Erindale College

UNIT OUTLINE

MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND IT ACADEMY
SEMESTER 1 2018

Course Title	**Biology**	**Course Code**	2427
Semester Unit	**Unit 1 Biodiversity and Connectedness**	**Unit Code & Value**	23232 (1.0)
Term 1 Unit	**Unit 1a Biodiversity and Connectedness**	**Unit Value**	23233 (0.5)
Term 2 Unit	**Unit 1b Biodiversity and Connectedness**	**Unit Value**	23234 (0.5)

Unit Description

The current view of the biosphere as a dynamic system composed of Earth's diverse, interrelated and interacting ecosystems developed from the work of eighteenth and nineteenth century naturalists, who collected, classified, measured and mapped the distribution of organisms and environments around the world. In this unit, students investigate and describe a number of diverse ecosystems, exploring the range of biotic and abiotic components to understand the dynamics, diversity and underlying unity of these systems.

Students develop an understanding of the processes involved in the movement of energy and matter in ecosystems. They investigate ecosystem dynamics, including interactions within and between species, and interactions between abiotic and biotic components of ecosystems. They also investigate how measurements of abiotic factors, population numbers and species diversity, and descriptions of species interactions, can form the basis for spatial and temporal comparisons between ecosystems. Students use classification keys to identify organisms, describe the biodiversity in ecosystems, investigate patterns in relationships between organisms, and aid scientific communication.

Through the investigation of appropriate contexts, students explore how international collaboration, evidence from multiple disciplines and the use of ICT and other technologies have contributed to the study and conservation of national, regional and global biodiversity. They investigate how scientific knowledge is used to offer valid explanations and reliable predictions, and the ways in which scientific knowledge interacts with social, economic, cultural and ethical factors.

Fieldwork is an important part of this unit, providing valuable opportunities for students to work together to collect first-hand data and to experience local ecosystem interactions. In order to understand the interconnectedness of organisms, the physical environment and human activity, students analyse and interpret data collected through investigation of a local environment and from sources relating to other Australian, regional and global environments.

Specific Unit Goals

By the end of this unit, students:

• understand how classification helps to organise, analyse and communicate data about biodiversity
• understand that ecosystem diversity and dynamics can be described and compared with reference to biotic and abiotic components and their interactions
• understand how theories and models have developed based on evidence from multiple disciplines; and the uses and limitations of biological knowledge in a range of contexts
• use science inquiry skills to design, conduct, evaluate and communicate investigations into biodiversity and flows of matter and energy in a range of ecosystems
• evaluate, with reference to empirical evidence, claims about relationships between and within species, diversity of and within ecosystems, and energy and matter flows
• communicate biological understanding using qualitative and quantitative representations in appropriate modes and genres

Science Understanding

Describing biodiversity

- Biodiversity includes the diversity of species and ecosystems; measures of biodiversity rely on classification and are used to make comparisons across spatial and temporal scales (ACSBL015)
- Biological classification is hierarchical and based on different levels of similarity of physical features, methods of reproduction and molecular sequences (ACSBL016)
- Biological classification systems reflect evolutionary relatedness between groups of organisms (ACSBL017)
- Most common definitions of species rely on morphological or genetic similarity or the ability to interbreed to produce fertile offspring in natural conditions – but, in all cases, exceptions are found (ACSBL018)
- Ecosystems are diverse, composed of varied habitats and can be described in terms of their component species, species interactions and the abiotic factors that make up the environment (ACSBL019)
- Relationships and interactions between species in ecosystems include predation, competition, symbiosis and disease (ACSBL020)
- In addition to biotic factors, abiotic factors including climate and substrate can be used to describe and classify environments (ACSBL021)

Ecosystem dynamics

- The biotic components of an ecosystem transfer and transform energy originating primarily from the sun to produce biomass, and interact with abiotic components to facilitate biogeochemical cycling, including carbon and nitrogen cycling; these interactions can be represented using food webs, biomass pyramids, water and nutrient cycles (ACSBL022)
- Species or populations, including those of microorganisms, fill specific ecological niches; the competitive exclusion principle postulates that no two species can occupy the same niche in the same environment for an extended period of time (ACSBL023)
- Keystone species play a critical role in maintaining the structure of the community; the impact of a reduction in numbers or the disappearance of keystone species on an ecosystem is greater than would be expected based on their relative abundance or total biomass (ACSBL024)
- Ecosystems have carrying capacities that limit the number of organisms (within populations) they support, and can be impacted by changes to abiotic and biotic factors, including climatic events (ACSBL025)
- Ecological succession involves changes in the populations of species present in a habitat; these changes impact the abiotic and biotic interactions in the community, which in turn influence further changes in the species present and their population size (ACSBL026)
- Ecosystems can change dramatically over time; the fossil record and sedimentary rock characteristics provide evidence of past ecosystems and changes in biotic and abiotic components (ACSBL027)
- Human activities (for example, over-exploitation, habitat destruction, monocultures, pollution) can reduce biodiversity and can impact on the magnitude, duration and speed of ecosystem change (ACSBL028)
- Models of ecosystem interactions (for example, food webs, successional models) can be used to predict the impact of change and are based on interpretation of and extrapolation from sample data (for example, data derived from ecosystem surveying techniques); the reliability of the model is determined by the representativeness of the sampling (ACSBL029)

Specific Entry & Exit Requirements for Term Units

It is possible to enter this course at Term 2. This is a Semester Unit.

Assessment Schedule

TASK	DUE DATE	WEIGHTING
Assignment 1	Week 6	25%
Unit 1a Exam	Week 8	25%
Assignment 2	Week 14	25%
Unit 1b Exam	Week 18	25%

Science Unit Grade Descriptors for T courses

	*A student who achieves an **A** grade typically*	*A student who achieves a **B** grade typically*	*A student who achieves a **C** grade typically*	*A student who achieves a **D** grade typically*	*A student who achieves an **E** grade typically*
Knowledge and Understanding	• demonstrates thorough and extensive knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts • justifies and applies knowledge to familiar and unfamiliar contexts and across different concept areas and experiences, displays originality and lateral thinking in problem solving	• demonstrates broad and in-depth knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts • applies knowledge to familiar and unfamiliar contexts and across different concept areas and experiences, displaying originality and effective thinking in problem solving	• demonstrates broad and general knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts • is able to apply knowledge in a variety of contexts and different concept areas to solve problems	• demonstrates general and basic knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts • is able to use knowledge in different areas to solve problems	• demonstrates a limited knowledge of scientific concepts • displays emerging awareness of strategies to solve problems
Critical Thinking	• evaluates, synthesises and analyses patterns and trends in data, observations and investigations and makes valid and perceptive inferences • applies highly effective analytical and evaluative skills, makes perceptive connections between scientific concepts, draws accurate conclusions and proposes appropriate improvements	• analyses and synthesises patterns and trends in data, observations and investigations and makes valid inferences • applies effective analytical skills, makes insightful connections between scientific concepts, draws mostly accurate conclusions and proposes appropriate improvements	• describes and explains patterns and trends in data, observations and investigations and makes general inferences • describes and explains general connections between scientific concepts, draws conclusions and proposes improvements	• identifies and describes patterns in data, observations and investigations and makes simple inferences • describes connections between scientific concepts, draws conclusions and proposes improvements	• identifies patterns in data, observations and investigations • identifies connections between scientific concepts
Investigative Skills	• demonstrates logical and coherent investigations, acknowledges information using referencing conventions and operates equipment highly effectively and safely	• demonstrates well considered investigations, acknowledges information using referencing conventions and operates equipment effectively and safely	• demonstrates considered investigations, acknowledges information using referencing conventions and operates equipment safely with some general effectiveness	• outlines investigations, inconsistently acknowledges information using referencing conventions and mostly operates equipment effectively and safely	• displays emerging skills in investigations, attempts to acknowledge information and operates equipment with limited awareness of safety procedures
Communication	• presents highly complex concepts accurately and coherently in a wide range of written and non written formats using appropriate terminology with flair	• presents concepts clearly and logically in a range of written and non written formats using appropriate terminology with confidence	• presents general concepts clearly in a range of written and non written formats using appropriate terminology generally using terminology appropriately	• presents basic concepts in a narrow range of written and non written formats using terminology inconsistently	• presents some basic concepts in a limited range of written & non written formats using minimal terminology
Work practices	• organises time and resources to work in a highly productive and safe manner both independently and in a team • evaluates and analyses risks, acts highly appropriately in all investigations	• organises time and resources to work in a productive and safe manner both independently and in a team • analyses and explains risks and acts appropriately in all investigations	• organises time and resources to work in a generally productive and safe manner both independently and in a team • identifies and describes risks and acts appropriately in all investigations	• demonstrates inconsistent organisation of time & resources, works with occasional productivity & some awareness of safety independently or in a group • identifies risks and acts mostly appropriately in investigations	• demonstrates limited organisation of time & resources to work with an emerging awareness of safety • demonstrates an emerging awareness of risks, developing approaches to investigations

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to submit all assessment items and attend all classes, participate in a positive manner and seek support whenever it is required. Excursions, simulations and presentations by visitors (including lunchtime) may form part of class work. It is your responsibility to catch up on missed work when absent from class.

Any student whose attendance falls below the 90% of the scheduled classes/contact time and has not provided substantial documentary evidence to cover the absence will be awarded a V grade. This means that 4 unexplained absences in a term or 8 unexplained absences in a semester could mean that a V grade may be awarded. However, the Principal has the right to exercise discretion in special circumstances if satisfactory documentation is supplied.

LATE SUBMISSION OF WORK

Students are encouraged to submit work on time as it is a valuable organisational skill. Students are also encouraged to complete work even if it is late, as there are educational benefits in doing so.

Late work will receive a penalty of 5% (of possible marks) per calendar day late, unless an extension is granted by the class teacher prior to the deadline. This means that 5% is taken off the possible marks that could have been achieved eg. If a student achieved a score of 75/100, and the item is one day late, then five marks (5% of 100) would be taken from 75, which leaves the score as 70/100. 'Per calendar day late' means each day late whether it be a weekend or public holiday. Items due on any date must be submitted to the class teacher, faculty staff room, or front office at the college by 3.30pm on that day. After 3.30pm, the item will attract the late penalty. Submission of work on a weekend or public holiday is not acceptable. If you do not submit your work to your class teacher, make sure that it is signed and dated by either another member of staff in the faculty staffroom, or a member of the front office staff.

After 7 days, late work will be awarded the Notional Zero. Calculation of a Notional Zero is based on genuine scores, (items submitted on time or with an extension). The Notional Zero will be a score that lies between 0.1 of the standard deviation below the lowest genuine score for that item and zero. If the lowest genuine score is zero, then the notional score is zero.

No work will be accepted after marked work has been returned, or accepted after the unit has completed. Computer and/or printer failure will not be accepted as a valid reason for late work. Make sure you backup, keep hard copies and rough notes.

Unless prior approval is granted, any student who fails to submit assessment tasks worth in total 70% or more of the assessment for the unit will be considered to be unassessable and will receive a V grade. The Principal has the right to exercise discretion in the application of the late penalty in special circumstances where satisfactory documentation is supplied.

CHEATING AND DISHONEST PRACTICE

The integrity of the College's assessment system relies upon all involved acting in accordance with the highest standards of honesty and fairness. Any departure from such standards will be viewed very seriously. Accordingly:

- Plagiarism - claiming authorship of someone else's work (intentionally or otherwise) - is a serious misdemeanour, and attracts severe penalties.
- Students are required to acknowledge the source of all material that is incorporated into their own work.
- Students may not submit the same item for assessment in more than one unit, unless specific agreement has been reached with the class teacher.

MODERATION

Throughout the semester, moderation in the form of common marking schemes, cross marking and joint marking occurs across all units in the Moderation Group to ensure comparability of standards. Moderation is a process whereby student's work is compared so that student performance can be graded fairly and consistently. Moderation takes some time, and so students may not receive their work back until ACT wide moderation of grades across all colleges has occurred. Small Group Moderation is carried out in courses with small class sizes.

UNIT SCORES

- Raw scores are calculated by adding Z scores according to the weightings in the assessment table.
- All raw unit scores are then combined into two rank order lists, one for each cohort Year 11 and 12. Each list is reviewed by the Executive Teachers concerned to identify any anomalies.
- Each of the rank order lists is then standardised for each semester using historical parameters or back scaling.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

You can appeal against your assessment if you feel that the result you obtained is not fair. You should first talk to your class teacher, and if you are not satisfied with the explanation you must discuss the situation with the Executive Teacher of the faculty concerned. If you still do not feel that your result is fair you should talk to the Deputy Principal Programs for further advice on the 'appeal process'.

Executive Teacher: Ruth Edge **Class Teacher: Ingrid Bean** **Date 12/02/2018**