

AP Environmental Science  
Course Information and Expectations  
2017-2018

\*\*AP Environmental Science Exam Test Date – Thursday, May 10<sup>th</sup> (afternoon)\*\*

**Course Description**

The goal of the AP Environmental Science 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 problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving and/or preventing them.

Environmental science is interdisciplinary; it embraces a wide variety of topics from different areas of study. Yet there are several major unifying constructs, or themes, that cut across the many topics included in the study of environmental science. The following themes provide a foundation for the structure of the AP Environmental Science course.

- A) Science is a process.
  - Science is a method of learning more about the world.
  - Science constantly changes the way we understand the world.
- B) Energy conversions underlie all ecological processes.
  - Energy cannot be created; it must come from somewhere.
  - As energy flows through systems, at each step more of it becomes unusable.
- C) The Earth itself is one interconnected system.
  - Natural systems change over time and space.
  - Biogeochemical systems vary in ability to recover from disturbances.
- D) Humans alter natural ecosystems.
  - Humans have had an impact on the environment for millions of years.
  - Technology and population growth have enabled humans to increase both the rate and scale of their impact on the environment.
- E) Environmental problems have a cultural and social context.
  - Understanding the role of cultural, social, and economic factors is vital to the development of solutions.
- F) Human survival depends on developing practices that will achieve sustainable systems.
  - A suitable combination of conservation and development is required.
  - Management of common resources is essential.

**Class Expectations**

This is an AP course, and you should expect the workload to be accordingly. The class will move at a fast and continuous pace in order to cover the topics outlined by College Board. There will be reading and outlining of material outside of class. Class time will be spent on reinforcing activities and discussions. Mathematical calculations will also be an integral part of this course as well. It is your responsibility to know what you don't know, so you can get help.

## Supplies

- pencils
- pens (black or blue ink)
- highlighters
- red marking pen/pencil
- colored pencils (10 colors)
- calculator
- loose leaf paper
- 3 ring binder (1 inch)

## Grading System

*Grades will be calculated based on the following categories using the points system.*

- **HOMEWORK** – Homework includes reading and written assignments. Homework will consist of various assignments to reinforce concepts. Success in class and on tests will depend largely upon keeping up with the reading material and regular studying.
- **CURRENT EVENTS PROJECTS** – Throughout the year, there will be various assignments related to current events, which will be called “APES in the News.” There will be 1 per grading period and will be equivalent to a test. Details will be given throughout the year on these projects.
- **QUIZZES** – Quizzes include both announced and unannounced. Quizzes will include material such as the reading from the night before or the lecture from the day before the quiz.
- **TESTS/PROJECTS** – Tests includes objective and subjective questions and are worth 50-100 pts each. They will be given at the end of each unit. They are modeled after the AP test, and will include 25-30 multiple choice questions and 1-2 free response question worth 10 points. Projects will be assigned periodically throughout the year. Specific guidelines will be distributed in class.
- **LABS** – Labs are a vital part of AP Environmental Science. Labs will be a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. They will consist of both field work and laboratory experiences.