

Instructor Information:

Hilary Mercer

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Office: GLAS 0265

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Materials:

Inquiry into Life, 17th Edition

Mader and Windelspecht **READ "Textbook Information" below before purchasing**

University Policies/Information:

As a WKU student enrolled in this course you have certain rights, entitlements and responsibilities established by federal law and/or set forth in University policies. These are summarized at: <https://www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo/>

Information on requesting an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act can be found by clicking on the "ADA Accommodation" tab.

Information regarding the reporting of discrimination or harassment under Title IX of the Equal Opportunity in Education Act can be found by clicking on the "Title IX Discrimination/Harassment" tab.

1. Information regarding academic integrity and the student code of conduct as described in the Student Handbook can be found Don't leave points on the table. The reason some people do poorly in this class is because they fail to complete SmartBook assignments or in-class quizzes. These points are totally under your control, so be sure to take advantage of them by clicking the "Things you should know" tab.

Additional information on university resources and support available to you can be found by clicking on the various tabs.

Schedule Changes:

The Undergraduate Catalog provides information on withdrawing from the course; [the process is summarized here](#). Be aware that it is your responsibility to drop the course if you desire, and that doing so may have implications for tuition refunds and/or financial aid. If you wish to withdraw from the course you should do so by the dates printed in the [Registration Guide](#) for the semester.

Communication and Help:

Please reach out to me if you have questions, or if you need assistance with the class. I'm happy to help, but will need to rely on you to take the initiative.

Email is the best way to reach me. When emailing to ask questions or set up an inperson time to talk, please:

1. Use your WKU-assigned email address, as this is the venue for official WKU correspondence.
2. Include your class and section in the Subject line (i.e., BIOL 113- 001). This will help me know better what you're asking about.
3. Give me a day or two to respond. Generally, I will be quicker, but circumstances may prevent me from getting back to you right away, so be patient.
4. Use a professional tone. Take the time to construct grammatically-correct, complete sentences, remembering that you are communicating in a professional setting. 'Hey,...' is not an appropriate way to begin such a conversation.

If I need to communicate with you (e.g., if class will need to be cancelled, or to remind you of something), I'll do so using your WKU-assigned email address. Be sure to check this address regularly to ensure you don't miss any important notices from me or the university.

Strategies for Success:

1. Come to class. Exams will be drawn from material we talk about in class; studying PowerPoint slides alone will not be sufficient to earn a good grade on the exams. In addition, unannounced quizzes will be given during class. If you're not in class regularly, you will not be successful.
2. Take written notes. Annotate course notes and slides. Studies have shown that people who write notes retain more than those who type them.
3. Build a regular study routine. The habits you set during the first few weeks of college will tend to be the ones you stick with. Make them good and reasonable ones.
4. Don't leave points on the table. The reason some people do poorly in this class is because they fail to complete SmartBook assignments or in-class quizzes. These points are totally under your control, so be sure to take advantage of them.

An introductory course in biology for the non-science major, which emphasizes the diversity and organization of life integrated with major principles and new discoveries. This course fulfills one of two natural science (E-NS) requirements of the Colonnade General Education Program.

Learning Outcomes. By the end of this course, the goal is that you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the methods of science inquiry.
2. Explain basic concepts and principles in [biology].
3. Apply scientific principles to interpret and make predictions in [the field of biology].
4. Explain how [biological] principles relate to issues of personal and/or public importance.

I hope that will be unlike any biology course you've had in the past. We will not move through the textbook chapters from beginning to end. Instead, we're going to take a 'Big Ideas' approach. At the beginning of each section of the course, I'll present you with a question or statement I hope will pique your curiosity and interest in learning more. As we talk through it in more detail, we'll make connections to other topics and see how different concepts and processes come into play. We'll cover most of the same topics as you would in a traditional biology course, just in more of a back-to-front way.

It's also my hope that each day, you'll learn at least one interesting fact, concept, or application of biology you'll want to go back and share with friends and family. I want you to see biology as a dynamic field of study that has implications for how you view and navigate the world.

Grading and Evaluation. In order to be successful in this course, you'll need to (1) be prepared for lectures, and (2) keep up-to-date. Studies have invariably shown that attendance and active engagement in class are the biggest contributors to success. To assist you in this regard, grades will be based on the following components:

1. 15 SmartBook assignments @ 10 points each (all-or-none)
2. 4 mid-semester exams @ 50, 100, 100 and 100 points each, respectively
3. 10 quizzes/assignments @ 10 points each
4. Colonnade Assessment @50 points

for a total of 650 total points possible. The grading scale will be as follows:

A = 90+% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F = 59% or less

Plan to read the assigned chapters and complete the associated SmartBook assignments at the beginning of each section of the class. These assignments will be available on Blackboard the day we start each section; you must complete them by the time we reach the end of the section. DON'T WAIT until the last minute! SmartBook uses adaptive technology; each assignment continues until you have demonstrated competency for the material. As such, each is graded in an all-or-none fashion – if you complete the assignment, you'll get full credit. Because Smartbook assignments are available for about 2 weeks and can be completed on any computer, (including open computer labs on campus) no deadline extensions or make-ups will be given.

Exams will be based entirely on the material covered PowerPoints and accompanying lecture notes

10 short quizzes will be scattered throughout the semester, and completed only during the scheduled class period only. The purpose is to give you the chance to practice in real time what we are learning.

Tentative Course Outline: Dates are subject to change. I will communicate any changes to you as soon as possible.

Dates	The Big Ideas	SmartBook Chapters
1/16 – 1/31	“Thinking like a scientist”	1/2
Exam 1: Must be completed by 1/31 (50 points)		
2/1 -	“Nothing in biology makes sense except...”	27
2/29	“Where did all the oxygen come from?”	3/4, 6, 7/8
Exam 2: Must be completed by 2/29 (100 points)		
3/18 – 3/22: Spring Break		
3/1 -	“Are any of your relatives blue?”	23, 24, 5
4/4	Yes or no to GMOs?”	25, 26
Exam 3: Must be completed by 4/4 (100 points)		
4/5 -	“Because eggs are bigger than sperm”	33, 18
5/2	“1.5 to stay alive”	34, 36, 37
Exam 4 and Colonnade Assessment: Must be completed by 5/2 (100 + 50 points)		

Course Delivery. This course will be fully online.

Textbook Information: To save you money, maximize your effective use of the textbook, and increase learning, we’ve entered into a partnership with McGraw-Hill publishers. By enrolling in this course, you agree to purchase the digital materials associated with this course. You will have received some information about the **Big Red Backpack Program**, which is designed to reduce the cost of textbooks over the course of your time at WKU. By default, each term you are charged \$24 per credit hour enrolled to cover the cost of all your required textbooks; this corresponds to \$72 for the materials associated with BIOL 113. While this is a good deal if the classes you are taking have a lot of expensive or required texts, it may not be in all cases. As such, you should look carefully at the actual costs of ALL the texts you will need for a given semester, and decide if the Big Red Backpack Program makes sense for you.

There is a 6-7 day window to opt out each semester. If you decide to opt out, you will need to purchase the e-text and access to Connect for BIOL 113 directly from McGraw-Hill at [Inquiry Into Life \(mheducation.com\)](https://www.mheducation.com). Select the Connect option under Purchase Options. The cost is about \$102. Once you purchase the materials, you’ll be given an access code to link your account to the BIOL 113 Blackboard course site. If you opt out but fail to purchase access separately, you will lose the ability to complete SmartBook assignments once the grace period is over.

SmartBook and Respondus Lockdown Browser set-up. Using the e-text to complete Smartbook assignments requires that you establish a McGraw-Hill Connect account, and link it to the Blackboard course site.