

AP Environmental Science “APES”

Cathy Ramos - Teacher

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To: APES students and parents

Welcome to AP Environmental Science, a laboratory course in life science. This course is designed to prepare the student for the AP Environmental exam. In addition, this course satisfies the University of California admissions requirements of one year of a laboratory based life science class. Since passing the AP exam may qualify the student to by-pass a semester of a first-year college environmental science course, AP Environmental Science should not be considered college preparatory. Rather, this is a college class that includes higher levels of expectations of content, participation, effort, and behavior.

General Course Objectives: The primary goal of the course is to provide students with the scientific principles, concepts, and methodologies required to understand the interrelationships of the natural world, to identify and analyze the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them. Collecting and analyzing data from local ecosystems will be an integral part of the class.

Grading Policy - Grades are based on total points. To obtain an "A" grade in the course a student must have more than 90% of the total points possible. A 90%-100% B 80-89.9% C 70-79.9% D 60%-69.9% F 0%-59.9%

Item	% of Total Grade
Tests & Quizzes	45
Laboratories/Field Work	30
Assignments	15
Homework	5
Class Participation	5
Projects	0

Second term will have a 10% project grade and a 35% test grade. I will provide make-up labs or other make-up experiences (field work, etc.) whenever possible. These can be made up during homeroom and lunch. Many of these labs, assignments, and fieldwork experiences are invaluable and require teacher supervision. Therefore, if a student misses many labs it could easily hurt the student's grade. For this reason students are highly encouraged not to schedule dental appointments, trips, etc. that interfere with attendance.

Homework - Homework will consist of reading and outlining the text, studying vocabulary, answering questions, completing lab reports, studying for tests and quizzes, and completing projects (which will include library research). Laboratory reports are often completed at home. There will be at least one lab per week, although it's usually more like 2-3, with some lasting over several weeks. Work on projects will be completed outside regular class time, at home or after school in the science building. Students will be given a bimonthly calendar of the class' assignments (Note: the due dates may have to be adjusted if a lab or other activity runs longer than expected).

Notebook and supplies - Each day students will bring the following materials to class: writing instrument (I have no preference, except for formal papers which must be done in ink or typed when specified), a notebook, a calculator, and a clipboard (only on days of fieldwork). Students need to save every paper as the previous

work may be used for subsequent labs, to prepare for tests (occasionally tests are open note), for their end of the year portfolio, and as a record of completed work.

Field Trips -A portion of the course is on site fieldwork. We will be taking several trips throughout the year. Students will be studying various ecosystems such as: sandy beaches, tide pools, estuaries, chaparral, whale watching, cemeteries, etc. Transportation will be coordinated with a combination of student, teacher, and parent drivers. Field trip slips will need to be signed by the student, parent, and teachers of the periods in which the field trip will be in conflict.

Absences - Students who are absent on a laboratory day may make the missed work by attending a replacement laboratory held after school or during lunch. Students who have missed a lab should make arrangements to attend. Tests that have been missed can be made up within a one week time frame before school at 7:20 a.m., lunch, or directly after school (students need to make an appointment for both these times). It is up to the students to find out what work was missed during an absence and to make up the work. A study partner (in addition to homework calendar) is an excellent way to be sure you know what was missed. Lab reports are due the day after a student returns from an absence. Late homework cannot receive more than half credit and must be turned in the next day. Students with legitimate absences will be given an alternate assignment in place of missed work.

Behavior

The Science Department has adopted a policy of mutual respect.

Electronic Equipment - All electronic equipment such as cell phones, MP3 or CD Players, and games should be turned off during class. Failure to do this will result in confiscation. Students will need to retrieve the equipment from the Assistant Principal's office after school.

Falsifying laboratory results and Cheating- the entire point is to show me what you know! Don't do this.

Laboratory Safety - Any activity or action that risks the safety of any individual in the class or lab will result in a failure for that laboratory, and an immediate referral to the Assistant Principal for suspension (if warranted by the seriousness of the offense, permanent removal of the student from the class may result). It is extremely important that the laboratory be a safe place for all of us to work and learn. Safe laboratory practices will be taught in class.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,

Cathy Ramos

CUT HERE _____

Date: _____

My student, _____ and I have read the APES course guidelines.

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

We have no concerns at this time.....

OR

Could the teacher call us at _____ (phone number) to discuss concerns that we may have?.....

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____