**What is this course about?**

\*Where do **you** fit in to the Houston ecosystem? What is your role? How do you depend on the natural environment for living?

\*How can you and other Houstonians make choices and design our lives in a way that preserves natural resources?

\*How do our planet’s systems work – the water, air, soil, animals and plants?

**What topics will we learn about?**

Houston, ecology, endangered species, biodiversity, water resources, land use, air pollution, climate change, energy resources, food resources.

**Going Outside and Participation**

This course involves extensive activity and much of it will take place outside in the school-yard garden, the campus habitat (Wolf Prairie) as well as off-campus for field classes and volunteer events. Your responsibility is to wear/bring appropriate clothing for outdoor activities as well as practice a willingness to participate and assist in all classroom activities. You can receive minor and major grade credit each grading cycle for your participation.

**Supplies and Equipment for Class Everyday**

* Laptop AND charger
* Binder or pocket folder
* Spiral notebook with pockets (can be kept in the classroom)
* Appropriate clothing for outdoor activity depending on weather and conditions

**Classroom expectations:**

* Respect yourself, your peers, your instructors and our environment
* Arrive on time each day ready to participate
* Be prepared with charged laptop, charger, completed work and appropriate clothing
* All mobile phones (and other similar devices) must be out of sight at all times
* Clean-up after yourself and no food permitted in the science lab (except by invitation)
* Be an active participant in your education and utilize a growth mind-set

**Grading System**

Tests, digital portfolios, projects, participation, certifications and some labs are major grades worth 70% of the grade average. Expect at least three major grades each grading cycle. Daily grades are worth 30%. Each semester, complete a minimum of 1.75 hours of service-learning on-campus after dismissal on Wolf Prairie and/or in the school garden. The other option is to complete 3 hours of service in a teacher-approved off-campus location taking place outside of the school day. Academic credit for service-learning is major grade awarded in Cycle 3 and Cycle 6 as well as credit towards the final exam grade. A list of dates and registration to attend events on-campus are available in our course in Canvas.

## Absences and Make-up Work

It is your responsibility to find out what you have missed. Use Canvas to help you know due dates of assignments. When absent from class, you have the same number of days to complete missing work without a loss of points. If you are absent only on a known test day, you must attempt the test when you return unless you did not have access to new material on the test. If you are feeling ill, STAY HOME. You are allowed to be absent. Manage and use your absences wisely and as needed.

**Electronics in Class and During Assessments**

Per the Westside Way handbook, all personal electronics devices must be turned-off during class hours and put-away in a purse or backpack. Exceptions may occur by invitation of the teacher and use is allowed during lunch and passing periods. If an electronic device is seen during instructional time, it can be confiscated by school personnel and submitted to the associate principal. See Student Code of Conduct for details on retrieving your device.

If your device is visible during an assessment (test or quiz), it is assumed that test security is compromised and you will receive a zero for that assessment with no opportunity for a retake. The device will be confiscated.

**Re-take/Re-do policy**

If you earn less than 70% on a major grade (test, project or lab) you may be eligible to retake that major grade for a maximum grade of 70% IF

* You attend at least one tutorial and make adequate corrections to the assessment
* The tutorial **and** retake or reattempt must be completed within one week of the assignment being assessed digitally or physically returned to you.

You may also replace one major grade each cycle by participation in a Grade-Trade community service-learning event for a minimum of 3.0 hours, by completing and submitting the Community Service Verification Form, as well as uploading photographic evidence to Canvas. You may earn full-credit on a Grade-Trade activity (not just a grade up to 70%). A list of events from which to choose will be advertised in our course on Canvas.

\*\*This policy does not apply to final exams and some major grades such as projects, labs\*\*

**Office Hours and Tutorials:**

Office hours and tutorials take place Mondays and Wednesdays during the first half of lunch. Other times may be available by coordinating with the teacher,

**Late Work Policy-** We expect you to complete ALL course work to the best of your ability.

Late work is accepted under the following conditions:

* Daily assignments submitted one-day late can earn a maximum of a 77% and will receive a 50% after two-days late. There is no retake for daily assignments.
* Major grade assignments (labs, projects, portfolio activities) will lose one letter grade each day late until a 70, then 5 points deduction each following day late
* All late assignments must be submitted within one week of due date to be considered.
* During face-to-face instruction, assignments may be stamped to denote timely completion. Stamps earn extra credit. Stamps are never given to late work. If you are absent, a stamp on any work will be given the day you return, but YOU must ask for it.

**Conference Period and Contact Information**

Coach Mister Spence’s conference time is third period which is 9:30 AM to 10:15 AM Mon, Tue, Friday and 9:30 AM-11:05 PM on Wednesdays Conferences needing to take place before 7:40 AM or after 3:25 PM can also be available by appointment. Email is the best way to contact at [lspence@houstonisd.org](mailto:lspence@houstonisd.org)

“There are no problems, only solutions.” “You are brilliant and the Earth is hiring!”

-John Lennon, musician and philosopher -Paul Hawken, environmental economist

“Where there is no vision, there is no hope. If you love it enough, everything will talk to you.”

-George Washington Carver, inventor, scientist