

SAMPLE COURSE SYLLABUS
ENTO/PLPT 813 BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF PESTS

I. Instructors

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II. Course Objectives

The overall course objective is to familiarize students with the principles and practices of using natural enemies and antagonists to manage the abundance of pests (invertebrates, pathogens, and weeds) and reduce economic losses.

Specific Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, students will be able to

1. To state the commercial and environmental advantages of using biological control.
2. To express the ecological, physiological and biochemical processes involved in biological control.
3. To identify the various strategies for applying biological control agents
4. To recognize the environment under which each strategy will be most effective.
5. To recognize the biological and ecological limitations of biological control.
6. To identify some of the more common natural enemies and pathogens that can be used for controlling invertebrate pests and weeds.
7. To identify some of the common antagonists used for controlling plant pathogens
8. To state the general processes by which biological control agents are discovered, developed and commercialized, in addition to the economic and regulatory factors that affect commercialization.

III. Course Structure

This course will be divided into 4 modules. Each module will last from 3 to 4 weeks. Within each module, there will be a set of lectures, with accompanying reading assignments. The number of lectures for each topic will vary. In addition, a group of students will compose essays. The essays will be posted and serve as the basis for discussion threads in which all students in the course will participate. At the end of each module period, there will be an examination. Schedules and topics covered in each module can be found in the Course Documents folder in Blackboard. Lectures and reading materials for each module will be made available much earlier than scheduled to allow those students writing essays for later modules to preview the information. Students, otherwise, are advised to follow the schedule to stay in synch with the rest of the class.

IV. Instructional Method

Except for the required textbook, all course materials will be available via Blackboard instructional system at UNL. To access Blackboard or to learn more about it, go to the following website: <https://my.unl.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>. Lectures will contain narration and slides. To play the lecture videos, you must install RealPlayer which is available free at: <http://www.real.com/realplayer>

Lectures will all be supported by readings from the textbook and selected writing that will be available as PDF files or as links to webpages. In addition, course activities (exams and discussions) will be conducted via Blackboard. Grades will also be posted in the My Grades folder (note: students will have access only to his/her own grades).

The following textbook is required for this course: **Hajek, Ann. 2004. Natural Enemies: An Introduction to Biological Control. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge, UK.** It is available through local bookstores and various sources on the internet.

V. Student Assignments

1. View the lectures and read the assigned chapters in the textbook or selected references. The viewing and reading must be completed by the end of each module.

2. Essay

The instructors will provide several essay topics per module (see “Essay Topics” in the Course Documents folder). Each student will select only one essay topic. Instructions for the selection process will be provided at beginning of the course. Instructions for preparing essays will be provided as a separate document in the Course Documents folder. The paper must be submitted to the module instructor by the due date for grading. The student will also submit 2 to 3 discussion questions based on the essay. The paper and the questions will be posted as a discussion thread on Blackboard for at least 1 week. During that time all other members of the class are expected to read the essay and participate in the discussion. While discussion participation will not be graded, the content of each essay and discussion threads may be included in the exams. The essay is worth 50 points.

VI. Exams

There will be four exams during the semester, each given at the end of a module. Students will be provided examinations online via the Blackboard. Each exam will be available on Blackboard for 4 days beginning at 8AM Central Time on a Friday and ending at 11:59 PM Central Time the following Monday. Each exam will be in two parts. The first (“short exam”) will be worth 10 points and is a timed exam consisting of a mix of 10 true-false, multiple choice type, and short answer questions. During that time, the student will only be able to open the short exam once and will have 40 minutes to complete it once it is started. Therefore, a student must be well prepared before commencing this portion of the exam. The second part of each exam (“essay exam”), worth 20 points, will also be available during the same 4 day period. It will consist of one question to be answered by a short essay. Once the question is opened the student will have 2 hours to prepare and return the response. The answer can be typed directly or cut-pasted into the box provided.

Exam accommodations can be provided for students with disabilities. See Accommodating Student Disabilities section below.

VII. Grading

Exams (10 points for short + 20 points for essay) X 4=	120
Essay	50
Total	170 points

Grading Scale

Percentage (points out of 170)	Letter grade
90% (153).....	A
80% (136).....	B
70% (119).....	C
60% (102).....	D
below 60%.....	F

Students enrolled on Pass/Fail basis must achieve 80% in order to earn a “Pass”. The scale may be adjusted downward depending upon the class curve.

X. Other Policies

Exam policy

Make up exams will be available to students who experience illness or other crises. If you know ahead of time that other commitments will conflict with a scheduled exam, arrangements can be made ahead of time for an alternative exam time.

Accommodating Student Disabilities

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

Help with Blackboard

You can find a list of helpful resources for Blackboard courseware and other technical issues under “Online Help Resources” on “My UNL” Blackboard page.

Library Services

The website can be accessed directly at: <http://iris.unl.edu/>. It can also be accessed from Blackboard by clicking the “UNL Library” tab at the top of the page.

Cheating and plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students are expected to adhere to guidelines concerning academic dishonesty as specified in Entomology policy (<http://entomology.unl.edu/dishonesty.shtml>) in accordance with Section 4.2 of the University Student Code of Conduct (<http://stuafjs.unl.edu/ja/code/>). Students are encouraged to contact the instructor for clarification of these guidelines if they have questions or concerns.