

Carissa Ann Metzger

Former AP Biology Student

Farewell Address Numero Uno

Dear future AP Biology students,

This class is pretty hard. You will need to ask questions when you don't understand and at least try to get your homework in. I didn't do a very good job of this. It did not work out very well. Also don't let George Roy (GRoy) steal your lab book. It creates a very stressful situation and is not fun. Start studying for the AP exam before Ester Break. It will make the process much easier. The AP test is hard, but not in the way that you think. You need to know the information, but not in the way you know facts. You have to be able to understand the information in a way that you can apply it to the questions. Time management is also a must for the Exam, especially for the FRQs. When you practice the FRQs in class she won't time them so you might want to practice it on your own. The thing that makes this class hard is the amount of homework. There will be around a half an hour of homework each night. Don't procrastinate your lab work. She will probably give you a week to complete each lab packet and you should start it early. You will probably have questions on it and it can take an hour to complete. I recommend using the Holtzclaw prep book to study for the unit tests, the book follows Riedelle's unit structure so it is easy to follow alone. All in all it is a pretty good class and I enjoyed taking it.

Letter for AP Biology student

I am writing in per, which means I'm pretty serious about this. But not as serious as how you should take this class. Cramming might help sometimes, but it won't for the AP test. Also, don't use study guides that Mrs. Riedell gives you on the tests... that's cheating. Mrs. Riedell might seem like she doesn't care, but like all teachers, she does. If you get bored reading the fat textbook, read the ~~study~~ student comparison to the textbook and Cliff notes. The majority of AP biology tests require only common sense, not memorizing like what you would think. So if you're not good at reasoning, good luck. Don't mess around in class. She hears everything. 😊  
Good luck!

Dear Next Year AP Bio Students,

My advice for next year for you incoming AP Bio students is to study. Studying will help your test grades a lot. When studying for tests and the AP exam, do not procrastinate. Procrastinating will destroy your grades and will have to make a lot of corrections on the tests, but you can't make corrections on the AP exam. The score you get is the score you get. The chapter tests can be corrected to get half of the missed points back. It's easier to do well in this class if you study.

Sincerely,

Past year's AP Bio student

Dear 2017-2018 A.P Biology Students,

Congratulations for taking a step towards challenging and preparing yourself for the future. You're in for a class that will definitely be unlike the others you have taken before. Be prepared to open yourself up to learning lots of new information. Unlike other classes, A.P Biology not only requires you to absorb many facts and concepts, but also demands that you apply this knowledge to complex scenarios and real-world contexts. Although it may seem like the class does not have that much daily work or "homework," in order to truly stay on top of things and comprehend the information you learn each day, you should spend a little bit of time each day to work on developing your understanding of biology even if there is no official homework assigned.

The tests in this class are perhaps the most difficult part. They present you with questions that require critical thinking and application skills. To make it easier for yourself, the best way to prepare for the unit exams are to look at previous A.P Biology exams. This really helps you get a feel for the tests and become more comfortable with the material.

Another major piece of advice I have for you is to not procrastinate for the A.P Biology Exam! My favorite study tool was the Holtzclaw Review Book that aligns with the A.P Biology textbook. You don't even really need to use the textbook. The Holtzclaw book covers it all; it will be your best friend in this class. I promise. Preparing for the exam will be grueling. Hopefully, the prospect of looking at the post-exam memes on Twitter will get you through three hours of cells, photosynthesis, and DNA.

Best of luck,

Dear AP Bio Student,

I'm just going to start off by telling you a few things that you should consider doing throughout the school year in order to obtain the best grade possible for the class. First, pay attention during class time and do your homework; while that seems like it may be a pointless remark, believe me, it will help you understand the class much better and prepare for the AP test. Secondly, when receive a grade for a test, do the corrections for that test. Test corrections will improve your grade and your understanding of the test material substantially. With these two tips in mind, you should be able to pass AP Biology with ease.

Now, let me list off what you shouldn't do while in AP Biology (this is what I did):

1. Do homework on the day that it is due
2. Watch YouTube videos while class is session
3. Turn in homework 2-3 weeks late
4. Do test corrections on the day that they are due
5. Study the material only on the day of the test
6. Fall asleep during notes

Have fun!

Sincerely,

A struggling AP Bio Student

Kristen Werpy

## Advice to Next Year's AP Bio Students

I vividly remember Back-to-School night for AP Bio. I was uncertain about whether or not I could handle this class with the others in my schedule.

The best advice I could give to you is simply this: give it a try. Keep going, and you'll be alright. Take a deep breath, relax, and go along for the ride.

But with that, there are certain things to do to stay afloat. Do your homework, and read; at the very least, read the brown Test Prep book for each unit. Don't worry about reading every single word on every single thing. Concepts are key. Facts are helpful, but seeing the big picture is the main focus.

Most importantly, have fun with this class. Get excited about science and learning, and this class will be awesome. This was the class I was the most nervous about taking in high school, and quickly became one of the best.

Have fun, work hard, and  
**BREATHE!**

-Kristen

Dear Future AP Bio Students,

This is a hard class; then again, if you're reading this with legitimate intentions of taking the advice presented here, you're probably already on the right track to getting to where you want to be grade-wise. Most of the worksheets in AP Bio aren't that hard, but you're going to get a lot of them throughout the year; make sure to keep doing a bit of work each day to stay on top of things.

Stay on top of what you're learning in class! If you don't listen to the lectures and understand what's going on, the worksheets will be quite hard and the tests will be impossible. Tests in AP Bio use questions from previous AP exams, so they're entirely made up of application-based problems and will be very challenging if you don't listen in class and study quite a bit. The review packets Mrs. Riedell gives you for the tests are very helpful, so be sure to read through those. I remember the first test we had in class was quite easy, but the others weren't.

The human body projects you'll start getting after a bit take a fair amount of time, so take note of that. Those projects make up basically all of the review you'll be doing on the human body in class, so make sure to really put time into them. For reviewing for the AP exam, I would recommend giving yourself at least a month to study, as things get pretty crazy around then. Holtzclaw and Cliffnotes are both very helpful- the textbook is very long and goes into much more detail than you'll probably need for the test.

Dear AP Bio students,

Welcome to AP Biology! First and foremost, I hope you are passionate about science, because it will make your year much more enjoyable than stressful. You won't need to pull your hair out working, but you will need to be honest with your abilities and make sure to answer a lot of your own questions. It's no secret that studying only a little bit and very early into a unit will prepare you very much, just as *not* studying will drive you to a state of cramming that will not (and never has) worked successfully. There are 48 students in (presumably) two classes this year, but no matter how negative people may be about the large amount that signed up for the 2017-18 year, **be optimistic and practical!** Just because there are more students doesn't mean you're somehow limited in personal results. No circumstances have changed regarding the mental work ahead, which really is not that bad. Be sure to listen in class, it's definitely worth your while when you're studying alone. Regardless of how much you study, be prepared to get tests in the 75-90 percent correct range! This is common for the difficulty of the questions, and you get half back on them when you do test corrections. (Shoot for an 89%, because with test corrections, that still lands you at a 94.5% A.)

Lastly, study for the AP Exam at least 30 days out. For me, if I plan the most encompassing studying timeline leading up to the exam, there's still somehow more to do. You'll at least be able to maximize your potential by getting done what you think is necessary at an earlier stage of the year.

Don't stress, have fun investigating the beautiful phenomenon that is biology, and take comfort in the fact that you'll be taught by the most qualified teacher for this subject.

Kind Regards,

Oscar Kavanagh

Dear AP Biology students,

I have a few tips to staying sane while taking this class.

- Study- I hate studying and sometimes feel like it's pointless, but trust me, it is not pointless in this class. You may think that you have all of the material down after learning it, but it is never a bad idea to go over what you've learned just in case you missed something.
- Pace yourself- Do not cram right before a test. Some people say that is the strategy that works best for them, but that won't work in this class. Each chapter builds on the chapters you learned about previously. Make sure you're also studying things you learned in previous chapters. That information will show up later, whether it be on a test in class or the AP test.
- Don't stress over a bad grade- Everyone, and I mean everyone, gets a bad grade from time to time. What's important is that you understand what you did wrong and move on.
- Take time for yourself- If you are constantly studying, you will miss out on the high school experience. Make sure you're doing fun things, such as going to games, as well as studying.

Letter to Future AP Biology,

Dear AP Biology class,

If there's one thing that you have to make sure to do, it's to finish all your assignments on time at the listed due date. Mrs. Riedell will be lenient and understanding even if it's not completed on time, but seriously, finish it on time because it can cause complications to both the instructor as well as other students who want to continue with the curriculum. High school life can be stressful and busy, and even I had a few assignments not finished on time, but the reality is that it shouldn't be taken advantage of.

If you're taking the end-of-the-year AP Exam, don't be nervous or worried because if you've paid attention in class, then you will do great on the exam. The questions are exactly like the ones on the tests you'll take in class. A suggestion that would really help is to, if you feel like you have the material down decently well, take a bunch of practice AP tests from previous years, especially the free response questions. That would give you a good idea of what the test would be like as well as giving you practice to make you comfortable during the *actual* exam. In a way, you should be excited for the AP Exam because after that you're pretty much done and all you will do in class from that day are fun activities.

Best wishes,

Weilin Hu

---

Tips to next year's Bio students:

- If you don't understand a concept ASK QUESTIONS
- Read the Chapter in the book or summaries in the Holzclaw/Cliffnotes before the lesson to know what you'll be talking about in class
- ALSO use those books to study right before the test because they have really helpful practice questions and FRQs in them
- Don't wait till last minute to study for the AP test and take lots of Practice tests to prepare yourself

Feedback for Mrs. Riedell:

- I did not really understand the respirometer lab with the peas in the tubes. We did not know how to read it and overall I think we needed more time for the labs.
- I LOVED the field trip to the nature park :)

Dear New AP Bio Student,

Holtzclaw will be your BFF; if you sleep on it all of the knowledge will transfer into your head via osmosis (kinda, sorta, maybe not.) What I'm really getting at is STUDY for the tests. I estimate that I spent about 3-5 hours studying for each unit test in order to get a half decent grade. It may not be fun now, but at least you'll be able to understand all the memes after you pay \$90 and drag yourself out of the AP exam somehow. This class is pretty decent, but the tests are hard because they are all AP level questions (which is actually a really good thing because then the type of questions won't be a surprise on the actual exam).

Good luck,

Jensina Davis [Former AP Bio Student, 2016-2017]