Exploring the Life Sciences (i.e., Biology, Psychology) Courses satisfying this requirement introduce students to complex living systems within the framework of the natural sciences. Courses may either help students experience the breadth of disciplines encompassed by the life sciences or focus more narrowly on a single field of study. In either case, courses will emphasize fundamental understandings of life processes rather than the technical applications based on those principles. As appropriate, students will be introduced to the methods used to develop the models of life processes they are studying, and they should come to understand both the strengths and the limitations of those methods, especially as they impinge on a broader philosophical view of life.

Fall 2004

12. PSY001D Introductory psychology helped me to understand the processes by which people can evaluate the mind, soul, and behavior of humans. It gave me an appreciation for the statistical study of humans and the different experiments that can be performed to evaluate people's behavior. I was able to connect the issues of psychology to the responsibilities of Christian living.

14. PSY001 My only major complaint about this class is that we had an assignment to read a published peer-reviewed journal article of experimental research, then summarize the article in the form created by the American Psychological Assoc. A good assignment no doubt, but not one which should count for 20% of our final grade! If we'd had to conduct our own research and report on that in APA format I could see an argument for the 20% weight. To me, the summarization of another's work did not seem to be worthy of weighing more than a homework assignment.

I did enjoy the class and found the discussions about faith's role in modern psychology interesting. The textbook was good, even with the author's ridiculous personal insights (his humor made us groan).

15. PSY 001 In the syllabus, it directly said which of the GE requirements this class was fulfilling. Throughout the class, we were able to learn about a life science that is very applicable to our lives.
This course is a straightforward study of psychology. The field is naturally applicable as it is concerned with human thought and behavior. Applications to the “real world” were made by studies various psychological studies. It seemed that a greater focus on psychology as it relates to Christian life and thought would better fulfill the GE goals. Research skills are introduced. It expands a student’s breadth of knowledge. It presents strategies of inquiry by looking at how studies are best conducted. For these reasons it does fulfill basic GE goals, but does not seem to thoroughly embrace them.

Our professor has emphasized all year how important it is to learn the biological processes of the world God created so intricately. The integration of topics is ones that affect all of humankind and its life and lifestyles, its ideas, thoughts and attitudes. This course gives us a place to start in understanding our biological nature, our relationship with our Creator and Savior, and our responsibility to our human selves. Although there was limited time to cover all the material, we were able to engage and ask questions to get a better understanding. Each day different people presented a news article, so we could see how so many of the things that we talk about are going on in the world. We also each had topics to write a research paper on, and gained a deeper understanding of that topic. This course was very centered on fulfilling the requirements of the GE to make Westmont students aware of the world, and a better rounded person.

General Psychology seemed to present material that rivaled what Christianity has taught me about nature, nurture, predispositions, behavior, personality, disorders and much more. The professor has commented occasionally that it is hard to find Christians in psychology because it often contradicts Christianity. It seems to me that St. Thomas Aquinas was correct when he thought scientific truths and religious truths need to agree and when they do not, there is misinterpretation of the data. This has forced me to
reconsider what I believe and what the world is telling me and putting them into accordance with one another.

PSY001B
a. The General Psychology course satisfies the GE requirement of “exploring the life sciences.” In both the syllabus and instruction, Professor Little made the goals of the GE very clear.
b. Professor Little always offered a Christian perspective on psychology which can be difficult in such a discipline, and because of that, I was really grateful I was able to take psychology at a Christian school. I felt like I had a very good grasp on psychology as a life science at the end of the semester.

LS 012
The Introduction to Life Science course I took this past semester fits into the “Exploring the Life Sciences” category of the requirements, and the class certainly fulfilled that role. The course is a very basic overview of general biology without the lab, and it was a great way to relearn this information in the context of a Christian environment. I thought it was especially interesting to be forced to reassess my own ideas about our role as Christians in the care and restoration of this planet, and how we are to be good stewards of what God has given us to enjoy. I also thought it was a unique opportunity to be challenged to rethink my ideas about how science and faith are connected in terms of controversial topics like evolution, and it was a chance to see many sides of the issue with new eyes. The class explored life science as it affected the earth millions of years ago, but also how it relates to everyday issues that are happening worldwide. Overall I think it was a foundational course for having basic knowledge about the biology of our earth, but also a great context from which to understand how our faith relates to the rest of our general learning.
In Biology this semester, I was asked to write a reflection paper on how the specific study or subject has influenced my life. I also was supposed to reflect on how Biology connects to my major in Political Science and my understanding of the Christian faith. I think this assignment was significant because I consciously made an effort to understand how biology is important not only in understanding life sciences, but in my education as a whole. It served to reemphasize that GE classes should really be integrated into one’s studies and not just a list of requirements to work through. I realized I had a deeper understanding of my responsibility as a political science major to observe how certain laws and government actions affect our environment and health care systems. I see more clearly the connection between the fields of Political Science and Biology.

15. LS 012
This class took a very broad approach to life science and also addressed issues related to biology that confront the church and society. In doing so, the class allowed me to take a subject I am not normally interested in and help me apply it on a broader scale by analyzing how biological issues affect today's world. It also helped me to be more appreciative of science and less suspicious of science's attempt to replace God.

Spring 2006

LS 012
This course was highly effective in communicating why we have this particular GE. This was accomplished by helping me to realize concerning issues in biology that have expressed themselves in God's creation. This course taught me how to be a better steward of the earth and to protect God's creation. The course was really effective in accomplishing the goals because it helped me to realize the importance of stewardship.

ns12
a) The goal of this class was to inform about the life sciences, and develop a fully informed view. There were moral issues of the environment learned, what it is to live in a community, learn from the society, and also actively participate in it. How to be stewards
of God’s creation was a main topic that was also discussed which tied in faith with our learning.

b) This class was very effective in teaching these aspects. There were controversial topics taught about such as creation, but it was stated from a scientific, un-bias point of view. The facts of evidence were stated, and biblical references were made in informing how Christians can view these issues.

**Fall 2006**

LS-012

a) The goals of the GE program were communicated through Life Science by giving a very broad overview of all life sciences. Thus it allowed the students to learn new material on a basically unknown subject with a Christian perspective given to such things as evolution.

b) It was very effective for me as I had never had any type of biology class before.