

BOT 4430C: Biology of Fungi

Department of Biology, College of Sciences

Number of Credit Hours: 4

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Instructor Information

- Instructor: Charissa de Bekker, PhD
- Office Location: Biological Sciences Building, room number BIO435
- Office Hours: TBA in the first week of classes based on in-class poll
- Digital Contact: charissa.debekker@ucf.edu or Webcourses@UCF messaging

Teaching Assistant

- GTA: Sophia Vermeulen, graduate student
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General Course Information

- Term: Fall 2021
- Course Number & Section: BOT 4430C
- Course Name: Biology of Fungi
- Credit Hours: 4
- Class Meeting Days: Tuesdays (T) and Thursdays (R)
- Class Meeting Time:
(T) **12:30 pm – 2:20 pm**: Lectures and literature discussions – Face to Face with option

for synchronous remote instruction using Zoom

(R) 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm: Laboratory – Face to Face

- Class Location: Online / Biology Building (BIO) room 304

BOT 4430C is designated as a **Research-Intensive (RI) course**. This designation will be noted on your transcripts. Your active engagement in the research and/or creative scholarship process will be the core of your learning experience in this course. As such, a significant portion of your grade for BOT 4430C will be derived from your active participation in the research process. If you have any questions about this designation, please ask your course instructor.

Enrollment Requirements

Course Prerequisites: BSC 2010C (General Biology 1), and PCB 3063 (Genetics) or MCB 3020C (General Microbiology)

Course Description

Biology of Fungi reviews broad topics pertaining to active fungal biology research, divided into the following themes:

1. Diversity and Evolution
2. Genetics and Molecular Biology
3. Cell Biology and Development
4. Molecular Ecology and Ecosystems
5. Decomposers, Mutualists, and Parasites

Students will be introduced to these topics through interactive lectures, reading assignments based on scientific literature, and hands-on, research-driven laboratory projects. To learn how to read and assess the primary mycology literature and to promote critical thinking skills, students will take part in weekly literature discussions, followed by written assignments. The laboratory portion of the course will be a combination of experiments pertaining to course topics and a research component in which students formulate their own research questions and design experiments based on the fungal species that they have collected during the first week of classes. Students will also learn how to write a scientific abstract, how to record their work in a laboratory notebook, and how to present their research to peers in a scientific symposium setting.

Course Materials and Resources

Required Textbook

[“The Fungi | Third Edition” ISBN: 9780123820341](#)

*The digital version of the course textbook is available **FOR FREE** [through the UCF Libraries](#).*

You can view [this e-text](#) through the Web or download a PDF version to read offline. Accessing the text off-campus requires that you authenticate as a UCF student.

- Read the assigned material listed in the course schedule *before coming to the lectures!*
- Not all of the material from the textbook will be covered. It is the student's responsibility to attend lectures and know what was covered and what was not.
- Exams will be based on textbook materials discussed in the lectures.

Scientific / Primary Literature

Recent relevant peer-reviewed research publications within the field of mycology will be provided by the instructor in PDF format through Webcourses.

- Read the assigned material listed in the course schedule *before attending the discussion session!*
- Assignments and discussions will be based on this literature.

Communication

Office Hours

- *Office hour times will be decided and announced during the first lecture and posted on Webcourses in the first week of classes.*
- Any meeting *outside* of regular office hours must be scheduled in advance with the instructors through email.

Emails

- **Email and Webcourses Messages are the only acceptable method of routine communication.**
- *Only* e-mails from your UCF's Knights mail account or messages through Webcourses will receive replies, without exception.
- All attempts will be made to answer emails within 48 hours. If you do not receive a response after 48 hours, please re-send.
- Emails must be written in a professional manner.
- State in the subject line a brief description of the inquiry.
- Keep in mind, Florida has a very broad open records law (F.S. 119). Emails between faculty and students may be subject to public disclosure.

Webcourses Announcements

- Check Webcourses Announcements regularly and/or adjust your Webcourses settings to allow notification emails of Webcourses Announcements. Knowing the important information released in these announcements will be the student's responsibility.

Classroom Announcements

- Important announcements will often be given at the beginning of the lecture or lab.
- It is the student's responsibility to be present for these announcements.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Given short answer questions about the course topics discussed in the lectures, students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and ability to apply core concepts in three written exams.
- Given relevant, recently published scholarly literature, students will learn how to break down, critically evaluate, and develop relevant research questions in weekly verbal group discussions and written individual assignments.
- By starting their own fungal biodiversity research project and conducting experiments designed by the instructor, students will learn standard laboratory practices and gain laboratory skills such as aseptic techniques, mycology-specific techniques and genetics techniques in the weekly labs.
- Using their skills obtained from weekly primary literature assignments, students will be able to conduct a short literature study and synthesize a scientific abstract about the fungal species from their biodiversity research project in a written assignment.
- Based on their literature search and fungal species that students have obtained for their biodiversity research project, students will formulate a relevant research question that integrates fundamental mycology principles and knowledge as part of their written abstract assignment.
- To address the research question, relevant to their fungal species, students will develop an appropriate methodology in the form of a written laboratory experiment complete with hypotheses and protocol.
- Throughout the semester, students will demonstrate their research progress by recording all their laboratory activities in a digital laboratory notebook that will be provided with regular feedback from the instructor and TA to help the student stay on track and learn appropriate record-keeping practices.
- By participating in a research symposium, students will gain scientific communication practice by disseminating their research process and results through an oral presentation and active audience participation in Q&As.

Course Activities

Academic Activity: Pre-, and Post-Assessment of Student Knowledge and Perception (2.5%)

- Faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course for proper distribution of financial aid to those students that receive it.
- To document that you began this course, complete the Academic Activity Assignment by the end of the first week of classes **Friday, August 27, 2021, at 5:00 PM**, or as soon as

possible after adding the course. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

- The Academic Activity Assignment for this course is a pre-assessment of your knowledge about the biology of fungi and your perception and understanding of practices pertaining to research within the field of mycology.
- The academic activity assignment is vital for financial aid students, but for EVERY student the activity will count towards 2.5% of their final grade, together with the post-assessment of your knowledge and perception towards the end of the semester.
- The Academic Activity Assignment for this course, as well as the post-assessment later in the course, can be accessed through Webcourses under the Quiz section.

Lectures Exams (45%)

- There will be three (3) lecture exams that cover lecture/textbook content.
- Critical thinking skills, that will be practiced during the literature discussions, will also be tested during the exams.
- Exam 1, 2 and 3 are based on subsets of the lecture content and will each count towards 15% of the final course grade.
- Exams consist of questions that prompt short written answers and will be held during the first 50 minutes of the lecture time on Exam Dates.
- Please, refer to the Lecture Schedule and Webcourses calendar for planned Exam Dates and do NOT plan trips or other activities on these dates.

Important: No exam grades will be dropped (i.e. all exam grades count toward your course grade).

Taking Lecture Exams

- Lecture exams will be given **online**.
- Even though certain assessments, including the exams, are online, it is vital that as a community, we continue to demonstrate and uphold academic integrity in this learning environment.
- The online exams are **NOT** open book exams. Use of your ebook, notes, lecture handouts or other resources is strictly prohibited.
- You are also **NOT** allowed to have conversations with other students during the exams. Contacting each other through GroupMe texts, other sorts of messages, or in-person is strictly prohibited.
- To motivate you to adhere to the UCF Creed and uphold academic integrity, we will be using the tool LockDown Browser. This is a locked browser for taking exams and quizzes in Canvas. It prevents you from printing, copying, going to another URL, or accessing other applications during an exam. The exams require that [LockDown Browser](#) be used. You will not be able to take the exam with a standard web browser.

Scholarly Literature Assignments (20%)

- There will be nine (9) literature assignments, roughly one per week except for the first week of the semester, any week an exam is being given, and symposium week
- The literature for each assignment will be discussed during the second half of the lecture time each week. So, make sure you read the assigned literature before coming to class, ready to ask questions and take part in discussions. These discussions will help you do well on the assignments!
- Each scientific article discussed will be accompanied by an assignment and a grading rubric that will be available through Webcourses.
- Each assignment will consist of open-ended questions about the article that will be graded using the accompanied grading rubric
- These assignments are intended to help you learn how to assess scientific literature, formulate a research question and promote critical thinking skills. The Assignments are “open-note” and un-timed.
- Literature Assignment 7 is a bit different. For this assignment, you will be conducting your own literature search related to your laboratory biodiversity research project (see below). The deliverable will be a short scientific abstract for which the expectations and grading rubric are provided through Webcourses.
- Literature Assignment 9 is different as well. This assignment will be used to design your own research experiment related to your laboratory biodiversity research project.
- Your **lowest (1) assignment grade will be dropped** from your final grade. This can be any of the assignments, except for assignments 7 and 9 (i.e., the literature search and scientific abstract assignment and the experimental design assignment).
- Assignments will be available to students for one week, opening at **8:00 AM on Mondays** and closing at **11:59 PM on Sundays** and are submitted through Webcourses.
- **Important: There are NO makeups or excused absences for missed assignments** (unless a student can provide documentation affecting them longer than 1 week, e.g. extended hospitalization, sequestered jury duty, etc. that prevented computer access.)
 - If you miss doing an assignment, you will receive a zero (0) for that assignment’s grade. Therefore, do NOT wait until the last minute to take the assignment.
 - Technical or internet difficulties will NOT be accepted as an excuse for missing assignments since there is a week-long window to do them.
 - Students are responsible for knowing the assignment due dates which can be found in the Lecture Schedule and through Webcourses.

Research-Intensive Laboratory (32.5%)

- The laboratory is meant to provide you with hands-on research experience while learning more about fungi.
- To make this experience more authentic, students will be performing experiments from which we do not necessarily know the outcome by following real laboratory protocols, which will be shared with you through Webcourses.
- You will also be asked to collect fungi from the environment in the first week of classes, which will form the basis of your biodiversity project. You will perform literature research related to this project, formulate your own research question and design a sound, relevant research experiment pertaining to this project.

Laboratory Notebook (17.5%)

- All performed laboratory protocols, results and interpretations of the results will be recorded in a laboratory notebook.
- The guidelines for keeping a laboratory notebook can be found in the “[Guidelines for keeping a laboratory record](#)” posted in Webcourses together with the corresponding grading rubric.
- The lab notebook will be kept as a digital Word file stored on OneDrive to which the instructors have access throughout the entire semester. These Microsoft Office programs and Cloud storage are freely available to UCF students.
- **The notebook will be graded based on the accuracy, completeness, organization, and timely keeping of the lab notebook, and count towards 17.5% of the final course grade.**
- Students will receive regular (i.e., ~bi-weekly) feedback on the lab notebook from the teaching assistant throughout the semester to help them improve their written research recording, interpretation of results and methodology, and communication.

Final Research Presentation (15%)

- The research you performed will be communicated and discussed with your peers during a symposium.
- Participation in the symposium by **presenting and taking part in the discussion will count towards 15% of the final course grade.**
- Instructions on how to prepare a scientific presentation in powerpoint/keynote can be found in the “[Guidelines for laboratory project presentation](#)” posted on Webcourses together with the grading rubrics that will be used by the instructors and your peers to assess your presentation based on the scientific content, organization and presentation.

Laboratory Attendance and Participation Policies

- There is a **required face-to-face laboratory component** to this course. Labs are held on Thursdays in the Biological Sciences Building.
- You will work in pairs, so make sure you show up and do not disappoint your lab partner! You are expected to work together as equals.
- **You are expected to attend ALL laboratory sessions: labs cannot be made up.** Students with unexcused absences will receive 10% grade reduction **for each** missed lab. If you have a valid, documented reason for missing a laboratory session, you must provide your lab instructors with appropriate hard-copy documentation within one week of the absence.
- You are required to be on time to class and remain in class for the entire lab. **If you are more than 15 minutes late to lab, you will not be permitted into the laboratory room and it will be marked as an unexcused absence. If you leave before fully completing the lab, you will receive an unexcused absence.**
- An absence due to anything other than a university accepted reason is deemed to be **unexcused**.

- **These rules will be strictly enforced to make sure nobody is making their lab partner do their work for them.**
- Attendance will be taken in each lab.

Laboratory Safety Policies

- It is advisable to wear old clothes to lab; you will be working with materials that can stain.
- **You must wear closed-toe shoes and long pants/skirt that covers the legs.** Students wearing open-toed shoes or short pants/skirts will be asked to leave and will be given an unexcused absence.
- **Wash hands** upon entering and before exiting the lab.
- **You must wear a lab coat and safety glasses.** *These will be provided by the instructor on the first lab day* after which students are required to take care of these items by following provided instructions. Students without a lab coat and safety glasses will be asked to leave and will be given an unexcused absence.
- **Long hair must be tied back.**
- **No smoking, eating or drinking is permitted in the laboratory.** All drinks and food must be discarded before coming into the laboratory or placed in your bag. They are not to be opened, consumed, or out on the table at any time during the lab.
- **Turn off your cell phone and put it away before you come into the lab.** You need to be paying full attention to what you are doing to avoid unnecessary hazards and accidents.
- Tablets/Laptops are permitted for viewing/completing laboratory manuals electronically and for note keeping in the laboratory journal.
- Act responsibly within the laboratory environment, paying close attention to your own safety and that of your peers.
- Irresponsible behavior will result in removal from the laboratory and an unexcused absence for the lab.

As part of the effort to reduce the spread of Covid-19, please consider the following:

- **Get vaccinated!** Vaccines are safe, effective and readily available at no cost and by appointment or walk-up at [Student Health Services](#) or [a location in your community or close to home](#). There is a vaccine waiting to be administered to you, and UCF strongly encourages you to get vaccinated as soon as possible if you have not done so already. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect against severe illness due to COVID-19 – and to show how much you care about the well-being of others.
- **Wear a face mask!** With the highly transmissible Delta variant present in Central Florida, UCF asks that everyone, whether vaccinated or not, wear a mask indoors in accordance with [the latest CDC guidelines](#). Wearing a mask protects you, your loved ones and your fellow Knights.
- For more information on UCF Covid-19 Policy, please visit <https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/>

Make-up Exams and Assignments

Per university policy, you are allowed to submit make-up work (or an equivalent, alternate assignment) for authorized university-sponsored activities, religious observances, or legal obligations (such as jury duty). If this participation conflicts with your course assignments, I will offer a reasonable opportunity for you to complete missed assignments and/or exams. The make-up assignment and grading scale will be equivalent to the missed assignment and its grading scale. In the case of an authorized university activity, it is your responsibility to show me a signed copy of the Program Verification Form for which you will be absent, prior to the class in which the absence occurs. In any of these cases, please contact me ahead of time to notify me of upcoming needs.

Assessment and Grading Procedures

- At the end of the semester, your score for each of the components below will be added together and converted to a final course percentage.

The table shows the weight distribution for each set of course activities.	
Course Activities	Percentage of Grade
Academic Activity Assignment / Pre-, and Post-Assessment of Student Knowledge and Perception	2.5%
Research Intensive Laboratory <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laboratory Journal 17.5%• Final presentation 15%	32.5%
Lecture Exams <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exam 1-3 15% each	45%
Scholarly Literature Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 Reading Assignments, 1 dropped• Literature search and scientific abstract• Experimental design	20%
Total	100%

- Your final course grade will be awarded using the following scale:

The table shows the range for each letter grade and uses an A,B,C,D,F grading system.	
Letter Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 or below

- There will be NO automatic additional curving of grades and no “extra credit” or “bonus” points awarded.
- Final semester grades will NOT be rounded up. (e.g. An 89.9% will be a “B”). This is a definitive cut off and NO grades will be altered unless there is a documented error in the grade calculation that would change a student’s course letter grade.
- Students are responsible for keeping track of their own grades and identifying issues within 2 weeks of any posted grade.
 - Grades will be posted in Webcourses but are NOT to be considered official grades.
 - No grades will be given over the phone or by email according to Federal law (FERPA regulations).
- Withdrawal Deadline: Friday, October 29, 2021 at 11:59 PM**
 - Please refer to the Undergraduate Catalog for detailed information about the implications of the withdrawal date.
 - Students must initiate withdrawal themselves. Instructors will NOT automatically withdraw any student from the course. Late and medical withdrawals and Incompletes are granted for only very compelling and documented reasons.
- Grade Forgiveness Deadline: Friday, December 3, 2021 at 11:59 PM**
 - If you are re-taking this course, you must apply through MyUCF for grade forgiveness (it will NOT be automatically granted). Please refer to the Student Handbook for additional information about Grade Forgiveness.

Consult the latest Undergraduate or Graduate [catalog](#) for regulations and procedures regarding grading such as Incomplete grades, grade changes, and grade forgiveness.

Course Schedule

The tentative lecture and laboratory schedules are subject to change and can be found [here](#).

University Services and Resources

Academic Services and Resources

A list of available academic support and learning services is available at [UCF Student Services](#). Click on "Academic Support and Learning Services" on the right-hand side to filter.

Non-Academic Services and Resources

A list of non-academic support and services is also available at [UCF Student Services](#). Click on "Support" on the right-hand side to filter.

If you are a UCF Online student, please consult the [UCF Online Student Guidelines](#) for more information about your access to non-academic services.

Policy Statements

COVID-19

Depending on the course of the pandemic during the semester, the university may make changes to the way classes are offered. If that happens, please look for announcements or messages in Webcourses@UCF or Knights email about changes specific to this course.

COVID-19 and Illness Notification

UCF encourages students, faculty and staff to report any positive tests, whether or not you have been on or plan to go to any of our campuses.

Students who believe they may have a COVID-19 diagnosis should contact UCF Student Health Services (407-823-2509) so proper contact tracing procedures can take place.

If you or someone you know tests positive for COVID-19:

- Stay home and don't come to campus
- Avoid contact with others
- Call the [UCF COVID Line at 407-823-2509](#)
- Continue home isolation until you've consulted with your healthcare provider about returning to campus

Further resources: <https://www.ucf.edu/coronavirus/>

Classroom Conduct

- All students enrolled in this course agree to abide by the UCF Golden Rule
- For the best learning environment for everyone, please:

- Arrive and depart on time and stay for the ENTIRE lecture period.
- No talking during class.
- Place cell phones on vibrate.
- Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and put away during lecture exams.
- Laptop use is allowed for course related use only.
- Tape recording of lectures is permitted.
- Abusive/Offensive behavior will not be tolerated in lecture, during laboratories, and during office hours. Abusive/Offensive language in email communications will not be tolerated either.
- This is an open, tolerant, judgement-free learning environment.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated; offenders will be removed from the classroom.

In-Class Recording

Students may, without prior notice, record video or audio of a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a formal or methodical oral presentation as part of a university course intended to present information or teach students about a particular subject. Recording classroom activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to lab sessions, student presentations (whether individually or part of a group), class discussion (except when incidental to and incorporated within a class lecture), clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving student participation, test or examination administrations, field trips, and private conversations is prohibited. Recordings may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance, and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct as described in the Golden Rule.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with [UCF's Rules of Conduct](#). According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

- *Unauthorized assistance*: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise unless specifically authorized by the instructor of record. The unauthorized possession of examination or course-related material also constitutes cheating.
- *Communication to another through written, visual, electronic, or oral means*: The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else's efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment, or project.
- *Commercial Use of Academic Material*: Selling of course material to another person, student, and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the university and the instructor. Course

materials include but are not limited to class notes, Instructor's PowerPoints, course syllabi, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, handouts, etc.

- *Falsifying or misrepresenting* the student's own academic work.
- *Plagiarism*: Using or appropriating another's work without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student's own.
- *Multiple Submissions*: Submitting the same academic work for credit more than once without the express written permission of the instructor.
- *Helping another violate* academic behavior standards.

For more information about Academic Integrity, students may consult [The Center for Academic Integrity](#).

For more information about plagiarism and misuse of sources, see "[Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices](#)".

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, [The Golden Rule](#). UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to academic misconduct. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade>.

Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need disability-related access in this course should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with [Student Accessibility Services](#) (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student.

Campus Safety Statement

Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise during class, everyone needs to work together. Students should be aware of their surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.

- Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Students should make a note of the guide's physical location and review the online version at <http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html>.
- Students should know the evacuation routes from each of their classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency.
- If there is a medical emergency during class, students may need to access a first-aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those are located, see <<http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/AEDlocations-UCF>> (click on link from menu on left).
- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <<https://my.ucf.edu>> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."
- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.
- To learn about how to manage an active-shooter situation on campus or elsewhere, consider viewing this video (<[You CAN Survive an Active Shooter](#)>).

Deployed Active Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor of record.