BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE (BISC)

BISC 1: Structure and Function of Organisms
3 Credits
An exploration of how cellular structures and processes contribute to life and how life displays unity even in its diversity. Students who have passed BIOL 027, 110, or 141 may not schedule this course.
Bachelor of Arts: Natural Sciences
General Education: Natural Sciences (GN)

BISC 2: Genetics, Ecology, and Evolution
3 Credits
The study of how living organisms inherit their traits, how plants and animals evolved, and how they now interact. Students who have passed BIOL 033, 133, 110, 220W, or 222 may not schedule this course.
Bachelor of Arts: Natural Sciences
General Education: Natural Sciences (GN)

BISC 3: Environmental Science
3 Credits
We are living in extraordinary times. Our numbers have now become so large, our power so great, and our consumption so rampant that we are despoiling our home. Indeed, over the past half-century environmental scientists have been calling attention to the deterioration of Earth’s atmosphere, Earth’s oceans, Earth’s forests and Earth’s soils, along with the loss of Earth’s biodiversity, from the tropics to the poles. The evidence is unequivocal: Planet Earth is under duress. Though we need Earth for our survival, Earth does not need us! So, will Earth shake us into oblivion or will we wake up, before it is too late, and become respectful members of Earth’s community of life? This is a critical question for humankind as a whole; and it is the reason that BISC 3 exists at Penn State. So it is that, in this course, we will explore the root causes of today’s environmental crisis and, in so doing, consider scientific, technological, sociological, psychological and personal responses to what is, arguably, the most significant crisis in the history of our species. If you commit to fully engaging with this course, you can expect to: 1-Discover how questions can be powerful catalysts for learning; 2-Grow in your ability to see both yourself and Planet Earth from new and liberating perspectives; 3-Apreciate the power of critical thinking and personal reflection as a means to both personal and global transformation 4-Realize that you, should you choose, can play a significant role in the healing of our world.
Bachelor of Arts: Natural Sciences
General Education: Natural Sciences (GN)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

BISC 4: Human Body: Form and Function
3 Credits
BISC 4 Human Body: Form and Function (3) (GN) (BA) This course introduces students to the biological principles fundamental to understanding human life. Cell structure, biochemistry and metabolism, and the structure and function of major organ systems are explored in the course. Special emphasis on the relationship of the functioning of the human body to human disease is also emphasized. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to describe the basic biochemical, structural and functional characteristics of cells. They will learn the roles of carbohydrates, lipids, proteins and nucleic acids in cells and in the body as a whole. They will understand how these molecules are used in building cell and body structures, in energy-releasing metabolism and in the copying and use of genetic information. Students will also be expected to explain how different organ systems enable the body to meet the need for support structures, oxygen, nutrients, waste elimination, internal communication, defense against infectious disease and cancer, coordination of internal activity, and reproduction. To provide context for the normal workings of the human body, students will also analyze human diseases and the current understanding of the underlying pathophysiology. As a course that meets general education (GN) requirements, students will increase their scientific literacy, their critical and analytical thinking, and ethical reasoning skills. Students will ultimately be able to use the knowledge gained in this course to better understand disease processes, and will be able to make better informed decisions regarding to their health and well-being. Students who have passed BIOL 129, 141, 161 and 163 may not schedule this course.
Bachelor of Arts: Natural Sciences
General Education: Natural Sciences (GN)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies