

## GENERAL BIOCHEMISTRY (BB 450/550 Ecampus) Syllabus

**Instructor:** [Dr. Kevin Ahern \(I prefer to be called Kevin\)](#)

**Office** – ALS 2145

**Office Hours** – Feel free to call me anytime.

**Contact:** ahernk@onid.orst.edu or phone 541-737-2305

### Meeting Times

No face to face meetings. The ecampus course is offered four terms 2016-17

**Examinations** (must be taken in appropriate time windows announced on Schedule page)

**(I) Exam #1 – announced on Schedule page through link on Announcements page - "Web Materials and Free Course Textbook"**

**(II) Exam #2 – announced on Schedule page through link on Announcements page - "Web Materials and Free Course Textbook"**

**(III) Final Exam – announced on Schedule page through link on Announcements page - "Web Materials and Free Course Textbook"**

All ecampus exams are administered by a proctor approved by ecampus. See

[http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/services/proctoring/finding\\_proctor.htm](http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu/services/proctoring/finding_proctor.htm)

### COURSE PREREQUISITES

CH 331 and CH 332 or CH 334, CH 335, and CH 336. Non-OSU organic chemistry credit is perfectly fine, though you may need the instructor's assistance to register.

### LEARNING RESOURCES

**Primary Textbook:** *Biochemistry Free For All* - download [HERE](#)

**Alternative textbook:** *Biochemistry Free and Easy* - download [HERE](#)

Course materials available only through a link on Announcements page  
Emailed questions to the instructor are welcomed.

## **WEB MATERIALS**

The tentative lecture and assignment schedule is on the Web at  
<http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/bb450/450material/schedule450w17e.html>

Topics Covered in *Biochemistry Free For All* (pages)

Introduction/Acids&Bases (6-48)

Protein Structure (52-105)

Hemoglobin (109-140)

Protein Characterization (854-894)

Enzymes (335-369)

Catalytic Strategies (380-391)

Regulation (370-379, 395-407)

Carbohydrates (189-216)

Cellular Signaling (826-850)

Metabolic Strategies (410-426)

Glycolysis & Gluconeogenesis (481-507)

Glycogen Metabolism (507-535)

## **GRADING**

Course Points Distribution - Exam 1 (25%), Exam 2 (25%), Final Exam (45%), Turning in assigned problems on time (5%). There is no extra credit possible beyond the occasional questions asked on exams and therefore I do not (and in fact cannot) take improvement during the term into consideration in assigning grades. No fixed grading scale will be used to assign letter grades and no fixed numbers of letter grades are set. Since there is no fixed grading scale (90/80/70/60, for example) grades are therefore "curved," since this is the definition of what "curved" means. If you ask if grades in the course are curved, you will lose points. If you ask for how to earn extra credit, you will lose points. Grades will be assigned on groupings as determined by the instructor at the conclusion of the course. In courses graded on a 90-80-70-60 basis, it is possible to calculate how many points you need to make on the final to make a desired grade. It is not possible to do this for courses like this one where grades fluctuate as the average on the exam fluctuates. You are in MUCH better shape being graded the way I grade than you are in a 90-80-70-60 system. It is your responsibility to check the online grade distribution prior to asking any question about grades. Failure to do so will result in a loss of points. Undergraduates will be evaluated and graded separately from graduate students.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

I love teaching this course and enjoy discussion and meetings with you. I know that the subject of biochemistry strikes terror in the hearts of many, so I see my role partly as helping you to overcome that fear in order to do well. I will do everything I can to help you learn more of this exciting subject and help you overcome your fears of it. Some of the most rewarding experiences I have had in teaching this class are helping students in this very way. I expect you to be involved and responsible for your own education, as much as possible. Students who ask questions that are answered in the syllabus are not being responsible. The aim of this statement is not to discourage students from discussing their standing in the class, but rather to have students participate more fully in their own education. I will gladly discuss any student's grade as it stands at any time in the course, but students need to use resources available to them to their fullest. Similarly, students need to consult exam keys and relevant videos and transparencies before asking questions or requesting consideration for regrades.

Students taking examinations are not allowed to use a calculator, books, or notes of any kind. Other than a pencil/pen and the computer they are taking it on, no other materials are allowed for student use on exams. The sole exception to this is that on the final exam ONLY, students are allowed to bring with them and use one note card with information on it handwritten by the student. The notecard must be no larger than 5x8 inches and printers may not be used to make it. All items on the card MUST be handwritten or hand-drawn and you do not have to get the card from me.

## **EXAM PROCTORING**

Proctoring of exams for this class is REQUIRED. Phone 800-667-1465 or 541-737-9204 for additional information. The proctor gives exams to you under the conditions I set. Please be aware that you need to have this set up well in advance of the exam and the proctor MUST be approved by ecampus. The exam MUST be taken in the time window described on the Schedule page. There are no exceptions to this window due to incorrect scheduling or student oversight. Please note also that I have no knowledge of how to get a proctor or how to get one approved. Ecampus has all of the answers to that. The only way I can get involved about proctoring is if there is some problem with the ecampus. You are responsible for having ALL proctor issues settled well in advance of taking exams.

VERY IMPORTANT - Canvas operates differently from Blackboard in how it manages exams. It will NOT warn you that you are running out of time on an exam. It is therefore essential that you monitor your time yourself, as you

will be penalized one point for every minute you go over your allotted time. For mid-term exams, this is 50 minutes and for the final exam, this is 110 minutes. Please note if you have permission from DAS to have extra time allotted for your exam that this may not show up in Canvas, but will be allowed for AFTER the exam is done (by me). Everyone should note that if issues arise during the taking of an exam, ecampus MUST be notified before your time for taking an exam is over. No adjustments can be made after your time for taking an exam is over. For everyone using Proctor U, please note - 90% of the problems with Proctor U arise from disconnections due to using WiFi. If you are taking your exam from home, use a wired connection. Proctor U or ecampus can tell you how to do this from your router.

## **EXAM POLICIES**

Preparing makeup exams requires a significant effort. There will be three exams given in this course (including the final). The final will be comprehensive. Exams will be taken under the guidance of a proctor approved by OSU's ecampus. There are options for proctoring all over the world and Proctor U is a common one. Reading and studying the assigned material before the lecture date is essential for success.

Excused absences will not be given for missing exams due to airline reservations, routine illness (colds, flu, stomach aches), or other common ailments. Excused absences will almost never be given after the absence has occurred. Students therefore must notify the instructor if they encounter difficulties BEFORE the exam occurs. If I decide your reason for missing an exam is valid, I might allow you to take a makeup exam. The following situations are NOT grounds for missing an exam:

- You misread the date of the exam on the syllabus.
- You went to the wrong room.

It is the responsibility of each student to check that their exam has been properly graded. If errors are made, or if the student feels that more points should have been awarded for a particular question, students must write a CLEAR explanation stating their case. Requests for regrading must be made in writing within 3 school days after the examination is made available to the class. Failure to follow these instructions will result in automatic denial of the request. Frivolous requests involving “fishing for points” (for example – asking me to regrade simply to award you more points without a valid reason) will result in loss of points.

One of the most common problems students have with deadlines for exams/problems arise from waiting to the last possible hour to take the exam

within the exam window and then having a problem, such as a flat tire, catching a cold, or having a technical problem. I am generally not sympathetic to last minute problems. The best way to avoid such problems is to schedule exams earlier in the time window so that if something unexpected happens, you have plenty of time to request a fix. Further, telling me about a problem AFTER the window closes means I will be unable to do anything about it.

### **OLD EXAMS**

I get a lot of requests for practice or old exams. In my experience, students use these exams for all the wrong reasons and in all the wrong ways. A practice/old exam is useful for illustrating the format of an exam and for that purpose only. In the lecture version of this course, the exam format is a little unusual, so I provide a practice exam to show the format. You can hear me saying that in the videos. The problems students run into with practice exams is that they use them as study tools. This is a very bad mistake because it leads students to study narrowly and study patterns of information instead of the content of the material itself. Questions change, but the content does not. Thus, when exam wording changes from one exam to another and students have been learning patterns, they answer according to the pattern they learned on an old exam, not according to the information they are being asked about. Usually, when they answer according to patterns, they find they are wrong. It is one of the most common reasons students feel like professors are trying to "trick" them. While I won't say some professors don't have a bit of that in mind, I can say definitively that I do not. As noted on the class Schedule page, the format of exams in this e-campus course is multiple choice. This is a simple format and there is no need to illustrate it with a practice exam. Consequently, I do not provide practice exams and by doing this, I (hope) I am doing you a favor by getting you to focus on the actual information and not on the pattern of information. I hope this is helpful to you and I wish you the best on your exams.

### **LETTERS OF REFERENCE**

I am frequently asked to write letters of reference for students from the class. Since I must know a student personally to write a letter of reference, it is almost never possible for me to do this in the e-campus, unless I know you through some other means.

## **REGISTRATION DEADLINES**

I expect students will meet all deadlines as appropriate for withdrawing from the class, should that be necessary. I do not routinely approve petitions to make changes after deadlines have passed, except in extraordinary circumstances. The deadline for dropping classes (no grade) during the academic year (fall, winter, spring terms) is the second week of class. The deadline for withdrawing from a class (grade of W) is the seventh week during the academic year. If you do not withdraw by Friday of the seventh week of the term, you will receive a grade in the course. Summer deadlines are different and students are responsible for confirming such deadlines with the OSU Registrar.

## **POLICY ON INCOMPLETES**

A grade of I is appropriate when 1) a course requirement has not been completed due to circumstances beyond the control of the student and 2) at least half of the work for the course has been completed at a level of C- or better. For medical problems that prohibited the student from fulfilling a requirement of the course, a note from a doctor is required. The request may be supplied without the note, and the request (if acceptable) will typically be granted, conditional on the note being provided later. For other circumstances, supporting evidence, such as a note from an advisor, will be helpful to the petitioner's case.

The following is a list of reasons that are **not** acceptable:

- The course proved to be more time-consuming or difficult than expected.
- Work in other courses ended up taking too much time.
- Work or travel associated with a job ended up interfering with course work.
- Time conflicts prohibited contact with the instructor or TAs during office hours,
- The student misunderstood the requirements or grading schemes of the course.
- The student wishes to avoid a low grade.
- The student wishes to retake the course at a later date

## **LEARNER OUTCOMES**

The intention of the course is for students to:

- Acquire the technical language used to communicate biochemistry information and use that language to describe proteins, molecules, signaling pathways, catalysis, and metabolism accurately
- Recall key elements of basic biochemistry principles, including metabolic

pathways, molecule names, molecular structures (as noted), enzyme/cellular control mechanisms, catalysis, and signaling pathways

- Perform analyses relevant to the material presented
- Communicate (through writing and speaking) key concepts relevant to biochemistry
- Understand and apply general concepts of biochemistry to relevant, specific problems.
- Predict the directions of metabolic pathways from an understanding of the control mechanisms and energy considerations of biochemical reactions.

### **LEARNER EXPECTATIONS**

- Advance preparation
- No last minute studying
- Questions to answer concepts/processes that the student does not understand BEFORE it is too late.
- Recognition that an understanding of a complex topic like biochemistry requires considerable background prior to the class, a considerable amount of information to be acquired in the class, and sufficient time and effort to put these together to master the material.

### **GENERAL OSU AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES**

Please note: "Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing, the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations must be registered with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities."

The Department of Biochemistry/Biophysics follows the university policies on student conduct. These can be found at

<http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0>

Cheating or plagiarism by students is subject to the disciplinary process outlined in the Student Conduct Regulations. Students are expected to be honest and ethical in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in one of the following areas:

\* cheating- use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids

- \* fabrication- falsification or invention of any information
- \* assisting- helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty
- \* tampering- altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents
- \* plagiarism- representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own

Behaviors disruptive to the learning environment will not be tolerated and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. The goal of Oregon State University is to provide students with the knowledge, skill and wisdom they need to contribute to society. Our rules are formulated to guarantee each student's freedom to learn and to protect the fundamental rights of others. People must treat each other with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive. Behaviors that are disruptive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated, and will be referred to the Student Conduct Program for disciplinary action. Behaviors that create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office.

**Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities:** Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.