



Saint Bonaventure High School

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To all AP Biology Students and their Parents:

Summer 2011

Again, welcome to Advanced Placement Biology! I hope that you had a nice restful summer because, even though school has not started yet, it is time to get to work in this class. I know that most, if not all of you, have had AP classes before and I assure you that this one is going to be just as much work (if not more).

This is a very self-directed class that will require time management and organizational skills from everyone. We will be covering almost all of a premier college level text and we will be doing around ten or so in-depth interesting labs over the course of the year. Along the way we will be using modern laboratory equipment, computer technology, simulations, Internet research and current events to help stimulate and learn. The end goal is a much deeper knowledge of biology and (hopefully) a passing score on the AP Biology exam in May 2012, which may lead to college credit next year for all of your hard work.

What we have ahead of us is a daunting task. The course description as set forth in the AP Course handbook states: *The AP Biology course is designed to be the equivalent of a college introductory biology course taken by biology majors during their first year.* As a consequence, we will be covering around a chapter a week (sometimes more) out of a college level textbook for the entire year.

You must understand that YOU, way more than I, will determine your success in this course. The course goes at breakneck pace for the whole year and nothing less than your full attention will keep your head above water. The most essential thing you can have is an "I CAN and I WILL" attitude. A love of biology, while not essential, is extremely helpful to make it through the long year. Also, consider yourself forewarned, the average grade in this AP course with some of the best students in the school tends to hover around a B-/C+. It is designed this way to force everyone to push themselves constantly. I set the bar very high and expect your full attention and best effort.

I expect that **all** of you will have **all** of the required materials when you get to class on the 18th of August. (In case you didn't know, the SBHS online bookstore began selling books this month and can be found at <http://sbh.escobookstore.com/>.) I also expect that all of you will have **answered the accompanying questions over Ch 52-55 in your textbook.** To help increase the chance that you have done this, **there will be an exam on the first day of school; Thursday August 18th that covers this information.** (Yes, it will count towards your grade.) The good news is that some of this information was covered your sophomore year and that it is an open note exam. The bad news is that the test and information is not easy. Read and study well, please. This particular material is rather complex but the questions walk you through the most essential parts. Do not just try to read and memorize the whole 4 chapters, focus on the material asked about in the questions. This is what the test questions will be covering.

Furthermore, you are also **REQUIRED** to contact me personally as soon as possible, **PREFERABLY VIA EMAIL** to tambler@saintbonaventure.com. (PLEASE DO IT NOW!) If you received this letter via an email then just hit the reply button and tell me you got it. If you do not have access to email right now, call and leave a message on my cell phone (805) 216-2435 or at school (805)648-6836 ext. 200. This is so I know that you have received this correspondence and also so that I have your correct email address so that I can contact you in the future. I will respond to your email very soon

after you contact me so be looking for at least two more emails from me, one when you contact me and one later on as the first day approaches. PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ME TRACK YOU DOWN. See additional material on the pages that follow about what is expected of you by August 18th. The lab book is not needed on day one (But will be needed by the end of the first week of school and can be obtained from either the bookstore at school or the online store at store.collegeboard.com .

I know this letter and assignment may come as a shock to some of you and that some of you may think I seem a bit overzealous in my methods. The results of my classes speak for themselves as to the validity of my program. 85% of my students get a 3 or better on the AP exam. This system of starting hard right away and pushing hard throughout the year works.

Now that I have scared the dickens out of you, you need to know that my class is not all work and no play. There is plenty of levity throughout the year and we do have as much fun as possible. But you must understand that to me, studying biology and constantly learning new things *is* fun, so this may not be exactly the kind of fun that you are thinking of when I say, “Fun”. To help you get a student’s perspective and idea about things, I urge you to talk to anyone that has had this course with me and ask their opinion of it. I feel it is a worthwhile class and a great subject, and I find that most of my students agree.

I am sincerely looking forward to meeting you all and having a great year! Dive in!



Timothy R Ambler

Things to do for NOW for AP Biology:

* **ASAP** Email Mr. Ambler at tambler@saintbonaventure.com about the fact that you received this information and understand about the assignments or call me at 805-216-2435 if you do not have access to email. Those that do so in a timely manner will be rewarded.

Things to do before August 18th:

* **Get the textbook, the lab book and sign up for the textbook’s website:**

- *Biology* (8th edition), author Neil Campbell and Jane Reece, 2009 ISBN 978-0-13-135691-7
NOTE: Make sure you get the 8th edition! For better prices for new and used ones, and if you are comfortable shopping there, you can go to ebay.com or amazon.com, but buyer beware (Search using the ISBN number)
- *AP Biology Lab Book* from the Collegeboard – Green Cover - 2001 edition (Item #991461- \$18 at the college board online store at www.collegeboard.com - DO NOT BUY THIS USED!)
- Sign up for the text book’s website at < www.pearsonschool.com/access> In a follow up email you will receive the code to register if your textbook did not come with one.

* **Get a large three ring binder with lots of loose-leaf paper.**

* **Answer the attached questions and review the information covered for the exam on the first day of school**

NOTE: Please utilize the website that comes with your textbook. It is a wonderful tool to help you master content. The self quizzes and questions at the end of the chapters in the text are not required for the first day of school but would be a good idea for you to answer. It will be required that you register and use the website that accompanies the text. Get started today!