

SUSTAINABLE AND ORGANIC HORTICULTURE

UA-HORT 3503
Fall Semester

Course Syllabus and Class Outline

An on-line course offered by the UA Global Campus, offered by the Department of Horticulture, University of Arkansas, and presented by the USDA Sponsored ACCEPtS Program.

I. COURSE NAME AND DESCRIPTION:

- I. **Course Name: Sustainable and Organic Horticulture**
- II. **Course Description:** This course will provide a base of knowledge of the principles and practices of sustainable, organic, and alternative horticulture management systems.

The class will review and evaluate topics including biological processes (compost, humus and fertility), pest management, alternative farming systems, and organic agriculture as a basis for sustainable horticulture farm operations. After this foundation information is studied, the class will study applications of sustainable agriculture principles to production systems such as organic vegetable and herb production, greenhouse vegetable production, fruit production, ornamental production, and landscape and turf management.

- III. **Prerequisites:** No Prerequisites. It would be useful for students to have fundamental understanding of plant growth processes, soil sciences, and crop plant pest management. Previous training in plant biology/botany, crop production, and soils is strongly encouraged.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this course are as follows:

Students, after successfully participating in and completing the course, will be able to:

- A. Explain and discuss principles of sustainability and organic production systems
- B. Evaluate the sustainability of agricultural systems
- C. Identify resources for studying and employing sustainable and organic horticulture
- D. Develop management plans for sustainable and organic production systems

III. COURSE FORMAT

- A. **Class Delivery.** The class content will be delivered using a BlackBoard platform with content posted in units. Materials to be posted include reading materials outside of the textbook and content presentations highlighting and emphasizing information from the assigned reading materials. Students will log-on to the web-based content at their own discretion and time.

Expectations: To receive the full benefit of the content, students are expected to read all assigned reading materials and study the presentations. The course has been structured and designed that there will be approximately 2-3 hours of on-line interactive instruction to review the posted course materials and presentations. Likewise, the readings and study will take an additional 2-3 hours of work.

- B. **Class Structure** The class content is divided into weekly units. Students are expected to study that unit during the assigned week. Units will not be “opened” until a few days prior to the week of assignment, and they will remain open for the duration of the course so that you can refer back to the units. Each weekly unit is subdivided into 1-3 Topics. Each Topic will be comprised of 1) Assigned reading materials, 2) Review and reference materials, 3) topical presentations, 4) Assignments (not for every unit). For each weekly unit, there will be a quiz (see below). The topic content presentations will be in a PowerPoint format.
- C. **Class Interaction and Student Participation:** Although this is an on-line, distance education course, to improve enhance learning and improve communication, students will be expected to participate in an “interaction hour” . For the interaction time, students should log-in to participate in video conferencing or an on-line chat discussion group. The class interaction time allows for the students to interact with the professor in real-time. It is strongly encouraged that all students have a microphone/earphone headset for use in discussion groups.
- The purpose of the discussion periods is to clarify issues, raise questions, seed additional information or feedback, and/or to discuss pre-assigned discussion topics.
- Discussion Periods: ***Hosted via Microsoft Teams on Fridays, Times to Be Announced***
- Participation: Students are expected to participate in the class discussion periods. Participation and attendance will account for 100 points of the total course grade.
- D. **Class Communication:** Outside of class, the instructor will communicate to the class via e-mail using a mail list of class participants. A BlackBoard resource will be used for posting class information.

IV. Textbooks and Materials

1. A number of materials will be used in class including readings and videos. An reading list and reading assignments for each learning unit will be posted. There are **REQUIRED** and additional readings for further learning in each unit. *Class participants will be responsible for having read the assigned REQUIRED material from which test and examinations will be derived.*
2. Optional Text: Poincelot, R.P. 2004. Sustainable Horticulture Prentice Hall. ISBN 0-13-618554-1
This is an exceptionally good reference and is a benchmark of the sustainability literature. It should be in your library. Unfortunately, it is out of print. Used copies can be found for purchase on-line from several sources, but the cost may be prohibitive.

V. Examinations

Two forms of examination instruments will be used; 1) weekly/unit quizzes, and 2) section exams.

Weekly/Unit quizzes at the end of each weekly unit and will cover the topics presented in that unit. The quizzes will be given through an on-line instrument within BlackBoard unless otherwise indicated. Students will have a period of time to complete course material and complete the quiz prior to moving on to the next sections. Quizzes will typically be approximately 10 questions. Each quiz is worth 10 points and contributes to the overall grade in the class.

Quizzes **must be taken** in the week of the assigned unit and completed **no later than 11:59pm (1 minute prior to midnight) on Sunday of the week of the exam.** The exams/quizzes will be “shut down” at 12:00am. Failure to complete the quiz results in a “0” grade for that quiz.

Unit examinations will be given at the end of each section of units as indicated in the course outline and will cover material specifically from that unit. Questions will be based upon assigned reading materials and presented content. The examinations will be given on-line. Each examination is worth 100 points.

Examinations **must be taken** in the week of the assigned sections are to be completed and the exam completed **no later than 11:59pm (1 minute prior to midnight) on Sunday of the week of the exam**. The exams will be “shut down” at 12:00am. Exams will be made available for completion on approximately Thursday of the week that the exam is to be completed. Failure to complete the quiz results in a “0” grade for that quiz.

VI. Assignments:

Several types of assignments will be given during the semester and specific instructions for each will be presented for those assignment. Assignments will involve writing personal reflection on course readings or videos. Grades will be based on strict rubrics ensuring each student thoughtfully reflects on the material. It is expected that students will defend the submitted assignments will also be graded for proper grammar and spelling.

- A. Personal Reflections: Students will be assigned essays reflecting on selected assigned readings. Specific word counts will not be defined, but students are expected to clearly address specific questions (which will be provided) and provide evidence from the readings to justify their thoughts.
- B. Other Assignments: Other assignments may be made during the semester. Instructions and point values of each assignment will be provided at the time of assignment. May include visits to local grocers, review exercises for exams, etc.

VII. Grading

Students will be graded on summary performance in quizzes, examination, personal reflections/other assignments, and attendance and participation in discussion periods.

Course item	Points per item	Total Points
Quizzes	10	120
Exams	100	400
Assignments	50	200
Attendance and Participation in Discussion Periods	(varies)	100
Course Total	N/A	820

Grades will be using a 5-step scale determined by percentage of total available points as follows:

- A >90%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-69%
- F <60%

INSTRUCTOR:

Professor/Instructor: The course instructor is **Dr. M.B. Bertucci, Assistant Professor of Sustainable Fruit and Vegetable Production**. Additional information may be found under the “instructor” tab.

Contact Points

Office: Plant Sciences Building (PTSC) Room 310

Phone: 479-575-2603 Department of Horticulture

M. B. Bertucci : 479-575-2790 – office line and voice mail

Cell available on request.

E-mail: M.B. Bertucci: **bertucci@uark.edu**

Other contacts upon request including Zoom, Teams, twitter, cell phone.

Other Class Policies:

ACADEMIC HONESTY The instructor assumes that the students will display a high level of integrity and academic honesty. Therefore, **cheating, copying or plagiarism will not be tolerated**. Students will be required to read and understand the University Rules on Academic Honesty found in the Undergraduate Student Catalog. Infractions of University policies will be dealt with according to University procedures. You may anonymously report incidents or allegations of academic honesty by e-mail to Dr. Bertucci; you are encouraged to express those concerns with the instructor. All violations of academic Honesty will be reported. Please review and watch: <http://honesty.uark.edu/> Students are responsible for knowing and supporting academic honesty in this class.

Honesty is an important component and part of the organic system; you are expected to be honest, follow rules as both a guidepost and obligation. Sustainability is based on the idea that people do the right thing. So, we expect the same for this class.

Participation, Deadlines, Late Work. By the nature of an on-line class, the participation is based upon student personal initiative. Students must review, read, study to receive the benefits of the class. Student participation in the on-line portion of the class via BlackBoard will be monitored although time of participation is not a factor in the course grade. Because the students can access and use materials at anytime, there are no excused absences for the class and all assignments and quizzes must be submitted by the deadlines. If a deadline for submission passes, the student may review and study the unit and complete assignments, but no grades for late work will be assigned.

After you read and study the syllabus, you are asked to do two things:

1. Send an email to **Bertucci@uark.edu** and introduce yourself. This is the official class email. Let the instructor know who you are and that you read the syllabus.
 2. Look for an interesting TedTalk or YouTube video related to sustainability, sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, sustainable horticulture, sustainable landscapes, or organic horticulture. Send the link of the video with a brief comment on why you liked it and if you would recommend it being added to the course content and why.
 3. Completion of this simple task will count as your first "Attendance/Participation" score.
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Date of last syllabus update: June, 2021