

**BIOL 150A – Modern Biology  
University of Victoria  
Syllabus (Fall 2023)**

**General Course Information**

Welcome! This course introduces the evolutionary and ecological principles that underlie biological diversity. Topics include, the history of life, genetics, mechanisms of evolution, and the ecology of communities and ecosystems. The course will be taught synchronously, 'face-to-face', and will be complemented by online tools.

**Lecture Contact Hours and Locations**

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays @  
9:30am-10:20am (A01) in MAC A144, or  
1:30pm- 2:20pm (A02) in in ECS 123

**Intended Learning Outcomes**

After completion of this course, you will be able to identify/define key biological terms, as well as describe core concepts relevant to the origin and maintenance of biological diversity. When prompted, you will also be able to effectively apply scientific reasoning to everyday issues relevant to human health, society, and the environment.

**Instructors:**

Dr. Gregory Beaulieu ([gregoryb@uvic.ca](mailto:gregoryb@uvic.ca))  
Dr. David Punzalan ([davidpunzalan@uvic.ca](mailto:davidpunzalan@uvic.ca)) ← [course coordinator]  
Dr. Benjamin Neal ([benjaminpneal@uvic.ca](mailto:benjaminpneal@uvic.ca))

**Assessments and Course Grades**

You will have the opportunity to demonstrate your progress and proficiency through various forms of evaluation, including:

Test 1	32%
Test 2	32%
Test 3	32%
Online Discussion Forum	4%

To pass the course, students must:

- 1) Write all three tests
- 2) Score a combined grade of 50.0 points, or greater

*If a student does not satisfy #1, they will automatically fail the course and receive an "N" ('Incomplete') on their transcript.*

*If a student successfully completes #1 but is not successful in #2, they will receive an "F" on their transcript.*

**Tests**

Tests will be administered online, using Brightspace. Questions may be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and matching. Tests are open-book, timed, and must be written individually. There are no re-takes of tests.

### **Online Discussion Forum**

Students can earn points up to a maximum of 4%, by **starting** a discussion thread (1% for each one started), OR by **replying** to a thread (0.5% for each reply). The intent of the discussion forum is to permit students to ask/answer questions about course content, while fostering a community, and cultivating a spirit of collaboration. It is also a useful tool for instructors to assess whether any concepts need clarification. Anonymous posting is permitted (identities hidden from other students), though instructors will still be able to see the identity of the posters (that's how we are able to award points).

The link to the forum is here: <https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/le/content/313340/viewContent/2417165/View>

### **Required Materials and Technology**

1. This course will require students to meet the UVic minimum technology requirements: <https://www.uvic.ca/systems/status/features/min-tech-requirements.php>
2. The Brightspace (BRS) course website: <https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/313340> will serve as the primary means of sharing learning resources, so please check this page regularly for important information and announcements
3. Textbook: OpenStax Biology 2e (<https://openstax.org/details/books/biology-2e>); this textbook can be downloaded for free and accessed electronically using a laptop, desktop, tablet, or smartphone; if you want a printed version, you must purchase one directly from OpenStax

### **Additional inquiries and Contact Hours**

There are no scheduled office hours, but instructors are available to meet by appointment.

**\*Please include "BIOL 150A" in the subject line of all e-mail correspondence\***  
**We try to get back to you within 48h**

### **Schedule - Instructor (Topics)**

September 6<sup>th</sup> to October 3<sup>rd</sup> - Greg (inheritance, evolution, and the history of life)

October 4<sup>th</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> – Dave (biodiversity)

November 1<sup>st</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup> – Ben (ecology)

### **Assigned Readings**

Instructors will post any assigned readings on the course website (in a BRS module under the relevant instructor's name).

### **Important Dates**

September 6<sup>th</sup> – First meeting & course info

September 22<sup>nd</sup> – Last day for adding courses

October 2<sup>nd</sup> – National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (university closed)

October 6<sup>th</sup> – Test 1 (Greg's material; during your scheduled lecture time)

October 9<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Day (university closed)

November 3<sup>rd</sup> – Test 2 (Dave's material, during your scheduled lecture time)

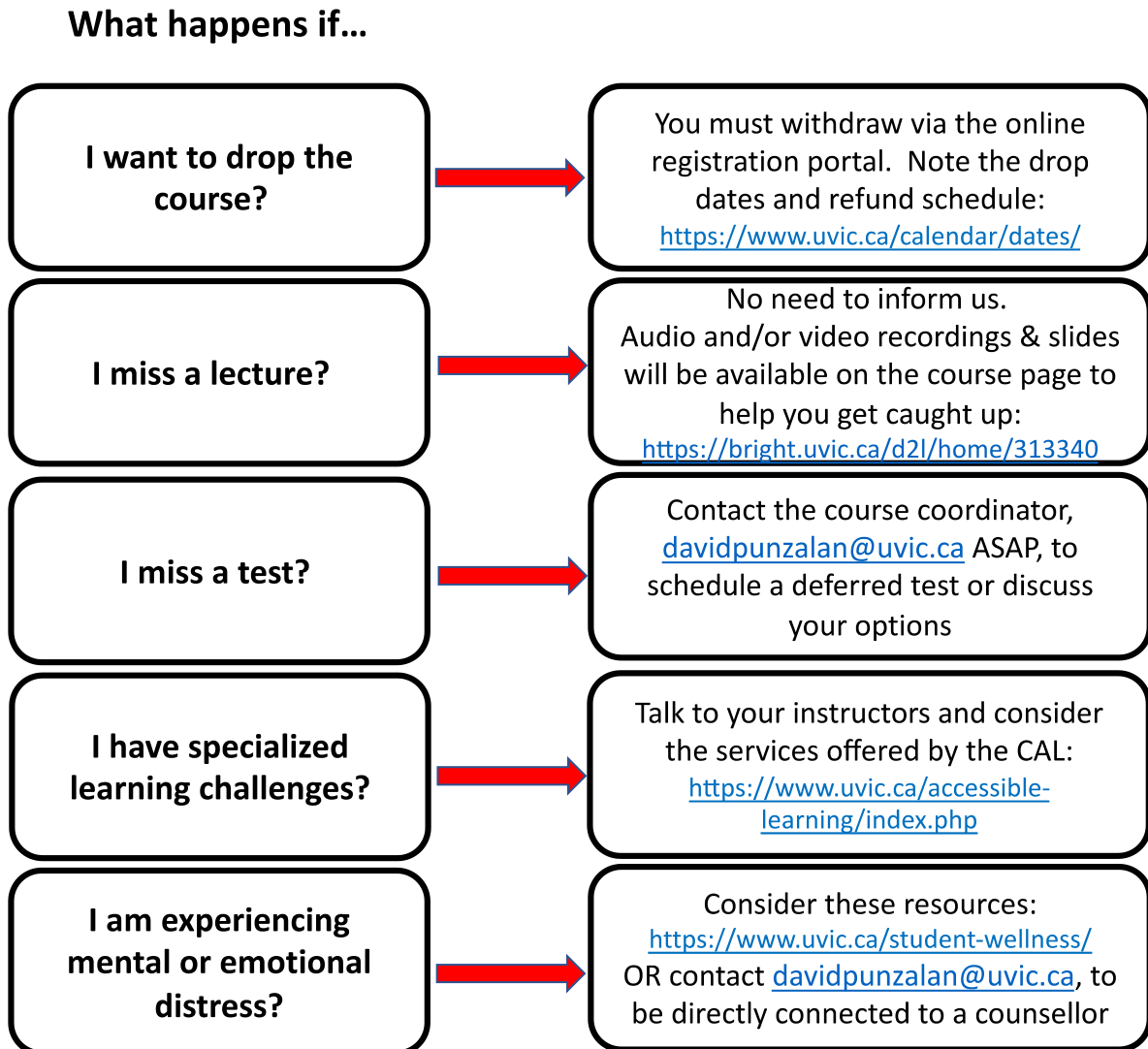
November 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> – Reading Break

December 4<sup>th</sup> – Recognition of Violence Against Women

December 5<sup>th</sup> – Exam period begins (Test 3 on Ben's material; date and time to be determined)

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Detailed policies are outlined in this syllabus—please read those carefully. For ease, a selection of questions and answers are depicted in the graphic, below.



## Appendix: Resources & Policies

### **Territory Acknowledgment**

The instructors of BIOL150A are grateful to live and work in the unceded territories of the Lekwungen speaking First Nations, and we support the University of Victoria's official territory acknowledgment:

"We acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day."

### **Code of Conduct, and Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

All members of the BIOL150A community are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. The course team welcomes students of all backgrounds, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, etc.

### **Wellness, Safety, and Support**

We encourage students to use the support services to address their needs, including Mental Health and Wellness (<https://www.uvic.ca/student-wellness/>), and Sexualized Violence Prevention and Education (<https://www.uvic.ca/sexualizedviolence/get-support/on-campus/index.php>).

### **Accessibility and Special Needs**

Students with special needs will be welcomed and accommodated, provided those needs are registered through the Centre for Accessible Learning (<https://uvic.ca/services/cal>; phone: 250-472-4947)

### **Public Health Policies**

All staff and students are expected to abide by the guidelines provided by the University of Victoria (<https://www.uvic.ca/covid19/>).

### **Academic Integrity**

The University of Victoria and the Department of Biology take academic integrity (including plagiarism) as a serious matter. Please read this:

[https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk\\_0xsM\\_V](https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V)

### **Missed examinations and assignments**

You are NOT required to provide a medical note. For Tests 1 and 2, deferred tests are scheduled for 9am on the Saturday following the original test date. If Test 3 is missed contact Dave ([davidpunzalan@uvic.ca](mailto:davidpunzalan@uvic.ca)) immediately to write a deferred exam, or 2) Request an Academic Concession to write the exam at a later date

(<https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-concessions-accommodations/request-for-academic-concession/index.php>).

### **Course Grade and Academic Transcript**

Grades for all UVic courses are submitted as percentiles. A student's academic transcript will include the percentile grade and a letter grade plus the class average and the number of

students registered in the course at the time of the final exam. Percentiles will be rounded to the nearest whole number; a grade of xx.5 will be rounded up. Percentile grades will be converted to letter grades on the student's academic transcript according to the table given below.

A+	90 – 100%	B+	77 – 79%	C+	65 – 69%
A	85 – 89%	B	73 – 76%	C	60 – 64%
A-	80 – 84%	B-	70 – 72%	D	50 – 59%

**A grade less than 50% is a failing grade and results in an “F” on your transcript.  
Failure to complete a course requirement (i.e., any of the tests) will result in an  
incomplete grade and an “N” on your transcript**