PLBI 530 – Honours Research Project in Plant Biology

PLBI 530 is a required two-term course that students in Biological Sciences must take as part of their requirements to fulfil an Honours degree in Plant Biology.

PLBI 530 will be conducted within the jurisdiction of the Program of Plant Biology and all projects must be done under the supervision or co-supervision of a regular or adjunct member of the Plant Biology Program. BIOL 530 is required of, and open only to, Honours students in Plant Biology.

To be eligible to register in PLBI 530, students must be enrolled in the Honours PLBI program, must have completed 72 units, and have a GPA of 2.75 or higher (over the most recent 30 units).

If the Supervisor is not a member of Biological Sciences, a Co-Supervisor from the Department of Biological Sciences is required. In this case, both will have to approve the webform submission before you can be enrolled into the course.

Both the Supervisor and Co-Supervisor must be kept apprised of the project during the term and must be involved in the evaluation of the project and determination of the final grade.

Projects undertaken outside the Plant Biology program must have a component that aligns with the Plant Biology program.

Getting a Supervisor
It is the responsibility of the student to decide on a general topic of interest for this course and to approach a suitable faculty member regarding supervision. This must be done well in advance of initiating enrolment into the course.

Have a project idea but unsure who to approach as a possible Supervisor?
Students who have a project in mind but are unsure which faculty members would be potential supervisors should view the research themes carried out by faculty members in Biological Sciences (https://science.ucalgary.ca/biological-sciences/research/research-areas).

GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO THE CONDUCT IN PLBI 530

Time commitment
Estimated time commitment is a minimum of 9 hours per week (on the project as a whole, which can include lab work, reading, writing, etc.), plus the time required to meet with the Supervisor(s) periodically to discuss progress.

Evaluation criteria
Evaluation criteria include the preparation of a research proposal, a progress reports, research components, a final report, and an oral presentation that is usually given the last or second-last week of classes. Students must agree with the Supervisor(s) on course content and weighting of components. The final grade will be assigned by the Supervisor(s).

Other specific notes:
1. Within three weeks of enrolling in the course the student must submit to the supervisor(s) a project proposal of no more than 5 pages outlining the objectives of the proposed research and details of how the student intends to achieve those objectives. These projects are expected to have a substantial laboratory or field research component. In the case of a co-supervised project, the Supervisor, the Co-Supervisor and the student will meet to approve the proposed project.
2. At the completion of the project, a final report written in the format of a research journal paper must be submitted to the Supervisor by the last day of classes or other date agreed with supervisor. In the case of co-supervised projects, the report will be assessed by both the Supervisor and the Co-Supervisor and a grade awarded as a result of consultation between these two individuals. The grade will be submitted to the Department of Biological Sciences by the Program faculty member.
3. All PLBI 530 students must present an oral presentation on the research they have carried out during the time registered in the course. The presentation will be normally assigned during the Biological Sciences Undergraduate Research Symposium usually held in early April. Data presented in the seminar and report must be the student’s own data, collected over the period of the course.
GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO REGISTRATION IN PLBI 530

GPA requirement
To be eligible to register in PLBI 530 and, students must have completed 72 units, and have a GPA of 2.75 or higher (over the most recent 30 units).

Meeting with potential Supervisor (and Co-Supervisor if applicable):

1. Provide a current unofficial copy of your transcript.
2. Agreed-upon value and due date for all course components must be determined with your Supervisor(s).
3. Students must be aware that there is an Independent Project Agreement & Checklist form to be completed and signed by the student and Supervisor(s). The last page of the form (Checklist) must be completed and signed by the student and submitted with the final report for the project. The form is available at: https://science.ucalgary.ca/biological-sciences/current-students/undergraduate/procedures-policies-and-forms
4. Be sure to ask about and/or discuss with potential Supervisor(s):
   - Type/topic of research, expectations of the student and the Supervisor(s), time requirements (e.g., minimum of 9 hours per week in total on the independent project), course components that will be required and graded, deadlines for submission of course components

Once the prospective Supervisor has indicated their willingness to supervise you on your project:

Complete the webform (https://science.ucalgary.ca/usc-independent-research-course-application) NO LATER than 10 working days before the add/swap deadline in the term (https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html).

- If approval is denied at this point, you will be notified by e-mail.
- If approval is granted, staff in the USC will enrol you into the course and you will be notified by email.

PLBI 530 – Honours Research Project in Plant Biology will count towards a major in Plant Biology.

The following component values will be discussed and agreed-upon by the student and supervisor(s) during their initial meeting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation criteria/course component</th>
<th>Due date (if applicable)</th>
<th>Suggested value range (%)</th>
<th>Agreed value in % (Total = 100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>Within first 3 weeks</td>
<td>10-25</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Progress Report</td>
<td>Halfway through course</td>
<td>10-20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Research component (in 3 subcomponents, if desired)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>30-55</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
<td>15-45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>Last or second-last week of classes</td>
<td>10-20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Letter Grade Conversion**

A+ ≥ 92, A≥ 85, A- ≥ 80, B+ ≥77, B ≥ 73, B- ≥ 70, C+ ≥ 67, C ≥ 64, C- ≥ 60, D+ ≥ 55, D ≥ 50, F < 50