

# VR biology labs bring science to life at ASU's Polytechnic campus

By Sona Patel Srinarayana, ASU News  
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At the [Polytechnic campus](#), the future of learning is here.

Students taking BIO 100 The Living World as an elective and first-year students requiring biology credits for their major are slipping on headsets in the [Dreamscape Learn](#) pod and visiting fictional worlds to discover genetics, evolution, the scientific method, physiology, ecology and more.

Students across majors — ranging from [preveterinary medicine](#), biological sciences and [nursing](#) to engineering, communication and the arts — are now engaging in immersive learning environments so they can apply classroom knowledge and build transferable skills for their future careers.

Dreamscape Learn combines cinematic storytelling, cutting-edge virtual reality and research-backed pedagogy to create immersive experiences that place students at the center of an unfolding narrative, where they apply classroom concepts to solve real-time challenges.

Launched at the Tempe campus in 2022, innovative biology offerings — known as NeoBio — are blending lectures, labs and virtual reality to enhance learning, and results show it is delivering strong outcomes for students.

A [large-scale study](#) at the Tempe campus compared student grades and experiences prior to the implementation of Dreamscape Learn and after the implementation of Dreamscape Learn. Results revealed that grades improved, students were more likely to remain in science majors, and the VR experiences were rated highly.

Biology Instructor [Maria Bautista](#) believes Dreamscape Learn success rates are due to hybrid learning models that enable students to better absorb the material. Bautista teaches in the [School of Applied Sciences and Arts](#) in the [College of Integrative Sciences and Arts](#) at the Polytechnic campus.

“Using a combination of learning methods: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, solitary, social, verbal, logical ... allows us to reach all the different types of learners and learning styles so students can be more successful,” she said.

Dreamscape Learn encourages students to use reasoning and analysis to problem solve, Bautista said, so they can infuse what they know into what they do.

This approach helps students learn new and complex material and, in the long run, builds transferable skills that can be applied in the workforce.

“There are six biology modules, each containing three 15-minute lessons,” said [Izaak Mansfield](#), XR experience coordinator in the Dreamscape Learn pod at the Polytechnic campus. “Each module contains its own narrative storyline. For example, the physiology module puts students in a virtual scenario where they are scientists tasked with helping a sick, dinosaur-like alien creature. The modules provide narrative context to the lab work to keep it fun and engaging.”

(Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSddKe4K1r4>)

## Dreamscape Learn is for everyone

Sixth- through 12th-grade students and community members alike are also embracing Dreamscape Learn VR technology. Pods across ASU campuses have welcomed thousands of visitors for field trips, team-building activities and community events. Its cinematic storytelling and engaging educational experiences are captivating audiences of all ages.

Across the Valley, various middle and high schools have already partnered with ASU and Dreamscape Learn to house pods on their campuses.

“We are just scratching the surface on how the community can get involved in Dreamscape Learn — the possibilities are endless,” says [Lisa Flesher](#), chief of Realm 4 Initiatives at ASU. “It’s free and engaging for anyone who is interested in learning about this innovative technology.”

In the fall 2025 semester, Flesher and her team will launch new material specifically for high school students.

“Dreamscape Learn at the Polytechnic campus will launch biology modules for advanced high school students who want to take college-level courses and receive dual credit, or for high school students who want to learn at the level they are at,” Flesher said. “These modules will align with the next generation of science standards.”

There are also opportunities for the East Valley industry to collaborate with Polytechnic campus programs to drive Dreamscape Learn curriculum, projects and other initiatives that benefit both students and collaborators.

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## Want to check it out?

To schedule a tour, field trip or event at the Dreamscape Learn pod at the Polytechnic campus, or to learn more about industry collaboration opportunities, contact Izaak Mansfield at [polydslbookings@exchange.asu.edu](mailto:polydslbookings@exchange.asu.edu).

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*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

## Main image



Students in the Dreamscape Learn pod in Santan Hall at ASU's Polytechnic campus participate in 15-minute modules to augment classroom and lab learning, and enhance overall understanding of the material. Photo by Alyssa Thornhill/ASU