

Master of Science in Microbiology

Program code: 049030

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Biological Sciences (College of Science) offers a Master of Science Program in Microbiology. English is the language of instruction and research. The program features a thesis and non-thesis option.

According to the University Council decision dated 4/2/2007, Thesis students admitted with effect from September 2007 are exempted from the comprehensive examination.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

33 (36) TOTAL COURSE CREDITS (non-thesis option in parenthesis)

12 (15) COMPULSORY COURSES (credits in parenthesis)

0480-585	Statistical Methods in Research	(3)
0495-501	Research Techniques	(3) Equivalent to 0494-501
0495-551	Microbial Taxonomy	(3)
0495-593	Project (non-thesis option only)	(3)
2000-501	Scientific writing and Communication Skills	(3)

12 (21) ELECTIVES COURSES* (3 credits each)

0495-511	Plant Virology
0495-513	Plant Pathogen Interaction
0495-515	Biology of Actinomycetes
0495-521	Marine Microbiology
0495-523	The Biology of Photosynthetic Bacteria
0495-541	Aspects of Biotechnology
0495-561	Stress Tolerant Micro-organisms
0495-562	Petroleum Microbiology
0495-571	Biology of yeast
0495-582	Advanced Topic in Immunology

*The program students are allowed to take a total of not more than 6 credits from any 500 level courses offered by other graduate programs in the College of Graduate Studies. Only 3 credits are be allowed to be taken from 400-level courses offered in the College of Science with the approval of the Program Director.

9 COMPULSORY COURSES

0495-597 Thesis (0)

0495-598 Thesis (0)

2000-599 Thesis (9)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

0495-511: PLANT VIROLOGY

CR: 3

Nomenclature and classification; infection process; resistance to infection; effect of virus infection on plants; effects of virus infection on the host metabolism; Virus-vector interaction; composition and structure of virus particles; Ecology of viruses; plant pathogens confused with viruses; sub-viral pathogens; Control of viral diseases; Economically important viral diseases.

0495-513: PLANT PATHOGEN INTERACTION

CR: 3

Lectures are confined to diseases caused by fungi and bacteria and will deal with the following topics. Concepts and definitions: Plant diseases, pathogens and parasites, pathogenicity and disease reaction types, definitions and problems of terminology; Interaction between pathogens and other organisms: Initial stages of pathogenesis, attraction of pathogens to plant contact and penetration, colonization of host plants; Mechanisms of attack: cell wall degrading enzymes, toxin in plant diseases; Growth regulating substances; Responses of host plants to infection: pathological alterations in structure, function and in host metabolism; Mechanisms of disease resistance: all types of disease resistance will be discussed in this section. The practical course includes: Inoculation of plants by pathogens, penetration as well as disease development in both a susceptible and a resistant cultivator; Methods of production of enzymes, toxins and growth regulators by different plant pathogens, The chemical analysis and characterization of these factors and their role in disease development. Investigation of disease resistance using advanced techniques such as electron microscopy, extraction, chromatography etc.

0495-515: BIOLOGY OF ACTINOMYCETES

CR: 3

Isolation from soil by selective media. Cultivation on solid and liquid media. Primary-secondary metabolism, antibiotics. Developmental biology, followed by biochemical and morphological methods. Auto regulatory factors (hormones). Degradation of organic materials - chitin, keratin, organic soil component, mineral oil. Regulating mechanisms. Genetics. Industrial applications.

0495-521: MARINE MICROBIOLOGY

CR: 3

The marine environment. The benthic and planktonic microflora: Sampling, counting and biomass determination; responses to environmental variations, role in oceanic productivity and chemical transformations with reference to fouling problems, symbiotic associations with higher marine organisms, role in and control of pollution. In the practical course the student will be asked to isolate and characterize predominant phytoplankton from the Arabian Gulf. The effect of environmental variables on growth of individual isolates will be investigated.

0495-523: THE BIOLOGY OF PHOTOSYNTHETIC BACTERIA

CR: 3

Classification of cyanobacteria, purple and green bacteria; Cell structure and composition; Oxygenic and anoxygenic photosynthesis; Photosphorylation; Effect of light irradiance and quality on photosynthesis, pigment composition and growth; Carbon metabolism in cyanobacteria and the assimilation of Carbon Heterotrophic growth and metabolism in cyanobacteria; Nitrogen fixation: mechanism, regulation of nitrogenase biosynthesis and activity. Hydrogenase-nitrogenase interrelationship; Interaction of cyanobacteria with heterotrophic bacteria. The practical course

includes: Isolation and identification of photosynthetic bacteria. Effect of light on photosystem II, I and NADP photoreduction. Enzyme assays such as glycollate dehydrogenase I oxidase, actate dehydrogenase, Malate dehydrogenase. Nitrogen fixation experiments using acetylene reduction method.

0495-541: ASPECTS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

CR: 3

1. Genetic Engineering:

Structure of DNA, topology of DNA, restriction enzymes (enzymes used in bioengineering), plasmids (PBR322, PUC8, PUC9); cloning with Plasmids and M13, cloning strategies, expression of cloned genes, sequencing (chemical & enzymatic); Split genes. The genetic element that control gene expression.

2. Plant Cell Structure

History of the technique; description of the technique: callus cultures, suspension cultures, protoplast cultures, green and photosynthetic cultures; The technique as a tool in basic studies (Cytology and genetics, physiology and biochemistry, genetic engineering); Production of valuable metabolites; Agricultural applications: vegetation propagation, programming, generation of stress-tolerant plants.

In the practical part (open laboratory) each student will be provided with seeds of a particular plant. He/She will be asked to establish callus and suspension cultures for this plant under the supervision of the lecturer.

0495-551: MICROBIAL TAXONOMY

CR: 3

1. Bacteria: (lectures only)

Origin and evolution of prokaryotes: Chemical, biochemical and phylogenetics evolution with reference to paleomicrobiology and origin of eucaryotes; Problems related to bacterial taxonomy: What is a bacterial species? Variability; Approaches to bacterial taxonomy: Classical, numerical, biochemical and genetic taxonomy; Nomenclature and classification of bacteria: artificial and phylogenetic keys; description of the major bacterial parts as presented in Bergey's Manual. Emphasis on phylogenetic relationships; Problems related to taxonomy of cyanobacteria.

2. Fungi (Theoretical and Practical)

Historical aspects of microbial taxonomy: Fungal taxonomy and its links with botanical nomenclature

and its application in fungal systematic; Introduction to international code of binomencalature; Introduction to world herbaria and culture collections: Preservation procedures for dried specimens; herbarium organization, Presentation procedures for living cultures, freeze-drying, liquid nitrogen storage agar slants, under mineral oil. Taxonomy of anamorphic fungi, taxonomy of telomorphic fungi.

This practical session in the taxonomy of fungi will be in the form of open laboratory sessions for identification of taxa using standard and specific keys. An introduction to technology of preservation and maintenance of cultures will be included too.

0495-561: STRESS TOLERANT MICRO-ORGANISMS

CR: 3

Review of the naturally occurring extreme ecological environments and niches which support microbial life; Review of man-made environments and conditions. Influence of industrial activity and pollution on the environment; Taxonomic survey of the stress-tolerant and obligate microbes; relationship with the Archaea, Bacteria and Eukarya and the role of natural selection in determining the composition of populations in the extreme environments; Membrane composition and function; Proteins and ribosomes; Stress induced biochemical activity in tolerant and obligate organisms; Interactions of microbes with unconventional or complex nutrient sources; hydrocarbons and heavy metals.

0495-562: PETROLEUM MICROBIOLOGY

CR: 3

Introduction: Microorganisms in genesis of petroleum, application of microorganisms in petroleum prospecting, Introductory petroleum chemistry; Microbially enhanced oil recovery. Microorganisms in deterioration of crude oil production systems, Microorganisms in oil reservoirs; anaerobic corrosion in petroleum systems; Remediation: preventive and combative measures against microbial deterioration of crude oil systems, Petroleum pollution and role of microorganisms in remediation. Lab: classes will be in the form of mini projects to cover topics in petroleum microbiology.

0495-571: BIOLOGY OF YEAST**CR: 3**

The practicals will be in the form of open laboratory and will cover the topics raised in the lectures. The lectures cover: isolation and identification of yeasts; physiology and growth; sugar transport, proteinase production, Polarographic measurements of oxygen uptake; influence of fundamental characteristics of yeast: growth form, ultra structure, taxonomy; biochemistry of yeast: Structure and composition of yeast cell membranes and walls, intermediary metabolism, bioenergetics, Biosynthesis and degradation of molecules; Formal genetics: yeast life cycle, mating type, mapping chromosomes, mating type switching, recombination and gene mapping; Molecular biology & genetics: Yeast plasmids - 2um and related ones. Killer plasmids in *Saccharomyces* & other yeast using autonomously replicating or integrating vectors. Expression of cloned genes. Protoplast formation, regeneration & fusion; Yeast biotechnology; Pathogenic yeast; Food spoilage, antifungal; protoplast preparation; isolation of petite mutants; adhesion of yeast to host tissues.

0495-581: ADVANCED IMMUNOLOGY**CR: 3**

Basic concepts. Innate immune mechanisms to infection: Cellular mechanisms Humoral mechanisms. Acquired cell-mediated immune mechanisms to intracellular infections: The cytotoxic T lymphocyte population (CTL), The helper T lymphocyte population (TH). Acquired humoral immune mechanisms to extracellular infections. Molecular aspects of immune recognition and regulation. Immune mechanisms to viral-induced tumors. Failures of immune mechanisms to infection: Evasive strategies employed by infectious pathogens, Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Manipulation of the immune response to fight infection.

**0495-582: ADVANCED TOPIC IN
IMMUNOLOGY****CR: 3**

The course covers advanced studies on major immunological topics, including key concepts in innate lymphoid cells, natural killer and dendritic cells, pattern recognition, antigen signaling, non-classical antigen presentation, lymphoid cell memory development, mechanisms underlying immunosenescence and T-cell exhaustion, advances in cancer immunotherapy and glycation.

0495-597: THESIS**CR: 0****0495-598: THESIS****CR: 0****2000-599: THESIS****CR: 9**