit, college prep science course. Biology is the study of living things. Areas of focus include cellular biology, genetics, diversity, evolution, ecology and body systems (see CA State Standards).

This class is an opportunity for you to learn about Science. I absolutely believe that at this level and age, the students are at a reasonable level of maturity and I will give them the respect that they are entitled to and I expect that they do the same in return.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

**Each unit of learning will focus on one central summative exam. Within each Unit, students will complete tasks that will prepare them for the Unit Exam:**

**Tasks completed during the school week** may include –

- bringing completed homework to class
- completing classwork in class
- completing group work in class
- participation in seminar/collaborative style learning
- participation and completion of lab/activities
- demonstration of standards mastery on the weekly quiz

Work is due on the due date announced, however much of the work will be collected into weekly packets collected each Friday. Work completed by the due date but not up to class standards may be re-done on a timeframe to be established by the teacher.

\* **Deadlines:** In the case of an EXCUSED absence, make up work will be accepted late according to the number of days missed without penalty. **It is the student's responsibility to ask for missing work and turn it in a timely manner.** If the student is late or truant, work will be a zero for that day. LATE WORK can be turned in for **some** credit BEFORE the end of the week.

\* **Homework:** homework is to be turned in on the DUE DATE or student will receive a ZERO.

\* **Unit Packets:** Packets consists of ALL the assignments for the unit and will be turned in before EXAMS.

## ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES:

Students are expected to attend class everyday and follow the school policy.

## NOTES/CLASSWORK:

Notes help students in studying for exams. They are important. I expect them to take CORNELL notes. Work will **be stamped by teacher** in order to receive credit.

## EVERYDAY MATERIALS:

Line papers

1" – 1.5" Binder (with dividers)

Pencil/pen/highlighters

School planner

## GRADING GUIDELINES --Grades as Levels of Mastery

Your grade in Mrs. Dinh's science course will be based on and meant to represent the extent to which you master the standards as described by the State of California. Although you will ultimately receive a letter grade of A through F, assessments in class will measure your mastery on a one-through-five scale. These numbers will represent mastery as described below.

<b>5</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	In addition to level-4 performance, in-depth inferences and applications go BEYOND what was taught in class
<b>4</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	No major errors or omissions regarding any of the information, terminology and/or processes that were explicitly taught in class
<b>3</b>	<b>Basic</b>	No major errors or omissions regarding the SIMPLER details and processes BUT major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes
<b>2</b>	<b>Below Basic</b>	Some major errors and/or omissions regarding the SIMPLER details and processes and major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes
<b>1</b>	<b>Far Below Basic</b>	Very little or no understanding or skill demonstrated

Each assessment - tests, quizzes, projects, writing assignments, labs, etc - will be assessed using the scale above. In other words, if there are no errors in the simple content the student will receive a score of no lower than 3, if there are no errors in the complex content the student will receive a score of no lower than 4, and if a student can apply the concepts beyond what was explicitly taught in class the student might be assigned a score as high as 5.

### **Formative and Summative Assessments**

#### *Formative*

During a unit of study, quizzes and other assessments will be completed in order to measure progress towards mastery of the standards for that unit. These are *formative* assessments and are meant to inform both the student and teacher about what needs to be accomplished towards mastery. These scores will be entered into the grade book as a way of tracking progress and will be used, if need be, to assign letter grades before a unit of study is completed. But these ARE NOT GRADES even though they may be forced to be used that way in the interim. Formative assessments will not always measure at the highest levels of mastery. For instance a quiz dealing only with vocabulary might have a maximum score of 3, since it would not contain any complex content.

#### *Summative*

At the end of each unit of study there will be a summative exam (test), and there will almost always be another summative measure of mastery such as a project or lab. If students score higher on these summative measures than on previous formative measures, the final summative score over-rides previous scores in determining their unit score for that unit of study. There will almost always be a second opportunity to show mastery through a summative exam and/or summative project.

### Unit Scores

In addition to the gradebook entries for each assessment there will be a “Unit Score” entry which will be updated when each new assessment is entered into the gradebook. This Unit Score will be the only score averaged towards the grade displayed in Aeries. After the first quiz of a unit, the unit score will be the same as the score on that quiz. With each subsequent assessment the unit score will be updated to represent the student’s overall mastery. If the average of the summative assessments is greater than the previous formative assessments the unit score will be updated to reflect overall mastery.

### Work Habits

All classwork and homework completed towards mastering the standards, but not part of a formative or summative assessment, will be recorded into a work habits grade that is not averaged into the semester letter grade.

### Semester Grades

Semester grades will be determined by averaging the unit scores recorded during that semester. This ought to yield a score of zero-five, however, Aeries can only display final scores as percentages. In other words a score of five-out-of-five would show as 100%, a score of four-out-of-five would show as 80% and so on. Since 5 - Advanced - will be equated with “A” and 4 - Proficient - will be equated with “B” the following conversion table can help you interpret scores as displayed by Aeries.

80%= Summative      20%= Final

<b>4.1 - 5</b>	<b>Advanced</b>	<b>81% - 100%</b>
<b>3.1 - 4</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>61% - 80%</b>
<b>2.26 - 3</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>46% - 60%</b>
<b>1.76 - 2.25</b>	<b>Below Basic</b>	<b>36% - 45%</b>
<b>0 - 1.75</b>	<b>Far Below Basic</b>	<b>0% - 35%</b>

If you have any questions or concerns or if you would like to visit our classroom, schedule a conference, or volunteer to help out, you can **contact me** at:

School: (714) 663-6415

Email: vdinh@ggusd.us

( 9PM is the latest that I will check email in order to respond to you in a timely fashion)

### Office hours for students:

Tuesdays and Wednesdays during lunch and Wednesdays after school **OR** by appointment.

Once again, welcome to Mrs. Dinh’s Biology class! Let’s work together to make this the best year ever!

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Dinh

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## Mrs. Dinh’s Class Agreement

Please sign indicating that you have read the above letter with your student and return this page to Ms. Dinh. Thank you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (student)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email (parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Period

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date