NJIT BIOLOGY

Course Syllabus

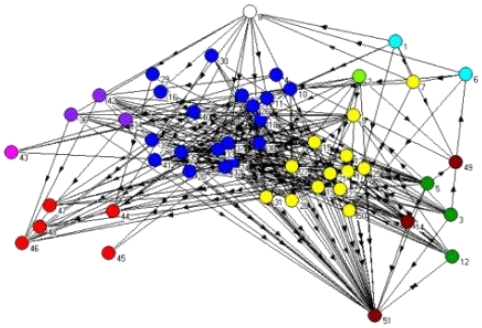
FALL 2014

BIOLOGY 338-001: ECOLOGY OF THE DINING HALL

INSTRUCTOR:	Maria Stanko	**PHONE:**	973-642-7246
OFFICE:	434 Colton Hall	**EMAIL:**	mstanko@njit.edu
OFFICE HOURS:	M: 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	**WEBSITE:**	http://moodle.njit.edu/
COURSE SCHEDULE:	T, R: 2:30PM – 3:55PM; FMH 110		

DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the on-campus ecosystem of the dining hall as a framework for learning about a number of ecological concepts. We will investigate topics such as food webs, nutrient cycling, microbial ecology, and agroecology as they apply to the organisms and biological processes present in our dining hall. Course work will involve extensive reading and discussion of scientific and popular literature, supplemented by trips to the dining hall and related on-campus facilities.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to:

- Apply the ecological concepts taught in class and understand how the ecosystem of the dining hall is connected to other systems.
- Read critically and be able to form and articulate opinions on complex issues in ecology.
- Independently conceive of and execute an investigation-based written project.

PREREQUISITE:

- BIOL 205&206 (Foundations of Biology: Ecology & Evolution) or permission of the Instructor.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Text: No required textbook
- Extensive required readings from a variety of sources, including scientific and popular literature, will be posted on the course Moodle site.

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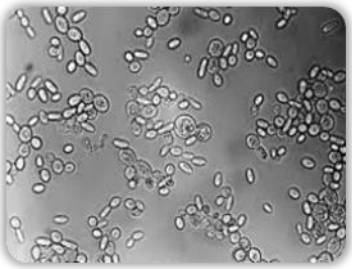
GRADE SCALE: Grades will be determined by the percentage of the possible points earned, following the standard grade scale:

Assignments:	50
Participation:	20
Quizzes (2x20):	40
Journal:	50
Final Exam:	100
Final Project:	100
TOTAL POINTS:	**360**



BIOLOGY 338 COURSE POLICIES:

Make up Exams, Quizzes and Late Assignments: Make up exams and quizzes will be possible only with a doctor's or a dean's letter or with prior approval. Late assignments will be penalized 10% of the points available for each 24-hour interval that they are late.

Journal: Students will keep a journal throughout the semester describing observations, questions, and thoughts related to course material. Writing prompts will occasionally be given, but free entries are encouraged. A minimum of 15 entries, roughly one page each, is expected. Journals will be collected periodically to ensure progress and return feedback.

Final project: A large portion of the points in this course are associated with an independent final research project. Your assignment for the final project is to research any topic that interests you that meets the following criteria: your topic must involve FOOD and ECOLOGY and require some DATA COLLECTION (for example, from the dining hall, a grocery store, or a literature survey). The final products of your project will be:

- A 5-10 page paper about your subject (70 points).
- A 10-minute presentation to the class sharing what you've learned (30 points).

Academic Dishonesty: The course has a zero tolerance policy for academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating. Please note that we often work together in this course, but all work you turn in must be your own. Instances of dishonesty will be punished by a zero on the assignment and consultation with the office of the Dean of Students to determine if further action is required. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please ask me or refer to the academic integrity code: www.njit.edu/academics/integrity.php.

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COURSE OUTLINE: *A more detailed schedule including readings and assignments will be posted to the course Moodle site.

WEEK OF:	TOPIC	NOTES
9/1	Introduction / What We Eat and Why	
9/8	What We Eat and Why	
9/15	Biodiversity in the Dining Hall	
9/22	Biogeography and Origins of Crops	
9/29	Energetics of Food and Eating	
10/6	Microbial Ecology – Beneficial Microbes	**QUIZ 1** Thurs 10/9
10/13	Microbial Ecology – Food Safety	
10/20	Pollination and Agriculture	**Project Proposal Due**
10/27	Food Webs	
11/3	Nutrient Cycling	**Journals Due**
11/10	Agroecology	**QUIZ 2** Thurs 11/13
11/17	Genetically Modified Foods	
11/24	Institutional Solutions: Incorporating Ecology into the Dining Hall and Beyond	NO CLASS THURS 11/27
12/1	**Student Presentations**	
12/8	**Student Presentations**	**FINAL PAPER & JOURNALS DUE**
FINALS	**FINAL EXAM WEEK: DECEMBER 15-19, 2014**	