

Teaching Plan for AGRO/HORT/SOIL 505 (Graduate Orientation)

Instructor: N. P. Hanan

Semester: Fall 2020

AGRO/HORT/SOIL 505 (Graduate Orientation): Training in writing research proposals, presentation of research results, and interpretation of research results (**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**).

Course Description/Objectives: Introduction to graduate school and graduate-level scientific research through discussion, review and practice of (i) critical reading and evaluation of scientific writing and presentations; (ii) the scientific method (hypothesis generation and reasoning), (iii) the structure of scientific writing; and (iv) preparation of individual research proposals or, for more advanced students, a proposal for future research (**SYLLABUS DESCRIPTION**).

AGRO/HORT/SOIL 505 is a four-credit course that meets twice per week for lecture/discussion/student presentations (T/TH 1030-1145 am), and once per week for PES Seminar (F 330-420 pm). The lectures/discussion sessions are currently planned to meet in Skeen Hall N120. The PES seminar is scheduled in Gerald Thomas GT200. Student numbers are typically 10-15. (**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREVIOUS DELIVERY METHOD**)

PROPOSED CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED WITH SAFETY AND SCENARIO CHANGES IN MIND

As one of the first opportunities for new graduate student induction into the life and culture of PES and graduate research, a face-to-face component is vital for this class. This is particularly important to reduce student isolation and alienation, while building team spirit and peer-networks that support students through the challenges of, and contribute to eventual success in, graduate school. For Fall 2020 we already planned to enable remote participation for students based at the NMSU Agricultural Science Centers (ASC), thus planning for remote options was already underway. **However, we would like to retain the option for a reduced face-to-face element as part of this course, as described below.**

The following arrangements will be made for the implementation of safety practices to help prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 in the instructional environment.

1. **Lectures (Tu/Th 1030-1145 am)**. Lecture, discussion and student presentations will be planned for majority online dissemination, using canvas (with integrated zoom conferencing) for lectures and student presentation, discussion boards and instructor/peer evaluations. Course organization in canvas will enable 100% distance education if needed for public health reasons. However, we are requesting limited face to face meetings for 1 class-meeting per week (Thursday). The 4 credit class will be organized as follows:
 - a. **Tuesday 1030-1145 (remote)**: Instructor presentations via canvas/zoom, either uploaded prior as a canvas recording with discussion during class-time (i.e. flipped), or delivered during the scheduled class-time with time at the end for

discussion. Student presentations will also occur via canvas/zoom, with student contributions uploaded 2-days prior and student peer-feedback uploaded 1 day prior.

- b. **Thursday 1030-1145 (partially face-to-face):** In depth discussion of assigned readings and graduate orientation will be organized with in-person meetings insofar as possible. However, to ensure ability for social-distancing, student numbers in the face-to-face classroom will be limited as necessary to maintain distancing requirements (~8 people maximum in Skeen Hall N120). Face-masks and use of sanitation stations prior to entering and on leaving the class meeting will be encouraged. Depending on enrollment, and the number of students participating remotely from the ASC, the social distancing requirements of the meeting space will be met by rotating requests for specific students to attend remotely. Individual students may request permission to attend 100% remotely, based on their personal risk and comfort level attending in person.
2. **Seminar (remote):** The PES Graduate Seminar already has an on-line (zoom) attendance option, with student peer-evaluations/feedback to presenters organized via an on-line system. Students taking Agro/Hort/Soil 505 will be required to attend Friday seminar remotely and provide feedback to presenters via the online systems.
3. **Reducing Overall Exposure:** Overall, moving two class meetings to remote attendance, while retaining just one face-to-face meeting, but with reduced numbers and strict social distancing, will reduce student proximity within the classroom by at least 75% and greatly reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission associated with this class.
4. **Contact tracing:** The instructor will maintain email and telephone contact information for all students and keep a record of all students attending in-person (Thursdays) for contact-tracing, if needed. A student will immediately notify me and the aggie health center by email or telephone if they suspect they are ill (body temperature in excess of 100.4F, cough, or shortness of breath). Students will notify the instructor if they suspect illness, or if they suspect (or are notified about) exposure to COVID-19. Ill or potentially exposed students will be required to attend class remotely (using the available canvas/zoom options). Ill or potentially exposed students will be asked to provide the instructor with information on recent face-to-face contact with other students in the class (over and above contact in class that the Instructor will have recorded), so those students can be notified. All students in the class will be notified of the potential exposure and offered the alternative to move to on-line only instruction. Ill or potentially exposed students will be advised to seek medical advice via their physician, the NM Department of Health COVID Hotline, or the student health center. Affected students will return to class only if advised by their physician that they are no longer a source of infection for other students and following 14-day self-quarantine. The instructor will notify the Department Head (and/or NMSU COVID-19 reporting systems) if a student is ill, or if any student in the class reports positive test results. Instructor will

provide student attendance information for the ill student and classmates (dates, times, student names and contact information) to assist with contact-tracing.