

COURSE DETAIL

PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY

Country

New Zealand

Host Institution

University of Auckland

Program(s)

University of Auckland

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Philosophy Biological Sciences

UCEAP Course Number

163

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY

UCEAP Transcript Title

PHILOSOPHY OF BIOL

UCEAP Quarter Units

6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description

This course examines philosophical and conceptual issues in the life sciences. Topics may include the units and levels of selection, adaptationism, the evolution of altruism, biology and ethics, sociobiology and evolutionary psychology, cultural evolution, evolution versus creationism, and the origin and nature of life. It addresses questions including: What is life? Why do living things inevitably die? Could artificial life (for example, synthetic cells made in a laboratory) ever be genuinely alive? How should we understand the role of our genes in shaping who we are? We're told that it's important to conserve biodiversity, but what exactly is biodiversity, and should it be the main target of conservation efforts? How do (and how should) social values relate to life scientists' study of human behavior, sexuality, and other topics? How does our increasing knowledge of microbial life, including the bacteria and other microorganisms living inside our own bodies, affect our understanding of the living world and of what it means to be human?

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

PHIL 263

Host Institution Course Title

PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY

Host Institution Course Details

<https://courseoutline.auckland.ac.nz/dco/course/PHIL/263/1205>

Host Institution Campus

Auckland

Host Institution Faculty

Arts

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

Course Last Reviewed

2025-2026

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