



AP Environmental Science

Basic Information:

- The AP Environmental Science course is designed to be the equivalent of a one-semester, introductory college course in environmental science. 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 environmental problems both natural and human-made, to evaluate the relative risks associated with these problems, and to examine alternative solutions for resolving or preventing them.
- Environmental science is interdisciplinary; it embraces a wide variety of topics from different areas of study. It includes a good amount of math and writing.
- Due to the quantitative analysis that is required in the course, students should also have taken at least one year of algebra. Calculators are not allowed in class or on the exam.
- Students are expected to be able to acquire basic information on their own and then work toward analysis, synthesis and evaluation of that material.
- Covers a broad and fast paced curriculum centered on the environment.

The Exam:

- **The AP Environmental Science Exam is given in May.** Students enrolled in the class are required to take the exam at no cost to the family. If a student does not attend the testing day, there will be a fee charged.
- The AP Environmental Science Exam is 3 hours long and is divided equally in time between a multiple-choice section and a free-response section. The multiple-choice section, which constitutes 60 percent of the final grade, consists of 80 multiple-choice questions that are designed to cover the breadth of the students' knowledge and understanding of environmental science. Thought-provoking problems and questions based on fundamental ideas from environmental science are included along with questions based on the recall of basic facts and major concepts.
- The free-response section emphasizes the application of principles in greater depth. In this section, students must organize answers to broad questions, thereby demonstrating reasoning and analytical skills, as well as the ability to synthesize material from several sources into cogent and coherent essays. Three free-response questions are included in this section, which constitutes 40 percent of the final score: 1 experimental design question, 1 analysis of an environmental problem proposing a solution using models & examples and 1 analysis question using calculations.
- Scores of 3 or better can equate to college credit. Students will get their scores in July.
- Student will practice these types of questions throughout the year.
- There will be a cumulative teacher made final exam at the end of the year.

Topics:

Global Climate Change & Ozone Depletion	Matter & Flow of Energy in Ecosystems	Air Pollution	Water Pollution
Evolution & Biodiversity	Sustainability of Resources	Population Dynamics	Risk, Toxicology & Human Health
Food Production & Consumption	Energy Resources	Geology & Soil	Urban Land Use

Resources:

- College Board website.
- Various workbooks & Study Guides. My preferred choice is the Barron's version.
- My Canvas course site which will have all the PowerPoints, handouts and resources we use in class available to students at any time.

The Schedule:

- This AP course is a yearlong course that meets every day for 90 minutes. This is because the class includes a laboratory section.
- Students who successfully complete the course will receive 2 credits toward graduation: 1 for the lecture & 1 for the lab.
- Students are required to complete up to 25 lab exercises and reports in the course. The lab grade will be reported as Pass/Fail.

The Decision:

- Things to consider when contemplating AP Environmental:
 - How many other things does my child participate in (sports, arts, work, etc)??
 - Will my child take both 10th grade AP course offerings?
 - Is my child ready to make the commitment to AP courses? (good time management & organizational skills)
 - Has my child been challenged in Honors courses? If not, maybe AP is the answer.
- Talk to others who are taking or have taken the course.
- Email me at allisom@gcsnc.com if you have questions.