

Parasitology

Code: 100833
ECTS Credits: 6

| Degree | Type | Year | Semester |
|-------------------------------|------|------|----------|
| 2500251 Environmental Biology | OT | 4 | 0 |

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: spanish (spa)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: Yes

Prerequisites

There is no official prerequisite, but in order to take this subject it is recommended that students should previously have studied and reviewed general concepts of Zoology, Zoology Extension, Ecology and Cell Biology and Histology studied in previous years.

Objectives and Contextualisation

On successfully completing this subject, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge about parasitic species in terms of specific and general characteristics, systematics, adaptations, biological cycles... and interpret and understand their importance in the species biodiversity and the complexity of their contribution to the ecological level. In addition, they will be able to understand the effect that parasites have on the health of their hosts and ecosystems and their role in modeling the ecology of their hosts, from different points of view: populations, communities as well as trophic networks. Finally, they will be aware of the usefulness of parasites as biomarkers in population and biological studies of their hosts and environment.

Competences

- Adopt an ethical stance.
- Develop a sensibility towards environmental issues.
- Develop planning and organisation skills.
- Focus on quality.
- Obtain, observe, handle, cultivate and conserve specimens.
- Perform biological diagnoses.
- Recognise and interpret the development, growth and biological cycles of the principal groups of living beings.
- Sample, characterise and manipulate populations and communities.

Learning Outcomes

1. Adopt an ethical stance.
2. Collect and identify animal organisms.
3. Design and execute samplings of animal populations and communities in their habitats.
4. Develop a sensibility towards environmental issues.

5. Develop planning and organisation skills.
6. Focus on quality.
7. Identify and treat the principal diseases caused by fungi: their symptoms and the corresponding biological cycles.
8. Recognise and interpret the different phases in the biological cycles of all animal groups.

Content

This subject is structured into the following sections:

I. GENERAL CONCEPTS

1. Parasitism. Basic concepts in parasitology. Categories of parasitism. Inlet, contact and penetration pathways of the parasites. Parasitic pathways.
2. Life cycles of parasites. Types of guests and parasites. Adaptations to parasitism.

II. DIVERSITY OF PARATED GROUPS

3. Protists: Excavata (Diplomonadids, Parabasalids, Quinetoplastids), Chromalveolata (Apicomplexes, Ciliats), Amebozous, Opisthokonta (Microsporidis). Mixozous. Generalities, diversity, life cycles, pathogenesis and ecological role.
4. Platihelminths: Trematodes, Monogenis, Cestodes. Acanthegene. Generalities, diversity, life cycles, pathogenesis and ecological role.
5. Nematodes. Parasitic Arthropods: Crustaceans, Arachnids, Insects. Pentastomide Generalities, diversity, life cycles, pathogenesis and paperecology.
6. Other groups with parasitic species: piglets, cnidarians, mesozous, nematomorphs, rotifers, hirudinis, equiurids, molluscs and cordados annelids. Generalities, diversity, life cycles, pathogenesis and ecological role.

III. ADAPTATIONS AND EVOLUTION OF PARASITISM

7. Origin and evolution of parasitic life: gradual adaptation to parasitism. Direct origin of parasitism. Origin of ectoparasitism and endoparasitism. Microhabitat of parasites. Origin of life cycles. Evolutionary and ecological consequences of complex life cycles. Origin of intermediate guests. Chains and trophic networks.
8. Specificity. Origin and degrees of parasitic specificity. Determinants and patterns of specificity. Parasitic evolution - host: macro-volatile and micro-metabolic patterns.
9. Parasitic balance - host. Host exploitation strategies. Guest strategies for parasites. Evasion of the immune response. Virulence

IV. PARASITARY ECOLOGY AND BIOGEOGRAPHY

10. Introduction to parasitic ecology. Hierarchical nature of populations and communities of parasites.
11. Parasitic populations. Density-dependent regulatory factors and independent factors of density. Intraspecific interactions
12. Effect of parasites on host populations. Regulation of guest populations. Epidemiological implications. Behavioral changes. Hitchhiking.
13. Parasitic communities. Types of parasites in communities. Interspecific relationships and their effect on niche selection.
14. Parasitic biogeography. Factors related to the geographical distribution of parasites.

V. SANITARY ASPECTS AND UTILITY OF PARASITS FOR THE HUMAN BEING

15. Main zoonoses. Interest and classification. Foodborne zoonoses and transmitted by water, the problem of the use of wastewater. Environmental and food health measures. Emergencies and / or re-emergencies due to environmental changes.

16. Principal parasitism. The problems of agricultural and livestock production, invasive species and protected areas.

17. Parasites as indicators of the biology of their hosts, of ecological stocks and of environmental deterioration.

Methodology

The subject applies the following methodology:

Lectures:

The contents will be taught mainly by the teacher with the support of videos and animations related to the topics discussed in class and / or with activities to assess student learning, by solving issues raised by the teacher. The visual aids used in class will be available in the Campus Virtual. With these lectures the student acquires the basic scientific-technical knowledge of the course, but it should be complemented with the personal study of the topics explained. It is advised that students consult regularly the books recommended in the Bibliography section to consolidate and clarify, if necessary, the contents explained in class.

Seminars:

The seminars work on the scientific-technical knowledge exposed in the lectures to complement their understanding, developing several activities such as the analysis and discussion of audiovisual material or scientific articles, the resolution of issues related to the topics, analysis of parasitological information, talks by professionals, etc. The seminars are characterized by the active work of the student and their aim is to promote the capacity for analysis and synthesis, critical reasoning and problem-solving capacity. In addition, a small part of the contents will also be explained by the students during the seminars with a work that must be presented as an oral presentation to the rest of the students.

Laboratory classes:

The students perform the experimental work individually or in pairs and under the supervision of the professor. Before beginning each practice session, the student must have read the practice guideline to know the objectives of the practice, the basics and the procedures that they must perform and the protocol that they must develop. The objective of the laboratory classes is to complement and reinforce the knowledge acquired with lectures and seminars. Practical sessions will be stimulated and developed in the student empirical skills such as the ability to observe, analyse and recognize parasitological diversity. At the beginning of each laboratory class there will be an introduction explaining the theoretical foundations of the practice to be performed. At the end of each practice the students will answer a questionnaire.

The laboratory classes consist on:

- 3 sessions of 3h to get acquainted with the identification of different taxonomic groups.
- 2 sessions of 4h destined to work the process of obtaining and preparing the parasitological material. In addition, calculations will also be made for the estimation of parasitological parameters necessary when it comes to quantitatively describing the level of infestation by a species of parasite that is the basis for any subsequent ecological study.
- 1 session of 3 h in the audiovisual room where the joint behavior of populations of parasites and hosts will be studied according to simple population models through computer simulations.

Tutorials:

The purpose of these sessions is to resolve doubts, clarify basic concepts and guide the sources consulted by the students. Likewise, these tutorials allow the orientation of the work that the students will do for the seminars.

Activities

| Title | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes |
|--|-------|------|------------------------|
| Type: Directed | | | |
| Laboratory classes | 20 | 0.8 | 1, 5, 3, 6, 7, 8, 2, 4 |
| Lectures | 24 | 0.96 | 1, 7, 8, 4 |
| Seminars | 8 | 0.32 | 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 4 |
| Type: Supervised | | | |
| Tutorials | 6 | 0.24 | 7, 8, 4 |
| Type: Autonomous | | | |
| Preparation of works and resolution of questions | 33 | 1.32 | 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 4 |
| Study and resolution of problems | 52 | 2.08 | 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 4 |

Assessment

The assessment of this subject is continuous. Students must provide evidence of their progress by completing tasks and tests.

Assessment of the theory classes:

There are two partial tests and a second-chance test.

Partial exams: In this part, the students' knowledge of the subject will be assessed individually, as well as their capacity for analysis and synthesis, and of critical reasoning. There will be 2 partial exams (a mark of at least 5 out of 10 is required to successfully pass the partial exam).

Second-chance test: Students who failed one or both partial exams can reassess them. The student must previously have submitted a minimum of two-thirds of the course-assessment items.

Therefore, students will obtain the "Not assessable" qualification when the assessment activities carried out have a weighting of less than 67% in the final grade. Likewise, students who wish to improve the grade of one or both partial exams can be re-assessed. Be aware that in this case, previous mark will be lost.

The mark corresponding to the two exams has a global weight of 50% of the final mark (25% each partial test)

Assessment of seminars:

Both oral works (content, capacity for synthesis, rigor in the expression, quality of documentary sources and timing) and written activities are assessable, as well as the participation and assistance during the seminars. In addition, the topics discussed during seminars may be included in partial exams.

The mark corresponding to the seminars has a global weight of 20% of the final mark.

Assessment of the laboratory classes:

After each practice the student will perform an individual test that assess the use and achievement of the specific competences and the contents of each practice. Likewise, the involvement of the students in the activities during the practices will also be valued. Attendance at practical sessions is mandatory. Students will be classified as "Not assessable" when their absence exceeds 20% of the scheduled sessions.

The mark corresponding to the laboratory classes has a global weight of 30% of the final mark.

Final Considerations:

A minimum mark of 4 is required in each of the different parts to successfully pass the subject.

Students will obtain the "Not assessable" qualification when the assessment activities carried out have a weighting of less than 67% in the final mark.

Assessment Activities

| Title | Weighting | Hours | ECTS | Learning Outcomes |
|--------------------|-----------|-------|------|------------------------|
| Laboratory classes | 30% | 2.5 | 0.1 | 1, 5, 3, 6, 7, 8, 2, 4 |
| Seminars | 20% | 0 | 0 | 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 4 |
| Theory | 50% | 4.5 | 0.18 | 5, 7, 8, 4 |

Bibliography

References:

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Websites

<http://tolweb.org/tree>

<http://www.dpd.cdc.gov/dpdx/Default.htm>

<http://asp.unl.edu/index.php>