

**GROWING FRUIT FOR FUN AND PROFIT**

FRC 1010 - 1 CREDIT

SPRING 2024

**LOCATION** Fifield Hall Room 2318

**MEETING TIMES** Fridays 1:55 – 2:45 pm

**INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Amethyst Merchant

amethyst@ufl.edu

1131 Fifield Hall

(352) 273 – 4595

**OFFICE HOURS** Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:00 pm in-person or via Zoom (by appointment)

Other times by appointment in office or via Zoom

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course aims to expose students from diverse majors to the most relevant fruit crops grown in Florida. Material will cover the basics of fruit production requirements for industry and within a home garden, technologies and techniques used for fruit production, as well as problems faced by growers. Current topics such as importance of pollinators, impacts of climate change, and organic production techniques will be discussed. No prerequisites are required.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

* Explain plant and environmental factors controlling fruit production.
* Appraise the importance of the horticultural industry in Florida in their daily life, for the state, and to feed people across the globe.
* Explain in general terms how fruit crops are grown in Florida.
* Relate the challenges and opportunities that fruit growers face in Florida.
* Discuss the use of modern technologies for fruit production.

**STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR EXPECTATIONS**

**From Dr. Merchant:**

I am committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere, teaching you something new and unexpected about fruit, and introducing you to relevant topics and ideas. I will grade assignments and supply comments within two weeks of your assignment submissions. I am available Tuesdays from 1 – 2 pm and other times by appointment.

**For this course to run smoothly, I expect students to:**

* Have a computer, camera, and stable internet connection.
* Check Canvas for new lectures, quizzes, other assignments, and announcements every Friday after noon. Quizzes will be posted on Fridays by midnight.
* Answer any questions and compose all assignments in your own words. The copying of material (cut and paste) from the internet or each other is plagiarism. Plagiarism results in a zero for that assignment and serious repercussions for your future at UF. Do not plagiarize!
* Be responsible for keeping up with due dates. All assignments will be due on Fridays by 11:59pm. Each assignment’s instructions will contain the due date.
* Submit work early if assignments are completed.
* Verify that assignments are successfully uploaded/submitted to Canvas.
* Contact Dr. Merchant by email within Canvas if you have any questions or concerns. If unable to so, please use UF’s Gatormail (Microsoft Office). Dr. Merchant’s email is [amethyst@ufl.edu](mailto:amethyst@ufl.edu).
* Have fun learning new information about fruit!!!

**COURSE MATERIALS**

**Textbook**

There is no required textbook for this course. However, UF/IFAS Extension has developed a multitude of publications to help gardeners and backyard growers. The instructor will provide links to these and other useful information on Canvas during the semester. Handouts will also be distributed in class and / or on Canvas.

**Course Website**

This course has a site in the CANVAS platform. Take time to familiarize yourself with the “Start Here”, “Syllabus”, and weekly module tabs in the navigation menu. The syllabus, handouts, lectures, quizzes, and assignments will be posted throughout the semester. New material will be added each week. You will be completing quizzes and uploading assignments into CANVAS.

**Growing Supplies**

A plant growing kit with seeds, soil, pots, and fertilizer will be available for pickup in class in the next few weeks. A video explaining how to plant and take care of your seeds will be on Canvas after the kits are delivered.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS AND GRADING (100 total points)**

1. **Weekly Quizzes 60 points**

Beginning the second week of class, **every Friday by midnight** a quiz will become available in **CANVAS in the Assignments and weekly module tab** over that week’s material. Each quiz will have up to 10 questions and you will have 12 minutes to complete the quiz. Quizzes can only be taken once. Questions may be multiple choice, true or false, fill in the blank, or short answer. Quizzes will be **available until the following Friday at 11:59 pm**.

There are a total of 13 quizzes. Each is worth 5 points. A makeup quiz may be granted if a student has a justifiable excuse. **Each student’s lowest quiz score will be dropped at the end of the semester.**

1. **Plant Growth and Development Project - Blog 20 points**

In the next few weeks, each student will receive materials to grow a fruit producing plant. Students will be provided all necessary materials. However, students will be responsible for the care of their plant throughout the rest of the semester. **Details on keeping a log about your plant’s progress will be presented when you get your kit.**

**3. Fruit Exploration and Reflection Activities - Blog 20 points**

Students must complete 4 of the types of activities listed below:

* **Tasting new fruits** and describing thoughts on experience – what you expected vs. reality
* Comparing the similarities & differences between fruit displays at **various grocery stores**
* Visiting an **active farm** – note the crops they are currently growing, provide information about the kinds of plants (flowers & fruits) you saw
* Visiting a **garden** – provide information about the kinds of plants (flowers & fruits) you saw
* Visiting a **garden center** - provide information about the kinds of plants (flowers & fruits) you saw
* Visiting a **farmers’ market** – describe the experience, the similarities & differences in marketing used by the farmers
* Participating in the **Field Day event** in April that will occur in the Teaching Garden across the street just south of Elings Hall from 4 – 6 pm (Friday) – what did you see and do; what did you learn from these experiences about how fruits (and vegetables) are grown

You will create a blog where you provide information about each activity you complete. Provide documentation (proof) of your experience / visit through photos. Be sure to include the location and date you completed each activity.

* If you would like to earn 2.5 bonus points, you can complete a 5th activity!

Note: Please inform Dr. Merchant if you have difficulty visiting sites off-campus. Alternative activities may be accepted if this situation arises, but prior approval from Dr. Merchant is needed.

**How to setup blogs - For Assignments 2 and 3 you will create blogs using Blogger.com.**

**Blogger.com** should be used to set up 2 blogs:

1) Plant Growth and Development Project

2) Fruit Exploration and Reflection Activities

Information about creating and managing a Team Blog can be found at:

<https://support.google.com/blogger/answer/41440?hl=en>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmOmQraJl0s&feature=plcp>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjL1oWA05ew&feature=plcp>

**GRADING SCALE**

A = 92.6 - 100 points

A- = 90.0 – 92.5 points

B+ = 87.5 – 89.9 points

B = 82.6 – 87.4 points

B- = 80.0 – 82.5 points

C+ = 77.5 – 79.9 points

C = 72.6 – 77.4 points

C- = 70 – 72.5 points

D+ = 67.5 – 69.9 points

D = 62.6 – 67.4 points

D- = 60.0 – 62.5 points

E = < 59.9 points

Additional information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found here:

* *Grading policy*, <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

**COURSE POLICIES**

Attendance and Make-up Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

* *UF Attendance policy*, <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

**Late completion of assignments will be allowed for documented emergencies and acceptable reasons per UF’s policy. Work must be made up to earn points.** In other words, an excused absence does NOT excuse the work. **Documentation is required to make up late work.**

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action.

* For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken when appropriate.

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

* *Disability Resource Center*, 0001 Reid Hall, (352) 392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

Campus HelpingResources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

• *Counseling and Wellness Center*, 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575**,** [www.counseling.ufl.edu](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu)

Counseling Services

Groups and Workshops

Outreach and Consultation

Self-Help Library

Wellness Coaching

• *U Matter We Care*,[www.umatter.ufl.edu](http://www.umatter.ufl.edu)

* *Student Success Initiative,* <http://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/>

Additionally, if you would like orientation on choosing a major, finding an internship, or planning your career, I encourage you to use the university’s on-campus resources.

* *Career Connections Center,* CR-100 Reitz Union, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>

Course Evaluation Process

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

Student Complaints

You can file and resolve any complaints about your experience in this course in the following site:

* *Student complaints in residential courses*, <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>
* *Student complaints in online courses,* <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

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Tentative Schedule

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| **Date** | **Week Topics** |
| 01/12 | 1 Introduction to the course |
| 01/19 | 2 Fruits vs. Vegetables; Flowers: Similarities and Differences |
| 01/26 | 3 Types of Fruit (part 1) |
| 02/02 | 4 Types of Fruit (part 2) |
| 02/09 | 5 Blueberries |
| 02/16 | 6 Strawberries |
| 02/23 | 7 Teaching Garden Event – Receive plant for course blog |
| 03/01 | 8 Pecans |
| 03/08 | 9 Peaches |
| 03/15 | 10 ***SPRING BREAK*** |
| 03/22 | 11 Citrus |
| 03/29 | 12 Mango or Mangoes |
| 04/05 | 13 Watermelon |
| 04/12 | 14 Tour of the Teaching Garden and Teaching Orchard |
| 04/19 | 15 Climate Change and the Importance of Pollinators |
|  | Note: There will be a FINAL QUIZ, but no final exam. |