

**New Perspectives in Plant Biology**

Code: 43871  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4316231 Plant Biology, Genomics and Biotechnology	OT	0	2

**Contact**

Name: Laia Guardia Valle  
Email: Laia.Guardia@uab.cat

**Use of languages**

Principal working language: english (eng)

**Teachers**

Maria Soledad Martos Arias

**External teachers**

Jorge Gomez-Ariza  
Lidia Campos Soriano  
Michela Osnato

**Prerequisites**

The student might have studied the subjects of the previous modules of the master's degree.

**Objectives and Contextualisation**

**Objectives and Contextualization:**

In front of the current and future human energy requirements (food, medicines, biofuel, cloths, phytochemicals), and environmental challenges (soil and air contamination, land use, climate alterations, pests, etc) emerges an urgent need to develop new ways to improve existing food and animal feed crops (and to develop novel crops). Plant biotechnology is a main tool to improve actual plant production and derived resources to meet future challenges.

The objective of the course is to provide new knowledge and widening of the knowledge acquired in previous courses by students, specially in modern plant and fungal biotechnology processes. We will deal with plant and fungal potentialities in current biotechnological processes, allways with the objective of improving plant characteristics and production in different contextualizations, understanding that biotechnological processes have applicative values in pharmaceutical and food industry, agriculture and in ecology, among other.

- Learn the methodology of its study and biotechnological management in order to develop subsequent activities in both research and professional environments.

- Share experiences with researchers developing their own projects on plant/ fungal biotechnology.

## Skills

- Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Conceive, design, manage and develop a scientific, technical or industrial project in Biology and Biotechnology of plants and fungi, and be able to interpret and extract knowledge of the same.
- Develop critical reasoning in the area of study and in relation to the scientific and business environment.
- Identify and use Bio-Computer Science tools to be applied to the genetic, evolutionary and functional study of plants.
- Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
- Propose and analyze ad hoc solutions derived from plant research, in accordance with the situations and needs of each case.
- Solve problems in new or little-known situations within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to the field of study.
- Synthesize, and analyze alternatives and debate critically.
- Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.
- Use scientific terminology to argue the results of research and present them in English both orally and in writing in an international environment.

## Learning outcomes

1. Apply advances in knowledge of the processes that regulate gene expression in plants and their regulation through internal and external factors in the study of plants.
2. Choose and apply IT tools to the reconstruction of plant and fungus phylogenies.
3. Choose and apply new techniques to investigate plants functional mechanisms and their interaction with fungi.
4. Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
5. Develop critical reasoning in the area of study and in relation to the scientific and business environment.
6. Handle different computer programmes for the reconstruction of plant and fungus phylogenies on the basis of molecular data.
7. Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
8. Propose innovative projects in the field of biotechnology, based on an integrated perspective on the scientific and methodological knowledge acquired in the field of the molecular evolution of plants and fungi.
9. Solve problems in new or little-known situations within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to the field of study.
10. Synthesize, and analyze alternatives and debate critically.
11. Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.
12. Use scientific terminology to argue the results of research and present them in English both orally and in writing in an international environment.

## Content

**PART 1** (Dra Laia Guàrdia) (18 h- 14h theory (including invited lecturers) + 4h Theorico-practical session)

1.1- Introduction to PLant-fungal interaction in the context of Plant biotechnology. (2h)

1.2- Endophyte interactions and biotechnological applications (5h).

The symbiosis concept and significance. Evaluation of the Symbiosis balance. Endophyte types. Resistance to biotic and abiotic stress. Secondary metabolism of endophytes in forage plants. Production of Alkaloids. Intoxications. Other bioactive metabolites from Plant-Endophytes. Essential oils. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Experimental methods in endophyte biotechnology.

### 1.3- Mycorrhizal interactions and biotechnological applications (5h)

Introduction. Dynamics of the symbiosis. Mycorrhiza types. Significance of the symbiosis from the individual to the plant community. Nutrient mobilization. Biotic- and abiotic- stress mediation in plant crops. Importance in agriculture and forestry. Biotechnology of ECM fungi.

### 1.4- Invited speaker- New perspectives of Plant Biotechnology in the Mediterranean context. (3h)

### 1.5- Theorico-practical session (3h- LAB C1/345)

## PART 2 (Dra Soledad Martos)

New perspectives in crop sciences (12h: 6h Theory + 6h Seminars, C5b/027), Dra. Soledad Martos

1. New pests and diseases. Control tools to fight against them
2. Plants to clean polluted soils
3. Plants to reduce hunger and human diseases
4. Phytonanotechnology
5. Bioenergy production by algae and plants
6. Local adaptations of plants to stressful environmental conditions

## Part 3 (CRAG SEMINARS)

- *"From basic to applied research: floral transition and beyond"*- (2h) **Dr. Michela Osnato-**

- *"Basics in Applied Agronomy: Case studies on sustainable rice systems"*-(2h)**Dr. Lidia Campos-Soriano**

- *"Science fiction projects for plant improvement"*-(2h) **Dr. Jorge Gomez-Ariza-**

## Methodology

The course includes theoretical sessions, seminars and theorico-practical sessions, structured as indicated in the table.

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
<b>Type: Directed</b>			
Seminars (CRAG)	6	0.24	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12
Theoretical sessions	21	0.84	1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
Theorico-practical session	3	0.12	3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12
<b>Type: Supervised</b>			
Seminars	12	0.48	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
<b>Type: Autonomous</b>			
Preparation of class-presentation in seminar sessions	24.5	0.98	3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12
Student personal working	80	3.2	

## Evaluation

### PART 1 (Dra. Laia Guàrdia) (50%)

- Lectures: - 2 Tests with multiple-choice questions at the end of the lectures. Also the attitude and lab competences in theorico-practical sessions will be evaluated.

### PART 2 (Dra. Soledad Martos) (33%)

-Lectures (50%):- 1 Test with 10 multiple-choice questions at the end of the lectures.

-Seminar (50%) on the basis of:- Selected article; Oral expression; Article presentation; Question deffending; Questions Posed to seminar colleagues.

### PART 3 (CRAG SEMINARS) (17%)

- The evaluation will be on the basis of active participation in each seminar, Questions Posed to seminar colleagues, test and or memory of the seminars, according to each seminar professor.

## Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Multiple-choice test 1 (LGV)	25%	1	0.04	4, 5, 9, 10, 11
Multiple-choice test 1 (SMA)	16,5	0.5	0.02	4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11
Multiple-choice test 2 (LGV)	25%	0.5	0.02	5, 7, 10, 11
Seminar (CRAG)	17%	1	0.04	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12
Seminar (Dra Soledad Martos- SMA)	16,5%	0.5	0.02	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

## Bibliography

A list of references will be provided to the students along he course.