

**From:** [Neff, Jennifer](#)  
**To:** [Cole, Susan](#)  
**Cc:** [Hamilton, Ian](#); [Vankeerbergen, Bernadette](#); [Steele, Rachel](#); [Hilty, Michael](#)  
**Subject:** Molecular Genetics 1103  
**Date:** Monday, April 15, 2024 9:45:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Good morning,

On Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Natural and Mathematical Sciences Subcommittee of the ASC Curriculum Committee reviewed a new course proposal revision for Molecular Genetics 1103.

The Subcommittee did not vote on the proposal as they would like the following points addressed:

- The Subcommittee would like to express to the department that they believe this is an excellent course as a whole and offer the following feedback in terms of the GEN Foundation requirements.
- The Subcommittee would like to point out the implications of referring to the non-lecture sessions of the course as “recitations”. A recitation has a different academic meaning than a lab, with the former focusing on discussion and understanding of the lecture material and the latter focusing on hands-on, practical applications. If the department is intentionally avoiding referring to these sessions as labs, the Subcommittee requests that they use a different word in the syllabus instead of recitation (e.g., workshop) that does not have an existing meaning for students, faculty, and staff at Ohio State. However, though the department can do this in the syllabus, “lab” will need to be selected in the course components section of the submission form in curriculum.osu.edu. If the department objects to this and intends to use the session as a true recitation by definition, then this causes additional issues regarding the 1-credit hour equivalent of experiential learning required of GEN Foundation: Natural Sciences courses.
- The Subcommittee notes that the explanation of the Foundation ELO 2.3 in the syllabus [p. 4] references discussions, which is not considered experiential learning and does not help to satisfy the 1-credit hour equivalent experiential learning component of the course. The Subcommittee requests a more detailed explanation of the activities that will be conducted in these recitation/lab/workshop sessions and how students will be regularly required to complete hands-on work in some way or another (e.g., lab work, collecting and working with data, using scientific tools to solve practical problems, etc.). Additionally, the Subcommittee notes that the GE rationale form and the in-syllabus explanation for the Foundation ELO 1.3 [p. 3] mention that students will be observing plants in the wild throughout the semester in order to satisfy the experiential learning expectations, but these activities do not seem to be a consistent part of the recitation/lab/workshop sessions. The Subcommittee asks that the department expound on the work that students will be conducting during these observations and that the department integrate this work into the course schedule more often, especially if it is the main activity intended to satisfy the experiential learning component of the course. The Subcommittee stresses the importance of more weeks of recitation/lab/workshop spending time on such work, as teaching the scientific method and initiating discussion do not achieve the same goals as hands-on experiences. Though discussion can certainly remain a part of the course and even a part of the recitations/labs/workshops, the Subcommittee

would like to see the majority of these sessions (more specifically, at least 10 of the 14 weeks) focused on hands-on work such as the plant observation activities or similar.

- Regarding how at least 25% of the course involves experiential learning, the Subcommittee notes that the points assigned to the readings and media of the course do not contribute to this calculation (as they are not considered experiential learning). Given this, the Subcommittee continues to struggle to see how the 25% of experiential learning is accounted for and requests that the department provide additional clarification on the breakdown of this percentage.
- It has come to the attention of the Subcommittee that the Department of Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology offers an existing course with a title and transcript abbreviation (EEOB 4240 – “Focused Study of Ecology and Evolution – Plants and People”) similar to that of this course. The Subcommittee can easily imagine this being confusing to students as they search for courses and recommends that the department consider adjusting the course title and transcript abbreviation to be more distinguishable. The Subcommittee apologizes for not realizing this overlap sooner.
- The Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee recently (03-01-2024) updated the list of required syllabus statements for all syllabi to include a new statement on religious accommodations. The new version of this required statement is a result of a directive by the Executive Vice President and Provost and can be found here on the [ASC Curriculum and Assessment Services website](#). Please note that the link to religious holidays, holy days and observances at the end of the statement is also required to be included in the syllabus. The Subcommittee thanks you for adding this revised statement to your course syllabus. [Syllabus p. 9]

I will return Molecular Genetics 1103 to the department queue via curriculum.osu.edu in order to address the Subcommittee’s requests.

The Subcommittee encourages the department to contact Ian Hamilton (faculty Chair of the NMS Subcommittee; cc’d on this e-mail) for additional advice regarding the above feedback.

Best,  
Jennifer



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Pronouns: she/her/hers