Course Orientation

**General Information.** BOT 4503 (Plant Physiology) is one of the three designated biological-science courses that can be used to satisfy an Area II (Physiology) requirement. (A biological-science major must take at least one designated course from any two of the three curricular areas.) The four 2000-level core courses (BSC 2010, BSC 2010L, BSC 2011, BSC 2011L), Introductory Plant Biology (BOT 3150) and Organic Chemistry (CHM 2210) are prerequisites.

**Insurance.** It is VERY VERY IMPORTANT that you understand that you must have accident insurance. You should get low-cost insurance, e.g., through Thagard Health Center, if you are not already covered by another policy. FSU does not pay medical or other costs associated with a student’s accident even if that accident occurs when the student is engaged in an FSU-sponsored activity (such as a laboratory) and even if the student is not negligent. Implicit in your remaining in this course is an understanding between you and me that you are insured adequately.

**Course Logistics.** The syllabus provides a guide for the sequence of topics and the coverage of topics. Although we will adhere to the order of topics, the lecture schedule is not fixed and dates may be adjusted as the course progresses. In contrast, the dates for lecture exams are fixed and will not be changed.

This course cannot be used to satisfy the Gordon Rule.

**Exams and Objectives.** A written set of specific lecture objectives is included in each lecture packet. Most questions for lecture exams are based directly on these objectives. These written objectives are not to the exclusion of other objectives that class experience gives.

**Lecture Attendance.** It is FSU policy that students attend class. Professors are required to document the attendance of certain students (e.g., athletes and students who receive particular kinds of financial support). Lecture attendance will be recorded. The liberal policy of permitting four absences without penalty is designed to compensate for the chance that you might be marked absent even when you have attended a portion of a lecture. In other words, a tardy entry or an early departure could be equivalent to an absence.

**Honor Code.** FSU faculty are required to remind students at the beginning of each term that they are bound by the Academic Honor Code, which is found in the Student Handbook. The code calls for the coordinated efforts of faculty members, TAs, and students to uphold academic integrity and combat academic dishonesty.

**Supplemental Material for Lectures.** There is an optional textbook for this course (Taiz and Zeiger, Plant Physiology). The lectures are not designed from this text and exam questions are not uniquely inspired by the text. However, the text can be used to clarify or expand some subjects and, thus, will be useful for some students. You must take notes. Some exam questions may not be taken directly from
lecture packets. Nevertheless, the lecture packets are useful as a workbook and study aid. Making these packets available to you—at least a couple of days before each exam—is the most efficient way that I can personally help you. It is particularly important to recognize the extremely high value of the objectives contained in the course packet.

Some companies offer so-called note-taking “services” for selected courses. Thus, they provide copies of class notes prepared by a student who is currently enrolled in the course. Because I make my own notes available to you free, these company services are both inferior and redundant. Said differently, class notes for my courses simply plagiarize my course packet. It is my opinion that a student's selling class notes to a company is an ethical violation.

Exams. All exams will be cumulative. They will generally be 30-45 minutes long and consist of short-answer- or short-essay-type questions. (I will lecture during the other part of the class period.) Most of the material covered will be derived directly from objective questions. All exam material will be taken from lectures, but reading the text is strongly encouraged. Expect the exams to be difficult.

If you miss a lecture exam without prearrangement, you will be expected to document the reason. A note that only documents a visit to a physician without explicitly explaining your inability to take an exam is insufficient. Usually, submitted documents will be verified, so your documentation must include the direct telephone number of the relevant official (usually your doctor).

Conflicts. You will, of course, be excused if an important religious observance relevant to your belief system falls on a scheduled exam day. A make-up will be given. Generally, a social opportunity will not be considered a conflict.

Grades. Any student with unsatisfactory participation will receive a failing grade. Unsatisfactory participation includes, but is not limited to, more than four lecture absences, recorded as described above, regardless of the reason. In any case, experience indicates that only very exceptionally does a student perform satisfactorily on exams if she or he fails to attend class on a routine basis. Again, it is exceedingly important to recognize that this course has many objectives, including the development of a perspective that can only come from your active participation in class.

Given satisfactory participation, your exam grades will contribute to your course grade according to the percentages listed on the syllabus. Thus, you should be able to calculate your precise standing at any moment, according to the following scale: A > 93, A- > 90, B+ > 87, etc. The grading scale is absolute—it will not be curved up or down. You are not in competition with any of your classmates.

It is my goal to enable you to make the grade that you want.

ADA Statement. During the first week of class, students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should (a) register with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), and (b) present a
letter to me from the SDRC indicating the need that is to be accommodated. Then, the student and I will make a written contract that indicates how instruction and testing will deviate from that of the general student population.

**Office Hours and Instructor Assistance.** See me after class, email outlaw@bio.fsu.edu, or call 644-4020 for an appointment. Otherwise, come by BIO 306 during office hours (generally, 1-2 p.m. on Monday and 9:30-10:30 am on Thursday) and I will try to work you in. Please be prepared before an office visit. I will be available to assist you to the extent necessary for you to master the course objectives.