Justification for Changes in H&CS 200

We are requesting several changes in H&CS 200 that in our view will strengthen the course and more accurately reflect what the faculty in the Department of Horticulture & Crop Science consider appropriate and relevant for the experience.

1. Title change from 'Crop Science' to 'The Science of Growing Plants'

   The course is now required for all majors in H&CS (Crop Science, Landscape Horticulture, and Turf Science). To broaden the relevance of the course to these diverse students, the content has been expanded to include examples from the cultivation of many crops beyond the traditional agronomic crops. The new title more accurately reflects the course's relevance to the diverse interests of our students. Depth and scientific rigor of content has not changed; the broadening is accomplished by using examples from the different plant commodities to illustrate points.

   The new name also reflects in more general terms what the course covers and could therefore seem more accessible to students seeking Natural Science courses to fill a University requirement. While Crop Science is a very clear and understandable term to those associated with Agriculture, the fact is that in many Ohioans' minds, crops means corn and soybeans (and perhaps wheat). While we adhere to a much broader definition of crops, students may not get past the title and therefore not consider what can be an excellent learning experience.

2. Change in the description of the course to more accurately present the broadened emphasis.

3. Addition of Freshman Chemistry to the list of accepted prerequisites. Other accepted prerequisites include Freshman Biology/Plant Biology. We feel a chemistry background is appropriate for some students in the course.

4. Change in the distribution of contact time: from 4 cl, 1 2-hr lab to 5cl.
   We feel the traditional ('experiments') lab format has not contributed as much to the learning in the class as was hoped when it was added in the early 1990's. However, because we feel that hands-on, experiential learning is important, the labs have been replaced with several activities that can usually be completed in a single class session and can be done by all the students in a large (>50) class during regular time. These experiential activities will vary by season and whether or not outdoor activities can take place. When students cannot go outdoors, appropriate indoor activities will be used.

The overall scientific rigor of the class has not changed. It continues to require students to build on knowledge of either biology or chemistry as well as develop an understanding of the role of ecological and environmental principles in the cultivation of plants. We feel it remains an appropriate course for the GEC category of additional natural science.