

BIOL 150A – Modern Biology

CRN: A01 (10256) & A02 (10257)

University of Victoria

Course Outline – Fall 2026

Tuesday / Wednesday / Friday

A01: 9:30AM – 10:20AM | MacLaurin (MAC) A144 (David Lam Auditorium)

A02: 1:30PM – 2:20PM | Engineering & Computer Science (ECS) 123

I acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

This course introduces biological science, discussing the diversity of organisms and the evolutionary and ecological principles underlying this diversity. Topics include the history of life, genetics, mechanisms of evolution, biological diversity, and the ecology of communities and ecosystems. I look forward to learning together! 😊



Photo by [Ave Calvar Martinez](#) on [Pexels](#)

BIOL 150A – Modern Biology | Fall 2026

One-Page Summary

I look forward to being on this learning journey with you! ☺

Instructor: Gerry Gourlay, LATHE, PhD (she/her) | holmgera@uvic.ca | Petch 041d

Student Hours: by appointment (e-mail to schedule)

Evaluation:

- Participation – 12% (in-class online activities)
- Weekly Online Mini-Quizzes – 15% (1.5% each, 10 in total)
- Midterm 1 (October 7, 2026) – Average of best 2 for 48% | Invigilated exam in-class
- Midterm 2 (October 28, 2026) – Average of best 2 for 48% | invigilated exam in-class
- Midterm 3 (November 25, 2026) – Average of best 2 for 48% | Invigilated exam in-class
- Cumulative Final Exam (TBD by Registrar in October 2026) – 25% | Invigilated exam during the Final Exam period
- All exams will use universal extended design of 1.5x for all students (e.g., if a Midterm is 30 minutes, all students will have 45 minutes)

Course Requirements:

This course has one essential component: writing the Final Exam. If you do not write the Final Exam, you will receive a grade of N.

Available Course Materials:

- Class slides posted on the [course Brightspace](#)
- [Concepts of Biology](#) textbook

Need Help?

If you have any questions, here are places to find answers (in order):

- Most questions can be answered by reviewing this Course Outline.
- Important information will be conveyed during class time and/or on the course Brightspace page announcements. Please ensure you read any e-mails from Brightspace pertaining to this course.
- Ask your peers.
- Contact me (holmgera@uvic.ca).

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A. Course Details

1. Instructor Name

Gerry Gourlay, LATHE, PhD (she/her)

I encourage you to please reach out and let me [know what name and pronouns you want to go by](#). I want to be respectful of what we all like to be called. For instance, my name is pronounced like “Jerry” (J-air-e) but is spelled with a “G”. It is not pronounced like Gary.

I may make mistakes in pronunciation or remembering preferred names, but I ask that you please gently remind me so that I can continue to learn and respect how we all want to be called. 😊

2. Instructor Contact Information

holmgera@uvic.ca (e-mail to schedule any individual meetings or for student hours). My office is Petch 041d.

I aim to reply to all e-mails Monday – Friday between 8AM and 6PM Pacific Time. Please include “BIOL150A” somewhere in the subject line of the e-mail. If a message is urgent, please include “Urgent” in the subject line.

My role in this course is to support your learning and engaging with key biological concepts. To accomplish this, I utilize two-way communication throughout the entire course meaning that I will communicate with you about upcoming deadlines, dates, changes, or any other relevant information for the course. In addition, I look forward to hearing from you about ways I can support you, assist you, or guide you throughout this course.

I am very much looking forward to exploring the world of biology together!

3. Pre-requisite

There are no pre-requisites for this course.

4. Course Philosophy

I am here to help you succeed and I encourage questions, reaching out to schedule one-on-one meetings (via Zoom, phone, or other platform) for additional support, or letting me know if something comes up. If you have feedback or additional suggestions around how the course is organized and facilitated, I welcome you to reach out to me via e-mail or to schedule a one-on-one meeting to have these discussions. Your insights are appreciated and important for the overall success of our course and our learning community.

There will be a Q&A discussion forum on Brightspace for course related questions. This is a great way to connect with your peers, and to help and learn from one another. I encourage you to ask questions and to help other students by answering questions, if appropriate. Invite others to form a study group or to share study strategies they may be using for the

course. I may also post questions and answers to individual inquiries received during class or via e-mail, anonymized and with consent, if the question will be helpful to other students.

Take advantage of student hours to talk to me if you have problems that cannot be addressed using the above channels. I am here to help. To help manage workload, it is recommended to review your notes and study regularly in lieu of postponing studying until only before a Midterm.

Life can happen and it can happen to every one of us. If there is any situation arising that makes it difficult for you to be successful in this class, please come and talk to me. We can work together to find solutions! Should you need to miss a class for any reason or want to review materials, class materials will be available on Brightspace.

5. Course Intended Learning Outcomes

In this course you will investigate and get curious about key concepts in biology! I also hope the course helps you to develop strong work and study habits that serve you throughout your university career and your professional work.

By the end of this course, you will ...

- classify the basics of heredity and evolution, and how they interrelate.
- identify unique aspects of invertebrates and vertebrates as it relates to evolution and diversity.
- describe the importance of ecology from an environmental and evolutionary perspective including behavioural, community, ecosystem, and population ecologies.
- relate community attributes in a population to both ecology and conservation.

In terms of your development as a student, you will actively work towards ...

- developing time management skills
- asking strong questions and finding out answers independently
- relating lecture and text material
- recording useful notes in class that address key concepts but are not a direct transcription of what is said
- coping with the pressures of university and finding solutions through on- and off-campus resources (see *E. Academic Policies & Regulations (Alphabetical)*).

A few tips

- I would recommend making at least one friend in class so that you can get notes from them if you miss a class for an unavoidable reason.
- Regular exercise helps with all aspects of your life: physical health, emotional equilibrium, cognitive functioning.

- Take advantage of my availability outside of class time. I am here to help! I look forward to connecting with you and answering your questions.

6. Student Hours

By appointment and generally on Zoom or Microsoft Teams. In-person options are available on class days (Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday). Please send me an e-mail (holmgera@uvic.ca) to arrange a meeting.

7. Required Course Material

Textbook

Concepts of Biology, by Samantha Fowler, Rebecca Roush and James Wise (senior contributing authors), OpenStax. This is a free online textbook. You can find it [here](#).

Brightspace

Recordings, lecture slides, and other materials will be shared using Brightspace on the [BIOL 150A Brightspace site](#).

8. Teaching Methods

In general, I will utilize interactive tools throughout our classes ranging from short questions to pair work, to small group exercises. You will be notified in-class and with Brightspace announcements for any changes to course material.

All lectures will be recorded using Echo360 and posted on Brightspace to support student learning. Auto-generated transcription and captioning are enabled in this course and is at best 70-90% accurate and by nature will include error. Students who have privacy concerns can contact me and will have the option to limit their personal information shared in the recording.

In addition to recordings, draft slides will be made available in advance of class to support notetaking. Final versions of slides will be posted after each respective class.

9. Expected Time Commitment

Readings vary by week from a few pages to a few chapters. It can be helpful to stay on top of readings as they complement what we will be discussing in class. Additionally, for most weeks, there will be a short online quiz to complete to assist your learning throughout this course.

10. Feedback

Throughout the semester, I will request anonymous student feedback twice (early in the semester and mid-way through) to inform how the course is currently running and to make any necessary changes to the overall course structure to better support student learning. I

appreciate your feedback about the course as it helps not only my growth as an educator, but it also helps to shape our learning community and better support all students.

Towards the end of term, you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (SEL) regarding your learning experience. The survey provides feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. When it is time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an e-mail inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an e-mail invitation, you can go directly to your [SEL dashboard](#). You will need to use your UVic NetLink ID to access the survey, which can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. Time will be provided in class to fill out the SEL survey.

11. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Acceptable use of AI:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be very useful when you use it as a study tool: it is acceptable to write your own summary and ask AI to provide exam questions. It is **not** acceptable to copy and paste lecture slide content directly to AI as this would violate Copyright. See *Fair Dealings* for more information.

Non-acceptable use of AI:

The **use of any form of AI during quizzes or exams (invigilated or not) and any other assessments** is unethical and considered a violation of academic integrity unless the instructor has specifically given permission. **Recording quiz or exam questions and sharing with peers who missed the evaluation and must defer is a violation of academic integrity.**

B. Methods of Student Evaluation

Participation	12%
Weekly Online Mini-Quizzes (1.5% each)	15%
Midterm 1 (October 7, 2026)	Average of best 2 for 48%
Midterm 2 (October 28, 2026)	Average of best 2 for 48%
Midterm 3 (November 25, 2026)	Average of best 2 for 48%
Cumulative Final Exam (TBD by Registrar in October 2026)	25%
Total	100%

1. Participation (12%): To get the most out of this class and to actively contribute to our classroom community, it is important to attend sessions, participate with questions or comments that are constructive to the lesson, and engage in class in a respectful manner. This includes working on in-class activities and other exercises either individually, in pairs, or in small groups. All participation points will come from the in-class online tools we use (e.g., Microsoft Forms). **You will need your UVic NetLink ID and password to access the Microsoft Forms.** Please do not hesitate to connect with me – I am here to help you

succeed. It is important that we have as many of our learners as possible in our community so we can co-learn together, but if there is a different way in which you want to participate, please let me know. I am happy to work with each of you to create a supportive learning opportunity.

2. Mini-Quizzes (15%): All quizzes will be online and specific details for each quiz will be provided in advance of quiz dates. There will be a total of ten quizzes. These quizzes are designed to help you stay on top of the course material. Additionally, they will support you with addressing key concepts from class and provide you examples of question-types on Midterms & the Final Exam.

If you do not have a device to write the quizzes, please connect with me the beginning of the course to guide you to resources available on campus (e.g., the '[Borrow a Laptop](#)' program from the library). Please arrange with the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) if you require any additional academic accommodations; it is important to abide to CAL's policies and timelines. All quizzes will be multiple choice and are to be completed individually.

3. Midterms x 3 (48% total, average of best two Midterms): All Midterms will be approximately 20-25 multiple choice questions for a time limit of 30 minutes with a universal extension for all students of 1.5x to 45 minutes. Midterms will take place in class, during the regular lecture period. Students with accommodations of more than 1.5x or requiring additional support (e.g., distraction-free environment) must contact the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) to arrange for exam invigilation.

There will be **no deferred Midterm** examinations. There will be three Midterms in this course and your course grade for the Midterms will be the average of your two best Midterms equating to 48% of your course grade. If you write only one Midterm, the second Midterm will receive a 0 and will be included in the calculation for the average Midterm mark.

4. Final Exam (25%): The Final Exam will be approximately 50-55 multiple choice questions for a time limit of 80 minutes with a universal extension for all students of 1.5x to 120 minutes (2 hours). The Final Exam will test all the material in the course, but the emphasis will be on topics which will not have been tested on the Midterms. Students with accommodations of more than 1.5x or requiring additional support (e.g., distraction-free environment) must contact the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL) to arrange for exam invigilation.

The Final Exam will be written during the Final Exam period (Thursday, December 10 – Wednesday, December 23). The specific day and time for Biology 150A will be arranged by the Registrar's office and announced in October.

Because the Final Exam period ends for all faculties on Wednesday, December 23, the university's last exam will be in the evening of that day. Your last exam might be on this date, or it might be earlier – you will know for sure only when the Final Exam schedule is drawn up and posted in October.

Travel plans are not a valid reason for missing a Midterm or the Final Exam. Please do not make plans to leave Victoria in December without being sure that your Final Exams in all your courses will be over.

Course Requirements

This course has one essential component: writing the Final Exam. If you do not write the Final Exam, you will receive a grade of N.

Failure to write the Final Exam will result in a grade of “N” regardless of the cumulative percentage on other elements of the course. Students who obtained a grade of “N” may submit a formal [Request for Academic Concession \(RAC\)](#) and a deferred Final Exam will be organized if the RAC is approved.

Exam Policy

No electronic devices will be permitted during the Midterms or Final Exam.

There will be three Midterms in this course and your course grade for the Midterms will be the average of your two best Midterms equating to 48% of your course grade. If you write only one Midterm, the second Midterm will receive a 0 and will be included in the calculation for the average Midterm mark.

If you expect to miss a Midterm for any reason, please notify Gerry as quickly as possible via e-mail (holmgera@uvic.ca).

Deferred Final Exam

The Final Exam can be missed and deferred for the following (i.e., illness, accident, personal or family affliction, participation in an important cultural, community or sporting event).

- If you expect to miss the Final Exam for any of the above reasons, please notify Gerry by e-mail as soon as possible (holmgera@uvic.ca).
- *Holiday travel plans are not an acceptable reason to miss the Final Exam.*
- If you defer the Final Exam, you must fill out a [Request for Deferral form](#). Note that you should send it to studentsupport@uvic.ca, not to the Course Coordinator.

- There is also available general information about the [types of concessions and accommodations available to UVic students](#).
- A writing of the deferred Final Exam will be offered to you on Saturday, January 9, 2027, at 10:00 AM, in Bob Wright B150. This constitutes your official notification of the deferred exam time. If you are not able to make this writing, please contact Gerry by e-mail as soon as possible (holmgera@uvic.ca).

UVic Grading Scale: All grades at UVic are submitted as percentiles, which is how it will appear on the academic transcript. Percentiles above 0.5% will be rounded up to the next integer for the final course grade.

Grade Conversion	A+: 90 – 100%	A: 85 – 89.5%	A-: 80 – 84.5%
	B+: 77 – 79.5%	B: 73 – 76.5%	B-: 70 – 72.5%
	C+: 65 – 69.5%	C: 60 – 64.5%	D: 50 – 59.5%
	F < 49.5%		

The only circumstances under which I change a submitted course grade are as follows:
a) if I have made a calculation error in determining your grade; b) if you have deferred the Final Exam, received an N, and then written a deferred exam. **Please do not ask me to raise your percent grade to qualify for a higher letter grade.**

You will receive an F in the course if your aggregate grade is less than 50% (rounded to the nearest whole number). It is not necessary to pass the individual course components – the Midterms or the Final Exam – in order to pass the course.

You will receive an N in the course if you miss the Final Exam. If you write a deferred exam, your course grade will be updated on your transcript to include your deferred exam score. No supplemental Final Exam (second-chance Final Exam) will be given in this course.

C. Important Dates in Fall 2026 Term

Date (Day of Week)	Key information about important date
September 9 (Wednesday)	First day of classes
September 22 (Tuesday)	Last day for 100% reduction of fees for standard courses. 50% of tuition fees will be assessed for courses dropped after this date.
September 25 (Friday)	Last day for adding courses
September 30 (Wednesday)	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (University closed)
September 30 (Wednesday)	Last day for paying fees without financial penalty.
October 12 (Monday)	Thanksgiving (University closed)
October 13 (Tuesday)	Last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees for standard courses. 100% of tuition fees will be assessed for this course dropped after this date.
October 31 (Saturday)	Last day for withdrawing from this course without penalty of failure.
November 9 – 11 (Monday – Wednesday)	Reading Break (no classes)
December 7 (Monday)	Last day of classes
December 10 (Thursday)	Exam period begins
December 23 (Wednesday)	Exam period ends

D. Tentative Class Schedule¹

Legend: T = Tuesday, W = Wednesday, F = Friday

Week Number	Class Number	Day & Date	Topic Quiz or Exam	<u>Concepts of Biology</u> (Chapter # or pgs.)
1	1	W September 9, 2026	Introduction ☺	None
	2	F September 11, 2026	Life & the Study of Life	Chapter 1 – Introduction to Biology Section 1.1, Themes and Concepts in Biology
2	3	T September 15, 2026	Genome & Mitosis	Chapter 6 – Reproduction at the Cellular Level - Section 6.1, The Genome - Section 6.2, The Cell Cycle
	4	W September 16, 2026	Meiosis	Chapter 7 – The Cellular Basis of Inheritance - Section 7.1, Sexual reproduction - Section 7.2, Meiosis
	5	F September 18, 2026	Patterns of Inheritance	Chapter 8 – Patterns of Inheritance - Section 8.1 – The study of genetics has ancient roots - Section 8.2 – The science of genetics began in an abbey garden
3	6	T September 22, 2026	Mendel's Law <i>Quiz #1</i>	Chapter 8 – Patterns of Inheritance Section 8.3 – Mendel's law of segregation describes the inheritance of a single character
	7	W September 23, 2026	Definitions of Evolution	Chapter 11 – Evolution and Its Processes - Section 11.1, Discovering How Populations Change - Section 11.3, Evidence of Evolution

¹ Please note that this schedule is tentative for topic structure. Any changes to the schedule will be communicated to all students in advance. We will also do a deep dive looking at the schedule on our first class.

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Week Number	Class Number	Day & Date	Topic Quiz or Exam	Concepts of Biology (Chapter # or pgs.)
3	8	F September 25, 2026	Mechanisms of Evolution	Chapter 11 – Evolution and Its Processes - Section 11.2, Mechanisms of Evolution - Section 11.4, Common Misconceptions About Evolution
4	9	T September 29, 2026	Speciation Quiz #2	Chapter 11 – Evolution and Its Processes Section 11.5, Speciation
	--	W September 30, 2026	--	National Truth & Reconciliation Day – no class
	10	F October 2, 2026	Phylogenetics	Chapter 12 – The Diversity of Life - Section 12.1, Organizing Life on Earth - Section 12.2, Determining Evolutionary Relationships
5	11	T October 6, 2026	Acellular Life Quiz #3	Chapter 17 – The Immune System and Disease Section 17.1, Viruses
	Midterm	W October 7, 2026	Midterm 1	All the above readings
	12	F October 9, 2026	Prokaryotes	Chapter 13 – The Diversity of Microbes, Fungi, and Protists Section 13.1, Prokaryotic Diversity
6	13	T October 13, 2026	Eukaryotes Quiz #4	Chapter 13 – The Diversity of Microbes, Fungi, and Protists - Section 13.2, Eukaryotic Origins - Section 13.3, Protists
	14	W October 14, 2026	Animals I	Chapter 15 – The Diversity of Animals - Section 15.1, Features of the Animal Kingdom - Section 15.2, Sponges and Cnidarians
	15	F October 16, 2026	Animals II	Chapter 15 – The Diversity of Animals - Section 15.3, Flatworms, Nematodes, and Arthropods - Section 15.4, Mollusks and Annelids

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Week Number	Class Number	Day & Date	Topic Quiz or Exam	<u>Concepts of Biology</u> (Chapter # or pgs.)
7	16	T October 20, 2026	Animals III Quiz #5	Chapter 15 – The Diversity of Animals - Section 15.5, Echinoderms and Chordates - Section 15.6, Vertebrates
	17	W October 21, 2026	Fungi I	Chapter 13 – The Diversity of Microbes, Fungi, and Protists Section 13.4, Fungi
	18	F October 23, 2026	Fungi II	Chapter 13 – The Diversity of Microbes, Fungi, and Protists Section 13.4, Fungi
8	19	T October 27, 2026	Plant Diversity I Quiz #6	Chapter 14 – Diversity of Plants - Section 14.1, The Plant Kingdom - Section 14.2, Seedless Plants
	Midterm	W October 28, 2026	Midterm 2	All the readings above since October 7 (Midterm 1)
	20	F October 30, 2026	Plant Diversity II	Chapter 14 – Diversity of Plants - Section 14.3, Seed Plants: Gymnosperms - Section 14.4, Seed Plants, Angiosperms
9	21	T November 3, 2026	Introduction to Ecology I Quiz #7	Chapter 21 – Conservation and Biodiversity Section 21.1, Importance of Biodiversity
	22	W November 4, 2026	Introduction to Ecology II	Chapter 19 – Population and Community Ecology Section 19.1, Population Demographics and Dynamics
	23	F November 6, 2026	Aquatic Ecology I	Chapter 20 – Ecosystems and the Biosphere Section 20.4, Aquatic and Marine Biomes
10	Monday, November 9 – Wednesday, November 11 Reading Break No classes ☺			

Week Number	Class Number	Day & Date	Topic Quiz or Exam	<u>Concepts of Biology</u> (Chapter # or pgs.)
10	24	F November 13	Aquatic Ecology II	Chapter 20 – Ecosystems and the Biosphere Section 20.4, Aquatic and Marine Biomes
11	25	T November 17	Terrestrial Ecology I <i>Quiz #8</i>	Chapter 20 – Ecosystems and the Biosphere Section 20.3, Terrestrial Biomes
	26	W November 18, 2026	Terrestrial Ecology II	Chapter 20 – Ecosystems and the Biosphere Section 20.3, Terrestrial Biomes
	27	F November 20, 2026	Behavioural Ecology	Chapter 19 – Population and Community Ecology Section 19.1, Population Demographics and Dynamics
12	28	T November 24, 2026	Population Ecology <i>Quiz #9</i>	Chapter 19 – Population and Community Ecology Section 19.2, Population Growth and Regulation
	Midterm	W November 25, 2026	Midterm 3	All readings since October 28 (Midterm 2)
	29	F November 27, 2026	Community Ecology	Chapter 19 – Population and Community Ecology Section 19.4, Community Ecology
13	30	T December 1, 2026	Ecosystem Ecology <i>Quiz #10</i>	Chapter 20 – Ecosystems and the Biosphere - Section 20.1, Waterford's Energy Flow through Ecosystems - Section 20.2, Biogeochemical Cycles
	31	W December 2, 2026	Conservation Biology	Chapter 21 – Conservation and Biodiversity - Section 21.2, Threats to Biodiversity - Section 21.3, Preserving Biodiversity
	32	F December 4, 2026	Final Exam Review	All the above readings

E. Academic Policies & Regulations (Alphabetical)

Academic Calendar

You can review the [Undergraduate Academic Calendar](#) for any relevant policies and procedures.

Academic Integrity

Adhering to academic regulations set as set out by the University, including [standards of academic integrity](#), is an important part of being a university student and a professional. Violations of academic integrity (e.g., cheating and plagiarism) are considered serious and may result in significant penalties. You can [review the University's policy on academic integrity here](#). All quizzes must be completed individually and not with a friend, or classmate, or a group. Please do not share any information about the quizzes with others.

Academic Concession Regulation & Guidelines

Life happens, I get that. Please talk with me before we get to the point of needing an academic concession – I want to help you succeed. You can review [academic concessions & accommodations here](#) including a friendly [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#).

Attendance & Absences

Medical documentation for short-term absences is **not required**. [Attendance is important](#) as it helps in bridging and creating our learning community. If illness, accident, or family event results in you being unable to complete the Final Exam in December, you will need to submit a [Request for Academic Concession \(RAC\)](#).

Centre for Accessible Learning

The [Centre for Accessible Learning \(CAL\)](#) works with faculty and students to promote educational accessibility for students with disabilities and chronic health conditions. CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Please release any accommodation letters **a minimum of seven days in advance of an assessment for accommodations to be applied** and to meet with me about specific concerns, if needed.

Emergency Information

You can find and access [useful resources for emergency information](#) on and around the University campus.

Fair Dealings

All course materials (including but not limited to lecture slides, recordings, exam questions, and in-class activities) are made pursuant to the [Fair Dealing Guidelines](#) of the University, library database licenses, and other university licenses and policies. These materials are made available by your instructor for educational purposes and for the

exclusive use of students registered in our class. The material is protected under copyright law, even if not marked with a ©. Any further use or distribution of materials to others requires the written permission of the instructor, except under fair dealing or another exception in the Copyright Act. Sharing course content (such as including but not limited to lecture slides, recordings, exam questions, and in-class activities) through note-sharing sites or other means violates UVic's policy on academic integrity. Violations may result in disciplinary action under the [Resolution of Non-Academic Misconduct Allegations policy \(AC1300\)](#).

Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement (IACE)

Indigenous UVic students have [access to many sources of support on campus](#) including a centrally located First Peoples House. Before, during and after your time at UVic, you are encouraged to explore programs and services available to you, such as [Indigenous counselling services](#) and the [Elders in Residence](#), as well as non-academic programs that may be of interest to you.

[səl̓xw'éyn sqw'él | SELWĀN SKĀL | Elders' Voices](#) - The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students and other university community members in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Mental Health

The semester can be stressful and I encourage you to take care of yourself throughout the term as best you can. There are many supports out there to assist you. Engaging in self-care and maintaining a healthy lifestyle this term can help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. The source of symptoms might be related to your course work; if so, please speak with me.

However, problems with other parts of your life can also contribute to stress and the UVic [Student Wellness Centre](#) provides cost-free and confidential mental health services to help you manage personal challenges that impact your emotional or academic well-being. Student Wellness also provides a full-service primary health clinic for students and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students.

In addition to providing both face to face and online mental health resources through the Student Wellness Centre, a 24/7 phone & online student mental health resource and support program ([Support Connect](#)) is available for all UVic students & their dependents, no matter where you are located, at any time.

Scents & Fragrances

The University of Victoria is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees, students, and visitors. We encourage all members of the campus community

to [avoid the use of scented products](#) in work areas, classrooms and public spaces, as such products have the potential to impact the health of some individuals.

For more information, including steps to address concerns with scented products, please review the [scent safety guidelines](#).

Sexualized Violence Prevention & Response

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please [contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights \(EQHR\)](#). If you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also contact the sexualized violence resource office in EQHR, Sedgewick C119, Phone: 250.721.8021, e-mail: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca.

Student Conduct

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and supportive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to this experience and the responsibility to help create such an environment. The University will not tolerate racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment.

Please be advised that, by logging into UVic's learning systems or interacting with online resources, and course-related communication platforms, you are engaging in a university activity.

All interactions within this environment are subject to the university expectations and policies. Any concerns about student conduct may be reviewed and responded to in accordance with the appropriate university policy. To report concerns about online student conduct: onlineconduct@uvic.ca.

UVic LEARN (Learner Empowerment and Academic Resource Network)

[UVic LEARN](#) is UVic's student portal with a full range of student and academic support services including:

- [Academic Skills Centre](#) (ASC)
- [Library](#)
- [Computer Help Desk](#)

UVic LEARN also provides extensive information and student support for [online learning technologies](#).

University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS)

The UVSS is a social justice based non-profit run by students for students and is entirely separate from UVic. As an undergrad student, you are already a member! The UVSS works on issues affecting students such as affordability, public transit, sexualized violence, sustainability, student employment, and much more. The UVSS funds clubs and course unions and have several advocacy groups. The UVSS also has a Food Bank and Free Store, a Peer Support Centre, and run your health and dental plan. The UVSS is here to support you, so please reach out and [visit their website!](#)