

Environmental Microbiology

Code: 101015
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Microbiology	OB	3

Contact

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Teachers

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

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 Microbiology and Microbial Ecology courses.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Environmental Microbiology is a mandatory subject, nuclear in the degree of Microbiology. 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 transformation 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:

- . Describe the role of microorganisms as agents of environmental change
- . Recognize microorganisms as indicators of alteration of an ecosystem
- . Identify microbial processes aimed at solving environmental problems.

Learning Outcomes

1. CM15 (Competence) Evaluate the role of microorganisms in processes of economic interest as producers of key compounds in the development of our societies and in the improvement of the quality of life.
2. CM16 (Competence) Propose microbial processes to assess the environmental impact of human activity, as indicators of ecosystem alteration, as well as to recover contaminated environments.
3. KM22 (Knowledge) Define the role of microorganisms as agents of environmental change and as indicators of ecosystem alteration.
4. SM22 (Skill) Manage specific bibliography and internet tools to develop an academic work within the field of environmental or industrial microbiology both in English and in one's own language or others.
5. SM23 (Skill) Select the appropriate methodologies to characterise populations and communities of microorganisms from environmental and industrial samples and their abiotic environment.

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

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	30	1.2	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM22, CM15
Seminars	16	0.64	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM22, SM23, CM15
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials	3	0.12	CM15, CM16, KM22, CM15
Type: Autonomous			
Bibliographic search	20	0.8	SM22, SM22
Individual reading	15	0.6	CM15, KM22, SM22, CM15
Individual study	36	1.44	CM15, CM16, KM22, CM15

Preparation of oral presentations	10	0.4	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM22, SM23, CM15
Writing papers	15	0.6	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM22, SM23, CM15

Teaching methodology and training activities

The course of Environmental Microbiology consists of two 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 two modules are the following:

Theory 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 Virtual Campus.

Seminars These are sessions of work in groups with a small number of students, based on topics proposed by the teaching team, that the students will work independently and that will be discussed or exposed later in the classroom. Attendance to this activity is mandatory.

In this activity the use of AI is permitted but in a restricted manner. Then, for this subject, it is possible to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies exclusively in support tasks, such as bibliographic or information fencing, text correction or translations. The student will have to clearly identify which parts have been generated by this technology, specify the details. It includes a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and the final result of the activity. The non-transparency of the use of AI in this valuable activity is considered a lack of honesty, academic and may entail a partial or total penalty in the activity grade, or major sanctions in serious cases."

Additional information:

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

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.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Seminars assessment: preparation of multiple choice test questions	3	0	0	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM22, SM23
Seminars assessment: Work done and oral presentation	17	0	0	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM22, SM23
Seminars assessment: writing tests	10	1	0.04	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM23
Theory assessment: Part 1	35	2	0.08	CM15, CM16, KM22,

				SM23
Theory assessment: Part 2	35	2	0.08	CM15, CM16, KM22, SM23

Continuous evaluation

The assessment of the course will be individual and continuous through the following tests:

Assessment module of the theoretical classes (70% of the global grade): During the course, two written tests of evaluation of this module, which are eliminatory, will be programmed. Each of the tests will have a weight of 35% of the global grade, but it will only be averaged if the mark of the tests is greater than 4, otherwise, the student will have to retake the part of the subject with a mark lower than 4 at a Final exam

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 will allow us to evaluate a large part of the subject.

Seminar evaluation module (30% of the overall grade): The assessment will include the following aspects:

Work done and oral presentation of the work done (17% of the overall grade).

Writing tests (10% of the overall grade).

The preparation of 10 multiple choice test questions corresponding to the seminar (3% of the overall grade).

To pass the course, you must obtain a score of 5 or higher in each module.

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 course 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 grades may present to an overall examination of the subject, 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.

It will be considered that a student will obtain the Non-Evaluable qualification if he/she carries out less than 67% of the evaluation activities.

Students wishing to take the grade improvement test must communicate it by mail to the teacher responsible for the subject.

Single assessment

The single assessment consists of a single summary test in which the contents of the entire theory program of the subject will be assessed. The test will consist of short-answer questions aimed at assessing whether the key conceptual objectives of the subject have been achieved and multiple-choice and/or true/false test-type questions, which will allow a large part of the content to be assessed. The grade obtained in this synthesis test will account for 70% of the final grade of the subject and must be equal to or higher than 5. The single assessment will be done on the same day as the 2nd part of the subject.

The evaluation of the seminar module will follow the same process as the continuous evaluation. The grade obtained will account for 30% of the final grade of the subject. The seminar module is compulsory for all

sessions. It is a requirement to have passed the seminar module (grade of 5 or higher) to take the single assessment test. In the same way, the delivery of evidence from the seminars will follow the same procedure as the continuous assessment.

Bibliography

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Software

No specific software is needed in this subject.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	731	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(PAUL) Classroom practices	732	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	73	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed