



# Biological Perspectives

**BIOL 863: Biological Perspectives - 3 hours**  
Summer, 2024

**Course Overview:**

A review of those biologists and their works from pre-Christian time to the present who have had an influence on today's study of biology.

**Course Objectives:**

Students are expected to (1) Identify major advances in biology, their impacts, and how they relate to modern day issues; (2) Describe how the study of biology has changed over time; (3) Discuss the importance of a historical perspective on scientific progress, and (4) Recognize and appreciate science as a human endeavor.

**Instructors:**

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**Class Structure:**

This is an on-line class. You will watch lectures covering the major topics of the class. In addition to the lectures, you will participate in class discussions on Canvas. Your grade will be based on your contributions to the online discussions and five writing assignments (see below for more information on assessment). To be successful in this course, you will need to stay current with the discussion and the assigned readings.

We expect you to be able to synthesize information and ideas from the lectures and readings in your online discussions and written papers.

**Expectations for Student Conduct:**

All students are expected to (1) complete all discussion participation within the week timeframe that is designated by the dates assigned on the syllabus, (2) turn in all class writing assignments by the scheduled due date in standard format: include student name on the first page; double spaced; standard margins (at least 1 inch on all edges); minimum 12 point font; be within the page limitations for the assignment (citations not included as part of paper length), and (3) follow the guidelines for student conduct and academic integrity published in the UNK Graduate Catalog (see <http://aaunk.unk.edu/gradcatalogs/current/ac/acacint.asp>). Cheating (including plagiarism), unauthorized collaboration with other students, and abuse of academic materials will not be tolerated. Assigned papers may be checked for plagiarism using SafeAssignment software embedded in Canvas (papers will not be accepted via email). Penalties for violation of these guidelines can be severe, ranging from no credit on the assignment to expulsion from the university.

**UNK Library**

The library is a good resource when looking for articles that may not be available online.

<http://library.unk.edu/services/distance.php>

<http://library.unk.edu/services/ildd.php> (Interlibrary loan contact Sheryl Heidenreich at [heidenreichs@unk.edu](mailto:heidenreichs@unk.edu) )

**Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated, please refer to the student handbook or ask for more clarification on the subject if unsure what constitutes plagiarism. It is expected students work independently on assignments unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Group work where not specified will be considered cheating and students will receive a zero for that assignment. Multiple offenses will result in the student(s) receiving a failing grade for the course and possible removal from the program.

**Withdraw (W) and Incomplete (I)**

In unusual circumstances beyond the student's control, an incomplete (I) may be issued. The (I) is issued as a final grade with the student having 12 months to complete the necessary work. If the coursework is not completed in this time the (I) will be converted to a failing grade (F) on the student's transcript. Students may withdraw from the course before 9 weeks have been completed and a (W) will appear on the transcript. Students are responsible for filling out the necessary paperwork to complete this process. Instructors are not able to withdraw students. If the student drops the class the (W) will not contribute to the student's overall GPA. All students at the University of Nebraska Kearney should be aware of the following university-wide course policies and resources.

**Attendance Policy**

Your instructor may have indicated on their syllabus an attendance policy specific to their class. If so, that is the policy with which you must comply. If no other policy is stated, the

University-wide attendance policy will apply.

#### Graduate Student Attendance Policy

#### Academic Honesty Policy

Academic honesty is essential to the existence and integrity of an institution of higher education. The responsibility for maintaining that integrity is shared by all members of the academic community. To further serve this end, the University of Nebraska at Kearney has a policy relating to academic integrity.

#### Graduate Academic Integrity Policy

#### Reporting Student Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence or Sexual Assault

Reporting allegations of rape, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and stalking enables the University to promptly provide support to the impacted student(s), and to take appropriate action to prevent a recurrence of such sexual misconduct and protect the campus community. Confidentiality will be respected to the greatest degree possible. Any student who believes they may be the victim of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report to one or more of the following resources:

- Local Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault Advocacy Agency 308-237-2599
- Campus Police (or Security) 308-865-8911
- Title IX Coordinator 308-865-8655

Retaliation against the student making the report, whether by students or University employees, will not be tolerated.

#### Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska at Kearney to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to students with documented disabilities. To receive accommodation services for a disability, students must be registered with the UNK Disabilities Services for Students (DSS) office, 175 Memorial Student Affairs Building, 308-865-8214 or by email [unkdso@unk.edu](mailto:unkdso@unk.edu)

#### Students Who are Pregnant

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska at Kearney to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to students who are pregnant. To receive accommodation services due to pregnancy, students must contact the Student Health office at 308.865.8218. The following links provide information for students and faculty regarding pregnancy rights.

<https://thepregnantscholar.org/title-ix-basics/Links> to an external site.

<https://nwlc.org/resource/faq-pregnant-and-parenting-college-graduate-students-rights/Links> to an external site.

## UNK Statement of Diversity & Inclusion

UNK stands in solidarity and unity with our students of color, our Latinx and international students, our LGBTQIA+ students and students from other marginalized groups in opposition to racism and prejudice in any form, wherever it may exist. It is the job of institutions of higher education, indeed their duty, to provide a haven for the safe and meaningful exchange of ideas and to support peaceful disagreement and discussion. In our classes, we strive to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication and mutual respect. UNK does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability or political affiliation. Respect for the diversity of our backgrounds and varied life experiences is essential to learning from our similarities as well as our differences. The following link provides resources and other information regarding D&I: <https://www.unk.edu/about/equity-access-diversity.php>

[unkdso@unk.edu](mailto:unkdso@unk.edu)<http://www.nwlc.org/resource/pregnant-and-parenting-students-rights-faqs-college-and-graduate-students>

## Required Books:

Texts: There are 3 required texts for this course:

1. *Microbe Hunters* by Paul deKruif (ISBN 0156027771);
2. *Naturalist* by Edward O. Wilson (ISBN 0446671991 – Grand Central Publishing; 1597260886 - Island Press)
3. *Blue Mind* by Wallace J. Nichols (ISBN 978-0-316-25211-9 (pb)

These books are available as affordable paperbacks from the campus bookstore ([www.loperbooks.com](http://www.loperbooks.com)), Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other online retailers. [Hardback copies, older versions, and newer editions may have different ISBN numbers and may vary slightly in pagination or front matter, but are still acceptable.]

Other required readings: In addition to the three required texts, other reading selections will be provided to you on Canvas or as web links. It is essential that you read the assigned material in a timely manner, as the readings will be the basis for online discussions.

Technology: In addition to a computer, Internet access, and a web browser, there are a few (free or low-cost) software packages are required for this course. Pre-recorded lectures will be made available as streaming video via Canvas; you will need a media player to view the videos. Written course materials will be provided as PDFs or Microsoft Office 2007 documents. Acrobat Reader 7.0 or higher will be necessary for viewing PDF files (download the most current version for free from Adobe at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>). The assigned short papers **must** be submitted in MSWord “.doc” or “.docx” format. Other file formats will not be

accepted due to difficulties and delays associated with software incompatibilities. (Purchase MSOffice at a discounted student price through the UNK Connections store at <http://www.unk.edu/unkconnections>).

**Course Assessments & Grading:** Overall course grade will be calculated based on points earned on the following assessments:

Assessment	Points
Short papers (x3)	40 each
Blackboard discussions (5x8 weeks)	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160</b>

Short Papers. Three short papers, of 3-5 pages in length (excluding references, tables and figures, if applicable), will be assigned. Each paper is worth 40 points. Topics and due dates are listed on the Course Outline or will be made available on the Canvas home page during the course. Late papers will be penalized 20% per day, beginning promptly at the stated deadline (to the minute). Assigned papers will be checked for plagiarism using SafeAssign software embedded in Canvas (papers will not be accepted via email).

Discussion board. Each week, a new topic for discussion will be posted on Canvas. You should post your thoughts, ideas, reflections, questions, and comments related to the topic of the week. View the lectures for the week, read the assigned readings, and think about the topic before posting to the discussion board. You are expected to make a unique contribution to the discussion, which means that you need to read the posts of others in your group and that your posts must consist of something more than statements like “I agree” and “Good point.” Feel free to begin new threads to introduce additional points of discussion but try not to wander from the prompted topic. You must earn discussion points they are not given to you for simply logging on and repeating what others have said. **The week begins on Monday morning** and runs through Sunday evening. Plan to check in, read the discussion, and respond several times during the week. At minimum, two (2) posts per week per person are necessary to generate meaningful discussions; thus, if only one post is made for the week points will deducted. Posting entries at the end of the week or at short intervals (such as making all your posts on the same day) will not indicate a serious effort to contribute to the discussion and will result in a lower grade. Making the minimal number of entries does not necessarily earn full points, as consideration is given to the value of the contributions. Discussion board participation is worth 5 points per week (over 8 weeks for a total of 40 points), which are awarded using the following rubric:

Criterion	Points
Contributes at least twice to discussion	0 1
Posts are made in a timely manner throughout the week	0 1
Posts incorporate a peer-reviewed article for support	0 1
Evidence of thoughtful analysis	0 1
Reads and responds to ideas of classmates	0 1
<b>Total weekly discussion points</b>	<b>____ / 5</b>

Grading Scale. Course grade is calculated as a ratio of points earned to points possible and assigned a letter grade using the following scale:

A	93-100%	B +	87-89%	C +	77-79%	D +	67-69%	F	below 60%
		B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%		
A -	90-92%	B -	80-82%	C -	70-72%	D -	60-62%		

### **Course Outline and Schedule:**

A schedule of the topics covered in each lecture, the assigned readings, and the deadlines for papers and quizzes will be posted on Canvas. Dates are subject to change at instructors' discretion.

Online courses proceed at a brisk pace and even a brief absence can impact your ability to keep up with the assigned work. It is recognized that unavoidable situations do occasionally arise that may interfere with your ability to participate in discussions or submit assignments on time. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor regarding any absence and to provide documentation, upon request, to establish a legitimate reason for the need to make up missed work.

Communication is important in an on-line class. Watch for important announcements on Canvas. Please contact me by email ([koupalkd@unk.edu](mailto:koupalkd@unk.edu)) or phone (308 865-5326) whenever you have a problem or question.

### **Incomplete Grades**

Under very unusual circumstances a grade of "incomplete" may be assigned. To be considered for an incomplete in Biology 863 you must:

1. Be in "good academic standing" in the course. This is interpreted as having a passing grade at the time of the request for incomplete consideration.
2. Submit the reasons why you cannot complete the assigned work by the end of the term. This must include a copy of your class schedule and a description of your responsibilities outside your coursework. This must be done in writing and include conformation from your employer or physician when appropriate.
3. Specify the assignments you have missed and a schedule of plans to complete them.