

Environmental Microbiology

Code: 102797
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2501915 Environmental Sciences	OT	4	0

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)
Some groups entirely in English: No
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Teachers

Maria Ramos Martínez Alonso
Jordi Mas Castella

Prerequisites

It is necessary to know Catalan or Spanish as the different teaching activities are taught in these languages.

Although there are no official prerequisites, students are advised to review concepts that refer to the microbial world, previously studied in the Microbiology course.

Objectives and Contextualisation

The Environmental Microbiology is an optional subject, of the degree of Environmental Sciences. It is a diverse discipline that ranges from the study of pathogens in drinking water to the relationship between microorganisms and geochemistry. Microorganisms are intimately involved in the geochemical cycles, transport and transformations of the elements in nature, including pollutants. Learning and understanding these processes allow us to use microorganisms to solve environmental problems.

The objectives of the subject are:

- . Understand the role of microorganisms as agents of environmental change
- . Recognize microorganisms as indicators of alteration of an ecosystem
- . Understand microbial processes aimed to solve environmental problems.

Competences

- Adequately convey information verbally, written and graphic, including the use of new communication and information technologies.
- Analyze and use information critically.

- Collect, analyze and represent data and observations, both qualitative and quantitative, using secure adequate classroom, field and laboratory techniques
- Demonstrate adequate knowledge and use the most relevant environmental tools and concepts of biology, geology, chemistry, physics and chemical engineering.
- Demonstrate concern for quality and praxis.
- Demonstrate initiative and adapt to new situations and problems.
- Learn and apply in practice the knowledge acquired and to solve problems.
- Quickly apply the knowledge and skills in the various fields involved in environmental issues, providing innovative proposals.
- Teaming developing personal values regarding social skills and teamwork.
- Work autonomously

Learning Outcomes

1. Adequately convey information verbally, written and graphic, including the use of new communication and information technologies.
2. Analyze and use information critically.
3. Analyze the most relevant of genetics and microbiology environmental aspects.
4. Demonstrate concern for quality and praxis.
5. Demonstrate initiative and adapt to new situations and problems.
6. Diagnose and solve environmental problems concerning the biological environment.
7. Identify and interpret the diversity of organisms in the environment.
8. Identify organisms and biological processes in the surrounding environment and evaluate them properly and originally.
9. Identifying and using bioindicators.
10. Learn and apply in practice the knowledge acquired and to solve problems.
11. Mostrear, characterize and manipulate specimens, populations and communities.
12. Observe, recognize, analyze, measure and properly and safely represent organisms and biological processes.
13. Participate in environmental assessments as to the biological environment.
14. Recognize the world of microorganisms and assess the environmental relevance.
15. Teaming developing personal values regarding social skills and teamwork.
16. Work autonomously

Content

1. Introduction to Environmental Microbiology
2. Aerobiology: The atmosphere. Bioaerosol dispersion. Methods in aerobiology.
3. Microbial interactions with inorganic pollutants: Nitrates. Acid mine drainage. Heavy metals.
4. Biofilms: Surface colonization. Biofilm structure. Biofouling. Biodeterioration. Biotechnological applications.
5. Drinking water: Treatment. Water quality testing. Waterborne microbial diseases
6. Biological treatment of solid and liquid wastes: Landfills. Composting. Anaerobic digestion of solid waste. Wastewater treatment.
7. Biodegradation and bioremediation of organic pollutants
8. Biological control of pathogens and pests

*Unless the requirements enforced by the health authorities demand a prioritization or reduction of these contents.

Methodology

Teaching methodology and training activities

The course of Environmental Microbiology consists of three modules, which have been programmed in an integrated way, so the student will have to relate throughout the course the content and activities programmed in order to achieve the skills indicated in this Guide

The three modules are the following:

Theoretical lectures: Lectures represent the main activity to be carried out in the classroom and allow to transmit basic concepts to a large number of students in relatively short time. They will be complemented with Power Point presentations and diverse teaching material that will be delivered to the students through the Moodle space.

Laboratory work: The objectives of these activities are:

- A) facilitate the understanding of the knowledge exposed in the theoretical lectures
- B) acquire manual skills
- C) to interpret the results
- D) integrate theoretical and practical knowledge

Attendance at the laboratory work is mandatory in order to be able to acquire the skills of the subject. For attending the laboratory classes it is necessary that the student pass the biosafety and safety tests that will be found in the Moodle space and to know and accept the working rules of the laboratories of the Faculty of Biosciences. In addition, he/she must comply with the regulations of work in a laboratory of Microbiology that he/she will find indicated in the Practical Handbook.

In order to achieve a good performance and to acquire the skills corresponding to this activity it is essential that the student makes a comprehensive reading of the practices proposed before their completion.

Organised visits. A visit to wastewater treatment plant have been programmed in order to bring the student closer to a real situations. This is a mandatory activity.

Additional information:

In order to support the training activities indicated above, students will be able to take individual tutorials with the teaching staff.

For a good follow-up of the course, the student will have in the Moodle space all the documentation indicated in the previous points.

*The proposed teaching methodology may experience some modifications depending on the restrictions to face-to-face activities enforced by health authorities.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			

Laboratory work	16	0.64	10, 5, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15
Lectures	30	1.2	3, 10, 4, 8, 7, 9, 14, 16
Organised visits	4	0.16	3, 4, 14
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials	3	0.12	3, 14
Type: Autonomous			
Bibliographic search	15	0.6	3, 2, 16
Individual reading	16	0.64	2, 12, 16
Individual study	45	1.8	2, 12
Preparation of Laboratory work	15	0.6	3, 2, 4, 16

Assessment

The modules that can be evaluated in the subject are two: theory and practices. Attendance to the organised visit is a mandatory activity.

Assessment of the theoretical classes module (70% of the global mark): During the course, two written tests of evaluation of this module, which are eliminatory, will be programmed. Each of the exams will have a weight of 35% of the global mark, but it will only be averaged if the score of the tests is greater than 4, otherwise the student will have to re-assess modul in the scheduled date for the retake of the course at the end of the semester.

Each test will consist of two types of questions:

Short answer questions aimed at assessing whether the key conceptual objectives have been achieved.

Multiple choice and / or true / false test questions, which will allow to evaluate a large part of the subject.

Assessment of the laboratory work module (20% of the overall mark). The evaluation of this activity will consist of two tests:

A) Practical skill, which will consist of the delivery of different practical results to the teacher during each laboratory session

B) Written exam, solving problems related with the work done in the laboratory (20%).

To pass the course you must obtain a score of 5 or higher in each module and assist to the organised visit. Non attendance to the visit implies no overcome the subject

Students who do not pass any of the written tests of the modules will be able to retake them in the scheduled date for the assessment of the subject at the end of the semester, as long as they have been evaluated in a minimum of 2/3 of these activities. The re-assessment of the theory module will be done in a single written global test.

Also on this same date, students wishing to improve their grade may present to an overall examination of the course, which will include questions from all three modules. In this case, the presentation of the student in the re-assessment examination involves the renunciation of the qualification previously obtained. . Students wishing to take the grade improvement test must communicate it by mail to the teacher responsible for the subject.

Students who do not pass any of the written tests will be able to retrieve them on the scheduled date for the final evaluation of the subject,

It will be considered that a student will obtain the Non-Evaluable qualification if he / she is not presented in any evaluation activity.

*Student's assessment may experience some modifications depending on the restrictions to face-to-face activities enforced by health authorities.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Laboratory work assessment	30%	2	0.08	2, 10, 5, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 1, 15
Theory assessment: Part 1	35%	2	0.08	3, 2, 8, 7, 12, 14, 1, 16
Theory assessment: Part 2	35%	2	0.08	3, 2, 8, 7, 12, 14, 1, 16

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Software

No specific software is needed in this subject