BIOL 3006: Evolution

Lectures: TBA
Room: TBA   Office location: TBA
Instructor: TBA   Office hours: TBA
Email: TBA and by appointment

Goals of the course:

Dobzhansky's famous quote "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution" highlights that evolutionary theory and methods are essential in all branches of modern biology. This course will provide a broad overview of evolutionary topics, including mechanisms of evolutionary change, adaptation and the history of life. By the conclusion of this course, students will be able to interpret and explain the Earth's amazing biodiversity by comparing and contrasting evolutionary processes that have led to the present day distribution of organisms. Analyzing these processes will allow students to evaluate modern-day challenges such as climate change and drug resistance. Furthermore, students will be expected to be able to apply evolutionary methods to develop their own future research topics.

Assignments & Grades:

25%   Midterm
25%   Final (cumulative)
15%   In-class group work/Participation
20%   Group project – Research Paper
15%   Homework assignments

Format:

The course is based on lectures derived from the **textbook** "*Evolution – Making Sense of Life*" by Zimmer & Emlen, 3rd edition.

Two **exams** (a midterm and a final) will be based on the lectures and readings featuring multiplechoice, short-and long answer questions. Some of the questions on the midterm and final will be taken directly from questions at the end of each chapter in the textbook and the online platform Achieve. Incorporating these questions in your study plan would be highly recommended. Lecture notes and suggested background readings will be posted on Blackboard. To make-up for a missed exam, *advanced notification & a doctor's note* and/or notification from the Division of Student Affairs office is required (see also Leave of Absence/Student Bereavement Policy).

You will **work in groups** *during class time* to complete short, graded assignments which will count towards your **participation** grade. In addition to group participation, in-class polls, short quizzes, feedback requests etc. will form part of your participation grade.

You will work with this same group outside of class to prepare a **Wiki** on a research paper and present this project in class at the end of the term. To successfully complete your group Wiki, a series of deadlines must be met throughout the semester, i.e., picking a choice of research papers, proposal of your chosen paper, presentation of project outline on Wiki, and a final presentation in class. You will receive feedback after each submission to help you progress with your project.

Groups will be assigned on the first day of class. You will evaluate your group member performance throughout the semester, and these **peer evaluations**, along with my observations of your **participation** in group work during class, will influence your group project grades.

There will be weekly **homework assignments** posted on the Achieve platform for each chapter covered in class. All homework assignments will have a "Adaptive Quiz" component, which grades completion regardless of accuracy, and a "homework question" component which is graded based on correctness of your answers.

Studying advice:

Plan to study two hours weekly per credit! It is easy to be disengaged in lectures, but I highly recommend that you use this opportunity to be present, ask questions, and participate as this will help you to understand the course content better and will save you studying time outside of class. If you are in need of a quiet working environment with access to the internet, Brooklyn College offers a limited number of computer lab stations for students by appointment, see requirements for accessing campus here http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/technology/labs/web_reopening.php.

Office hours & communication:

I strongly encourage you to drop by during office hours from the first day of class with any questions about the course. Office hours also allow me to get to know you better, *which is particularly important if you intend on asking me for a recommendation letter.* You can make an appointment to meet at a different time if you are unable to attend my regular office hours. You do not need a scheduled appointment to come to my official office hours, but I appreciate a notification nonetheless for better planning. Alternative office hours would also be available via Zoom and you will find a Zoom link for our office hours on Blackboard with my contact information.

The best way to contact me is email. I check my email several times a day and will reply to you within 48h during the week unless it is a question that is answered in our material on Blackboard. If your question is not personal, you should use our **"Ask a Question"** Forum on Blackboard to ask (and answer) questions about course assignments, content, policies and such **first!** It is likely others have similar questions, and responding to them in this forum saves us all from repetitive emails. I encourage you to subscribe to this forum so you will be notified by email when posts are made.

Grading policies

Assignments are due to strict deadlines and late assignments cannot be accepted. However, each student has a total of **5 late days** that may be used on assignments. To use late days: notify me by email *at least 30 minutes before* the assignment is due. Late days start immediately after the due date and run for 24 hours. If more than 5 late days are accumulated, or if you do not notify me in advance, the late assignment will not be accepted.

If you have to miss a class, you will also miss the in-class group assignment, which is part of your participation grade. But you have to opportunity to make up for it: To make-up for a missed class, *advanced notification* is required and a request for group work material & individual submission should be made.

Students are expected to complete all course requirements, and to contact colleagues for information on material they have missed.

Grade roster:

Letter Grade	% Range
F	0.00–49.99
D-	50.00–54.08
D	54.09–58.17
D+	58.18–62.26
C-	62.27–66.35
C	66.36–70.44
C+	70.45–74.54
B-	74.55–78.63
B	78.64–82.72
B+	82.73–86.81
A-	86.82–90.90
A	90.91–94.99
A+	95.00–100.00

FYI: my grade roster is based on an equal difference of 4.09% points to each letter category. Inevitably, some of you will end up with a final grade very close to the next higher letter grade. This situation does not justify more points added to your grade "because you are so close". There are no bonus points or extra assignments that can be done "last minute". Work hard from the very beginning of the class and submit high quality assignments on time and you will succeed in our class.

Netiquette:

Netiquette is online etiquette. Professional decorum is an important part of students' socialization into the work world; therefore, it is important that all course participants demonstrate respectful in-person and online behavior. Though we may use less formal speech in some of our course discussions, remember that obscene, threatening, or contemptuous language would never be appropriate. When sending emails, address the recipient (in my case Prof Musolf) and **always sign with your full name** as email addresses can be misleading (who is babyblue5@?? ;)).

Professional behavior also means being a **reliable co-worker within your group**. Respond to your colleagues' questions, stick to deadlines set by your group, and most importantly communicate *early* when you run into any troubles, so that your group has the opportunity to find an alternative solution. Ideally, a group will divide work equally, with everyone helping one another in times of need. It is your responsibility to make sure that your overall contribution matches that of your group members. Communication is key here – do not hesitate to engage with your group members if you think that they are not providing their part! As mentioned above, you will be asked to provide peer evaluations throughout the semester which will influence your final grade on these assignments.

Center for Student Disability Services:
In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with Center for Student Disability Services (CSDS). Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to schedule an interview by calling (718) 951-5538 or emailing testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu. If you have already registered with CSDS, email Josephine.Patterson@brooklyn.cuny.edu or testingcsds@brooklyn.cuny.edu to ensure the accommodation email is sent to your professors.

Statement on Academic Integrity:
The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for policy implementation can be found at www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation. Students should be aware that faculty might use plagiarism detection software. Find more information about Academic Integrity and Taking Exams Online here:
http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academicintegrity-policy/

Student Bereavement Policy
In the very unfortunate event that you experience a death in your family, you are eligible for specific accommodation. Please contact Students Affairs to initiate the process. You find more information here: http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/initiatives/policies/bereavement.php.

Further Resources:
As an educator, I support the rights of underline_undocumented students_ to an education. If you have any concerns in that regard, feel free to discuss them with me, and I will respect your wishes concerning confidentiality. For resources and support, please check-out Brooklyn College's Immigrant Student Support Office located at 117 Roosevelt Hall. You can also contact them via email at ISSO@brooklyn.cuny.edu or via phone at 718-951-5023.

For support beyond academics, check out Brooklyn College's Health and Wellness webpage, including updates on Covid-19 procedures on campus:
https://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/offices/studentaffairs/health-wellness.php

For more information about procedures in the Biology department or if you have a major concern, find more information on the Biology Department webpage. In case of any concerns, please refer to the respective contact person.
http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/academics/schools/naturalsciences/undergraduate/biology/contact.php

In case of moving to online classes during the semester

Classes:
Classes will continue **synchronously** online using Blackboard Collaborate as our video conference platform. Group work will continue online through breakout groups in Blackboard Collaborate.

Exams:
This course may apply online proctoring services as part of examinations, quizzes, and/or assessments, at the instructor's discretion. **During online exams, the use of a camera is mandatory.** If you do not have access to a camera on your computer, Brooklyn College provides computer loans – find more information here:
http://www.brooklyn.edu/web/about/offices/studentaffairs/healthwellness/coronavirus/device-loan-requests.php. Alternatively, you might use a second device (i.e., phone) with a camera. Students without a video connection will not be permitted to participate in the examination. Additionally, proctoring software such as RESPONDUS Lockdown Browser might be used for online exams which requires the installation of this software. **Students enrolling in this course accept these conditions, and agree to abide by the course requirements in accordance with any CUNY policies and procedures**.