

Fun with Biology! Fall 2010

Instructor: Demetrius M. Lutz

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Dates of Course: TBD

Course Description

This professional development course will provide specific instruction for the life sciences within the living environment scope and sequence. This course will provide teachers with an opportunity to receive additional science content, extensions and further applications of the Science Core Curriculum kits for their classroom. This course will utilize online software instruction to support traditional, face-to-face science instruction in the classrooms of the course participants.

Course Goals, Outcomes and Objectives

There are two goals of this course. The first goal is to provide you with a series of hands-on activities that facilitate the gaining of knowledge on your part. The second goal is to present you with ideas on how to enhance your pedagogical skills as a science teacher. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Facilitate tactile learning activities that pertain to the biological sciences.
- Reflect upon lessons that you and your colleagues teach in a constructive manner.
- Create a lesson plan that utilizes tactile learning techniques.

Key objectives to achieve in the course are:

- Writing and planning lessons that utilize cognitive reasoning and exercise the psychomotor skills of your students.
- Applying previous knowledge to observe scientific phenomena, which will lend itself to the acquisition of new concepts.
- Be able to assess effective classroom teaching techniques such that you can improve upon your skills as a science educator.

New York State Standards Addressed in This Course

This course is designed to address Standards 1 and 4 of New York State's Core Curriculum for Living Environment. Although not every topic included in the Curriculum will be touched upon, most key topics and their performance indicators will be addressed.

Prerequisites for the Course

A biology course at the high school level or an introductory level biology class at the college level, a computer, knowledge of Microsoft Office and its applications, internet access, an active e-mail address.

Software Required for the Course

Microsoft Office, Moodle online software (can be found at: <http://moodle.nyit.edu>)

Course Assessment/Determination of recommendation of In-Service Credit

Participants will be assessed based on their participation in the online asynchronous discussions, participation in the synchronous discussions and the final assignment. Percentage grades will be assigned for the final assignment for the purposes of formal evaluation. A rubric will be provided so that course participants are aware of the expected requirements. Ultimately, however, in-service credit will either be granted or denied at the culmination of the course.

Use of the Course Website

The web address to log on to the course is <http://moodle.nyit.edu/login/index.php>. In the first session, you will be instructed on how to log on to the course website, receive your log-in information (i.e. user name and password) and how and where to locate information pertinent to completing the course requirements. Please note that only course related material may be posted to the website. Any material that is deemed inappropriate or offensive to the course instructor or participants will be removed. If at any time you experience difficulties in accessing or using the website, please contact the instructor.

Course Attendance Requirements and Policies

Participants are required to complete at least 30 total hours of coursework for the duration of the course. During those weeks designated as asynchronous weeks, a minimum of six hours of coursework is required. Weeks designated as synchronous weeks require two hours of coursework. Participation in the asynchronous and synchronous discussion are mandatory and will be monitored. Lack of participation in either type of discussion will result in failure for the course. In order for an absence to be excused, notification must be provided to the course instructor as soon as possible. For absences due to physical, mental or psychological illnesses either for course participants or a close relative of the participants, written documentation such as that from a certified health professional is required. A clergyman's note will be required in the event of a death of a family member. Required court attendance, licensure examinations and parent/teacher conferences are acceptable reasons for course absence, however, written documentation is required. Failure to present written documentation or providing false evidence of documentation for any absence will result in immediate failure for the course. Further, by participating in this course, you are pledging that you are the person registered for the course and that you, personally, are fulfilling the course requirements. If it is determined that someone other than you is fulfilling the course requirements, failure for the course will be automatic and reported to the Office of After School Professional Development.

Make-Up of Course Requirements Due to Excused Absences

If an absence is excused, it is the responsibility of the participant to contact a course instructor regarding make-up requirements. A meeting will be scheduled between the participant and the instructor and an appropriate substitute for required coursework will be assigned and due by an agreed upon date.

Synchronous Chat Sessions

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE 2 SYNCHRONOUS CHAT SESSIONS THAT YOU MUST ATTEND! FAILURE TO ATTEND ONE OF THE FIRST TWO SESSIONS WILL RESULT IN DE-REGISTRATION FROM THE COURSE! To attend these sessions, please click on <http://moodle.nyit.edu> and log into your account using a username and password that you will receive via e-mail from Ra Yung. If you do not receive this e-mail by 5PM on Friday, June 25th, please contact Ra at yra@nyit.edu. He will set up your account such that it will enable you to log on to the synchronous chat sessions. The synchronous chat sessions will be scheduled as follows:

INTRODUCTORY CHAT SESSION: Tuesday, June 29TH: 7PM to 9PM

INTRODUCTORY CHAT SESSION: Thursday, July 1ST: 7PM to 9PM

AS MENTIONED ABOVE YOU MUST ATTEND ONE OF THESE FIRST CHAT SESSIONS OR RISK DE-REGISTRATION FROM THE COURSE!

GENETICS CHAT SESSION: TUESDAY JULY 29TH: 7PM TO 9PM

IF YOU ARE ABSENT FROM THE GENETICS CHAT SESSION HELD ON JULY 29TH, YOU MUST CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR WITHIN 48 HOURS TO OBTAIN AN EXCUSED ABSENCE.

A Bit About Your Instructor

I am a science instructor at the New York Hall of Science. I have held my position for five years. My main role as a science instructor is to provide professional development to teachers within the New York City area. I hold a bachelors degree in Earth and Space Sciences with minors in biology and marine science from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. I also hold a masters degree in Geosciences from Montclair State University. My primary field of study was invertebrate paleontology and marine ecology. I possess a permanent New York State license in Earth Science for grades 7-12 and have been an educator for over 10 years having taught at the college, high school and middle school levels. I feel I am qualified to serve as an instructor for this course based on my rigorous training in the natural sciences, education and overall experience as an educator. I have designed this course to provide participants with an opportunity to both gain content knowledge of the biological sciences, to experience tactile learning techniques applicable to the biological sciences and to provide an arena for reflection upon teaching practices. If the above is what you seek in a course and a course instructor, then this course is for you!