

Class Policy for BOT 3015L

Plant biology lab is an upper-division elective course that fulfills one of the five required laboratory courses required for a major in biological science. Plant biology lab is designed to correlate with and reinforce the concepts of the plant biology lecture (required for a major in biological science). Experiment design, basic statistical data analysis, and scientific writing are important aspects of the lab course. The lab activities provide opportunities to develop your observation and problem-solving skills. The objectives of the lab course focus on structure and function relationships, anatomy, physiology, symbioses between plants and organisms of other kingdoms, reproduction, and evolution. In addition to the plant kingdom, the lab introduces the fungi and protists.

Prerequisites

Before a student registers for 3000- or 4000-level courses in the Biological Sciences, he or she must have satisfactorily completed (C- or better) the following courses or equivalent: BSC2010/2010L, BSC2011/2011L, CHM1045C and CHM1046C. In addition, BOT 3015 is a co- or prerequisite for BOT 3015L. The information and experiences in these courses will be built upon and referred to in this course.

Insurance

Students must have accident insurance. FSU does not accept responsibility for accidents, even if the accident occurs when the student is engaged in an FSU-sponsored activity (such as this laboratory) and even if the student is not negligent. Instructors will not aid in cost recovery for any accidents that may occur while attending this course.

Required materials

- Laboratory manual
- Access to a personal computer with Microsoft Excel, internet, and a printer (undergraduates may access computers in the Conradi Computer Laboratory, and many computer labs around campus exist). Some assignments will require basic statistical analysis. All independently written assignments will be submitted in hard copy to the instructor and via Blackboard to Turnitin.com.
- Textbook: *Biology of Plants* by Raven *et al.* 7th edition. Throughout this manual, you will find footnotes that reference the textbook. The purpose of the manual is to link what you are doing in the lab to what is presented in the lecture and in the textbook, utilize these resources to make the most of the lab experience.

The textbook, manual, pencil, and eraser must be brought to class each week, even if you do not anticipate using. Not having required materials will result in an absence.

Attendance

The purpose of this laboratory course is to deepen our understanding of biological concepts, using plants as examples, by observation and experimentation; therefore, attendance is essential to the course objectives. Attendance on the first day of class is required university wide; Biological Science will administratively drop those not present. Student attendance will be recorded via student signature at the beginning of each class and verified by the instructor. Students arriving more than 15 minutes late will be marked absent. A student may miss only one lab period during the semester (with or without excuse and including the first day) without penalty beyond missed graded work. Each student may be granted one opportunity to complete an alternative assignment (*e.g.* essays, collections, reports) to make up for missed lab activities and work.

Alternative assignments will require time and work devotion similar to the missed lab and will focus on similar conceptual content. For each additional lab period that is missed, *a penalty of one letter grade from the final course grade for each absence will be applied*. Documentation does not excuse a student from missed lab periods in excess of the initial absence and thus, the penalty will still be applied. Make-up labs will not be given; however, prior (at least 48 hours) arrangements with TAs to attend another lab section will be considered. If a lab period is missed during which a quiz is given or on which a report is based, the student may make-up the quiz or experiments if proper documentation of a valid reason is presented at first opportunity (within 48 hours of documented event) after the missed period. All documentation will be subject to verification. Falsified documentation will be handled according to the Academic Honor Policy (see below). Late assignments and delay in make-up will result in grade penalty (20% per day) for the quiz or assignment. Valid documentation includes:

- sickness: a dated certificate of illness signed by a physician (not within immediate family) with a verifiable address and telephone
 - legal: statement from a court confirming the student's presence in court proceedings
 - other legal document confirming an emergency that prevented the student from attending class
- Students may be excused (as with documentation) for religious holidays if notification is given at least one week prior to the beginning of class.

Students are responsible for understanding all material covered during any absences.

ADA statement

During the first week of class, students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (a) register with the Student Disability Resource Center and (b) present a letter to the instructor from the Center indicating the need that is to be accommodated. Then, the student and instructor will make a written contract that indicates how instruction and testing will deviate from that of the general student population.

All disabilities that arise within the semester that render a student unable to complete work in the course must be reported with proper documentation to the instructor within one week.

Documentation must include information about the disability, the time frame in which the disability will affect work, and the type of work that is affected. Failure to provide proper documentation results in the student being responsible for all work and all due dates.

Academic Honor Policy

All students are required to uphold the Academic Honor Policy (AHP) that is found in the FSU *Student Handbook* and at <http://www.fsu.edu/%7Edof/forms/honorpolicy.pdf> at all times.

Violations of the AHP include (1) plagiarism (presenting (*e.g.* written, oral, graphical) without acknowledgement of source (*e.g.* web, print, lab manual, work of other students), copying portions of sentences word-for-word from any source, with or without citation), (2) cheating (*e.g.* copying work of other students (past and present), unauthorized use of notes or devices (*e.g.* cell phones, calculators), discussion of examination contents before scheduled examination)), (3) unauthorized group work (group activities in this course include discussion and data collection, but *all* writing and data analysis must be completed individually), (4) fabrication (*e.g.* making up data or not reporting knowledge of falsified data, creating laboratory notebook drawings from figures), (5) falsification (*e.g.* altering data), (6) misrepresentation (*e.g.* signature imitation, false excuses), and (7) submission of same or similar work as previously credited work. All violations will be treated as explained in the AHP. No credit will be given for work created in violation of the honor code.

Performance and Participation

Students are required to read the lab materials before each class and are expected to participate actively in all laboratory activities. Prior to each class, each student is responsible for independently completing (in complete sentences) the questions at the end of each chapter. The questions will be presented to the instructor before the start of each class. At the beginning of class, the instructor will check that each of these tasks is complete and that all students have their materials. No credit (part of lab notebook grade) will be given for failure to bring the textbook or lab manual (checked only at the beginning of class). If questions are not completed prior to class, maximum credit will be 70% for those questions.

Expect to attend the entire 3-hour lab session. Prior to leaving the lab, all work for the day must be reviewed by the instructor, who will sign-off on completion. To ensure the instructor is available for helping students understand the lab material throughout the lab period, sign-off will only take place during the last 45 minutes of the lab period. Please, maximize your time in the lab and be courteous to your labmates.

Safety

It is our goal to maintain a safe learning environment for all students. No food or drink is permitted in the laboratory. Instructions given by the instructor must be followed or the student will be asked to leave the laboratory and will be counted absent for the laboratory. Disrespect for instructors or fellow students will not be tolerated and will also result in a student being asked to leave the laboratory. All students are required to uphold the Honor Code, found in the FSU *Student Handbook*, at all times.

Grading Policy

Grading scale: A ≥ 93 > A- ≥ 90 > B+ ≥ 87 > B ≥ 83 > B- ≥ 80 > C+ ≥ 77 > C ≥ 73 > C- ≥ 70...

Course grade breakdown

Four quizzes (total 40%) will be administered in the first 40 minutes of indicated lab periods. Each quiz will cover material from previous lab periods. Quizzes will have short-answer, multiple choice, and practical-style questions (drawings may be required). The objectives at the beginning of each topic provide a guide. During quizzes, no contact with cell phones, PDAs, calculators, chewing gum wrappers, or any other potential cheating materials is permitted. Absolutely no talking, except with the instructor, is permitted during quizzes. Violations and intention of violations of the AHP that involve quizzes minimally result in loss of credit for the quiz and penalty of one letter grade for the course and maximally result in an F for the course.

Three experiment reports (total 35%) will be independently written (see the guide to scientific writing in Chapter 1). Although there will be group participation in gathering the data, each student is responsible for an independently written report. Grades are based on understanding scientific concepts and the scientific method, the background of the experiment, the design of the experiment, interpreting the results of the experiment utilizing statistical tests, and effort in conducting the experiment. All sections of the report must be written independently. All graphs and data processing must be completed independently because the goal is for all to learn. Violations and intention of violations of the AHP that involve experiments and lab reports minimally result in loss of credit for the experiment and report and penalty of one letter grade for the course and maximally result in an F for the course. Electronic (via www.turnitin.com via blackboard under “Assignments”) and paper copies must be submitted. Both copies must be submitted to receive credit. As stated previously, late assignments will be penalized 20% per day, including weekends.

The lab notebook (20%) will be randomly collected and graded for completion and detail. See the introduction in this manual (Chapter 1) for details on maintaining a lab notebook. A final oral presentation (5%) will be presented and graded on the last day of lab.

Appeals and discussions, with specific questions, regarding assigned grades must be within one week of receiving the grade. Appeals and discussions will be held with the TA. If further discussion is needed, please seek the help of the lab honcho.

Appeals

Appeals—based on truly extenuating circumstances—for exemption to this policy should be to the laboratory honcho, and only finally, to Dr. Outlaw (bill@southernmatters.com, BIO 306).