

AP Environmental Science

Instructor: Mr. Andrew Britton

Room: 552

Phone: 858-621-9020 x4552 (classroom)

Instructor Email: abritton@sandi.net (Most effective way to reach me)

Tutoring: I am available most days; quick clarification questions before school and lunch, more in depth tutoring and review after school

Textbook: "Environment, The Science Behind The Stories, AP Edition" 4th edition, Withgott, Jay and Laposata, Matthew

Web page: <https://brittonsrhs.weebly.com/> or follow the link from the school website <http://www.srhsfalcons.org>

Access Codes

Please use the access codes in the table below to join the Google Classroom for your class period.

| | Period 2 | Period 4 |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| Google Classroom | tly6cr6 | tqypu2c |

Course Description*

Honors Preparatory Course (HP). This course meets the University of California's d (laboratory science) subject area requirement. AP Environmental Science (APES) is designed to be the Equivalent of a one semester, introductory college course in environmental science. The course goal is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world. Students will apply this knowledge to identify and analyze environmental problems (both natural and human-made), evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems and examine alternate solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. Students should possess a better than average level of reading comprehension. This is a rigorous course and the time commitment varies greatly, but in general students must be prepared to spend an average of 45 minutes outside of class time per hour of class time to successfully complete the course. Students who take this course are encouraged to take the AP test in May. Most colleges and universities require a student to take the AP exam if they want the opportunity to earn college credit.

Prerequisite: "A/B" in both semesters of AP Biology or Advanced Biology or "A" in both semesters of Biology with approval through Advanced Class Request Form. Students with a "C" in AP Biology will be considered with approval through the Advanced Class Request Form. A previous chemistry class is highly recommended, but chemistry can be taken concurrently with APES. English grades will also be considered. Senior students have priority.

Course Objectives

- To develop an understanding of scientific principles and an appreciation for the connectedness of mankind to the environment.
- To gain practical experience with standard laboratory and fieldwork techniques, equipment and methods of study. Students will be able to demonstrate the skills of experimental design, data analysis, and critical thinking.
- Apply scientific theory and research findings to explain everyday phenomena. Ultimately, students will be able to appreciate the roles of science, technology, and society, and perceive science as an ongoing human enterprise.

Learning/Teaching Philosophy

- Class discussions are an important aspect of class and students are expected to be prepared to participate. Discussions are an excellent opportunity to clarify material that is challenging. When reading assignments are made, you should read for understanding, not just to get through the pages. Read it. Study it. Know it.
- I expect students to review class material nightly and think about the significance of the material we are studying. Work with, and think about the material until you see the connections to previous concepts and ideas.
- Involve yourself completely in all lab activities and their analysis. This is a chance to see first hand how the study of Environmental Science can inform you about the world around you.
- Plan your study time for exams in order to be prepared. The harder you work, the better your life will be. (True for all of life, not just in this class) Do not procrastinate!
- Throughout this class we will be undertaking the study of the environment and the ways in which humans impact it. As a human being and resident of earth you should find the ideas, concepts, and experiences relevant to your daily life. Learn as much about it as you can. Some of it is complex and will challenge you. Challenge is good.

Suggested Materials*

All students should be prepared to learn every day. This will require having all class notes, assignments, and handouts for the current chapter organized and easily accessible each day. Much of the work in this class this year will be completed electronically. All students should have a working Chromebook, or personal laptop, with all San Diego Unified applications built in with them in class each day.

* The Constitution of the State of California requires that we provide a public education to you free of charge. Your right to a free education is for all school/educational activities, whether curricular or extracurricular, and whether you get a grade for the activity or class. Subject to certain exceptions, your right to a free public education means that we cannot require you or your family to purchase materials, supplies, equipment or uniforms for any school activity, nor can we require you or your family to pay security deposits for access, participation, materials, or equipment. You may be required to attend a fundraising event; however, if you are unable to raise funds for the event, you will not be prevented from participating in an educational activity. For more information visit www.sandi.net/staff/studentfees

Class Policies

- **Lab Safety:** Safety is a primary concern. Misconduct during labs may result in removal from the classroom during the rest of the lab and a zero for that lab in the gradebook. Repeated misbehavior will result in suspension from future lab activities with no opportunity to make up the lost points.
- **Academic Honesty:** Cheating is a breach of integrity that results when grades, rather than education, have become the major focus of students. In my experience, students who seek to understand the material taught in their classes and who approach school as an opportunity to learn new information are less likely to cheat. Those who are committed to understanding seldom worry about grades, because by working to understand the concepts, and apply them, they have mastered the concept and their grades naturally reflect this. Those who are more concerned about what they have to do to get a desired grade are those that are most susceptible to the enormous pressures to cheat. Copying another student's work is not a way to make up for work missed during an absence, fill in information that was not understood, or finish assignments that were not completed. **All written work should be in the students own words and demonstrate their own original thinking.** All copied work will receive a zero for all parties involved. All students are required to follow the SRHS academic honesty policy*.

* Please refer to the current student handbook at www.srhfsfalcons.org

- **Attendance:** Attendance is essential to student success. Missed class time may be difficult or impossible to replicate for absent students, especially some labs and simulations due to the time and materials required to conduct the investigation. In the event of an absence for such assignments students should see me for an alternative assignment.

Assessment dates are announced at least one week (usually 2 or more weeks) in advance and posted in class and in Google classroom. Students who are absent on the day of an assessment should email me during their absence or see me in person immediately upon their return to school in order to schedule a make-up assessment. In most cases, students will be expected to make up missed assessments within 24 hours of their return to campus. Assessments missed due to truancy cannot be made up and will receive a zero in the gradebook. Students who exhibit a pattern of absences on test days for the apparent advantage of better grades may not be allowed to make up future assessments.

Daily assignments are posted in Google Classroom for each class period that I teach. Students are responsible for emailing me on or before the first day of their absence to discuss work missed and to determine how to complete missed assignments. Assignments missed due to truancy cannot be made up.

Please be on time. Arriving late is very disruptive to me and to other students who were present on time. Consequences for tardies, excessive absences, and truancy in my class are consistent with those described in the SRHS student handbook.

* Please refer to the current student handbook at www.srhshfalcons.org

Students with attendance issues in my class may face additional school wide consequences as described in the in the SRHS student handbook and quoted below:

“To support student success in the classroom and to remain eligible for school events including homecoming events, dances, prom, and commencement, students must 1) be present in all of their classes for the duration of the period 2) have a valid pass when out of class 3) maintain a 2.0 citizenship score 4) demonstrate the pillars of Falcon PRIDE. If students do not meet the components listed above, they can complete the following to regain eligibility for school events. [Note that students on senior contract will need to complete the appeals process for the opportunity to have senior privileges (prom and commencement) reinstated.]

- Recover unverified class-period absences (A), tardies (T), or missed more than 30 minutes - unexcused (W) by attending lunch detention(s)
- Recover full-day absences (A) by attending Saturday School
- Complete any unserved detentions assigned for disciplinary reasons”

- **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:** The Board of Education approved Policy H-6980 allows students possession and use of cell phones and other electronic signaling devices (such as smart watches) on campus before school, during lunch, and after school. Scripps Ranch allows students to use their electronic devices during passing periods.

These devices must be kept out of sight, silenced or turned off during classroom time unless specified by the teacher for authorized academic purposes. To avoid distraction, it is recommended that students not have their phone on their person during class. It should remain in their backpacks throughout the class period.

Consequences for unauthorized use of electronic devices in my classroom are consistent with those described in the SRHS Student Handbook* and with the policies of SDUSD**. Unauthorized use of electronic devices is grounds for confiscation of the device by school officials and/or classroom

teachers. If a student refuses to give a cell phone, smart watch, or any electronic device to the teacher, the matter will be referred to the associate principal for additional followup and intervention if needed.

* Please refer to the current student handbook at www.srhshfalcons.org

**Facts for Parents booklet on the district website: <https://www.sandiegounified.org/>

- **General Behavior and Consequences:** Behavior that interferes with my ability to teach or the ability of others to learn will not be tolerated. All students are expected to follow all school-wide rules and policies while in my classroom. School wide behavior policies and expectations include behavior in class, bullying policies, and network use policies among others.

* Please refer to the current student handbook at www.srhshfalcons.org

Evaluation

- Students struggling to understand, having difficulties keeping up, questioning their ability to succeed in the class, and/or simply absent, should contact me immediately.
- **Academic Grades** are based on how well students master the concepts and standards of AP Environmental Science. (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/ap-environmental-science-course-and-exam-description.pdf>) A student's academic grade in the class will be based on their ability to demonstrate mastery of the concepts through assessments, lab work, and an end of year project. Additional, unweighted, but highly recommended, feedback assignments will be assigned to provide students with additional review and feedback throughout each unit.

Academic grades shall be based solely on students' current levels of mastery of the Board-adopted standards and shall not be influenced by behavior or other nonacademic measures.

- **Assessments (weighted 85% of overall class grade):** Includes unit tests at the end of each unit, quizzes within a given unit, semester finals, and a final end of year project. Students who score less than 80% on a unit test and therefore do not demonstrate proficiency with content area standards for that unit, will be allowed a second attempt to demonstrate their knowledge through an alternative assessment (retake). Quizzes, finals, and the end of year project cannot be retaken or redone.
 - Students seeking a retake, must meet with me in person **to review the initial test and request the retake within two class days of the initial score being posted in Powerschool**. Posting of scores to Powerschool will be announced in class.
 - Students seeking to retake a unit test, must complete all of the feedback assignments in that unit with a score of 3 or better and all of the graded assignments / lab work with a score of 80% or better. If assignments are missing, or show insufficient mastery of the concept, they must be completed or revised before the retake date. Students who scored a 3 or better on all assignments in a unit may be asked to complete additional assignments or tutoring before taking a retake.
 - Retakes provide students with a second chance to demonstrate proficiency with the content standards. The maximum score that can be earned on a retake is 80%.
 - All retake scores (up to 80% of the maximum score) will replace the original score earned on a given assessment, **even if the retake score is lower than the original score the student earned**.
- **Graded Assignments / Lab Work / Projects (weighted 15% of overall class grade):** Each unit will involve several in depth laboratory investigations related to the content of the unit. Labs

are an integral part of science and allow students to practice making a claim, collecting relevant evidence, and then reasoning from the evidence to support or refute their claim. Lab work (experimental work and data collection, some analysis of data) typically occurs in class during block days (wed or thurs). Interpretation of the findings and explanation of the results is assigned as homework and written up for a grade to be turned in the following class day. Due to the time required to prepare lab supplies, lab work cannot be redone for an improved score.

- **Feedback Assignments (*weighted 0% of overall class grade*):** Students may expect practice and review assignments in addition to the graded assessments and lab work in order to help them gain proficiency with the concepts and standards ahead of labs and assessments. These assignments will receive feedback using the 1-4 scale below, but **WILL NOT** count towards the students overall academic grade in the class.

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| 4 Point Scale | Percentage* | Letter Grade | Description* |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| 4 | 100 | A | Beyond grade level expectations |
| 3.5 | 93.75 | A | Beyond grade level expectations |
| 3 | 87.5 | B | Grade level/target proficiency |
| 2.5 | 81.25 | B | Grade level/target proficiency |
| 2 | 75 | C | Approaching grade level/target expectations |
| 1.5 | 68.75 | D | Approaching grade level/target expectations |
| 1 | 62.5 | D | Insufficient evidence |
| 0.5 | 56.25 | F | Insufficient evidence |
| 0 | 50% | F | No evidence submitted |

*At this time PowerSchool is not equipped for using the newer district recommended 0-4 scale and will automatically calculate scores on the 0-4 scale as mathematical percentages (i.e. $\frac{3}{4}$ = 75%). This does not match the above scale which is being used strictly to provide student feedback. Since feedback assignments are in a gradebook category with a weight of 0% the lower percent score automatically calculated by PowerSchool will not negatively impact a students overall grade in the class.

- **Late Work:** All assignments in this class will have a recommended due date to help students pace themselves through the content of the course. It is important for students to keep up with the reading and written assignments throughout a unit as the content builds on itself throughout the unit, and throughout the year. Falling behind will make it more difficult for students to fully understand future material. However, I understand that unforeseen circumstances do arise that may occasionally prevent a student from completing assignments by the recommended due date. For this reason I do accept late work for full credit on most assignments up until the next class meeting following the recommended due date. Assignments turned in later than the timeframe described above will receive no credit. (except in the case of excused absences)
- **The class academic grading scale** is as follows:
 - A** = 100% - 90% = Exceeds content area standards.
 - B** = 89.99% - 80% = Meets content area standards.

C = 79.99% - 70% = Approaching content area standards.

D = 69.99% - 60 = Beginning progress towards content area standards.

F = 59.99% - 0% = Little, to no progress towards meeting content area standards.

- Academic grades are earned through daily hard work. Do not expect to have your grades improved at the end of a grading period by any other method than sustained hard work. Do not expect extra credit.
- **Citizenship grades** shall be based on students' behavior, their contributions to the classroom community, and nonacademic measures, such as work habits, effort, and ability to meet indicated timelines for assignment completion and attendance. Board-adopted standards for citizenship shall be used to communicate current levels and areas for needed improvement. I expect that all students will, at a minimum, abide by the behavior standards outlined in this syllabus and in the SRHS student handbook, and as a result, all students start the semester with the citizenship grade of Meets (M). To improve a citizenship grade to Excellent (E) a student must also engage in the class with a positive attitude, participate regularly in class discussions, complete assignments in a timely manner, and be prepared for class or otherwise contribute to making our time together more enjoyable and productive for all.
- **Citizenship Marks**
 - Exceeds(E):** Consistently exceeds expectations in attitude, work completion, preparation, and participation, and positively contributes to the learning experiences of their peers.
 - Meets (M):** Consistently meets expectations: completes most work on time, prepared to learn, participates regularly, shows respect for others, and contributes to building a positive community.
 - Inconsistent (I):** Inconsistently meets expectations: occasionally completes work on time, not always prepared to learn, participates irregularly, and/or may occasionally disrupt the work of others.
 - Unsatisfactory (U):** Does not meet expectations: work is habitually late, not prepared to learn, does not participate, and/or disrupts the work of others.