

Aquatic Microbial Ecology (C002476)

Course size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)

Credits 6.0 Study time 180 h Contact hrs 50.0 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2019-2020

A (semester 1)	English	lecture	30.0 h
		self-reliant study activities	20.0 h

Lecturers in academic year 2019-2020

Vyverman, Wim	WE11	lecturer-in-charge
Lima Mendez, Gipsi	KULEU	co-lecturer
Sabbe, Koen	WE11	co-lecturer
Verleyen, Elie	WE11	co-lecturer
Willems, Anne	WE10	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2019-2020

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Marine and Lacustrine Science and Management	6	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

microbial biodiversity and ecology, viruses, prokaryotes, protozoa, micro-algae, marine and lake ecosystems, metagenomics

Position of the course

The aim of this course unit is to provide general insights in the biodiversity and ecology of micro-organisms in natural aquatic ecosystems. Special attention will be given to the increasing use of molecular tools, including the latest developments in the 'omics' area, to study aquatic microbial diversity and ecology. In addition to lecture sessions, students will have the opportunity to study specific topics in the field of Aquatic Microbiology through one or more literature assignments and practical sessions involving data analysis and interpretation.

Contents

This course unit will cover the microbial biodiversity occurring in natural marine ecosystems with emphasis on eubacteria, archaeobacteria, cyanobacteria, micro-algae and protozoa that play a crucial role in the microbial balance of seas and oceans. Next to general overviews on microbial diversity, natural interactions and importance for ecosystem functioning, a number of lectures will be specifically dedicated to methodological aspects of microbial sampling, isolation, enumeration and identification. The following lectures or lecture series are scheduled in this course unit:

PROKARYOTES

- General introduction to the taxonomic and functional diversity of aquatic prokaryotes
- Sampling, isolation and identification of aquatic prokaryotes
- Molecular diversity and dynamics of bacterial populations in seas and oceans

PROTOZOA AND MICRO-ALGAE

- General overview of the biodiversity of aquatic micro-algae and protozoa
- Sampling, culturing and identification of aquatic micro-algae and protozoa
- Functional diversity of aquatic micro-algae and protozoa
- Biodiversity patterns of aquatic eukaryotic micro-organisms (e.g. seasonality, biogeographical aspects)
- Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

GENERAL

- Microbial interactions in marine ecosystems

In addition to the scheduled lectures, students will receive one or more literature assignments. In this way, students have the opportunity to analyze and summarize the experimental design and major findings of published studies in the field of Marine Microbiology, and to present their own views before fellow students by means of an oral Powerpoint presentation.

Initial competences

Basic knowledge of molecular biology, biochemistry and of the physical and chemical ecology of aquatic ecosystems

Final competences

- 1 Understanding functional microbial diversity in aquatic environments.
- 2 Understanding and explaining microbial interactions in aquatic ecosystems.
- 3 Deciding on methodological aspects for isolation and identification of aquatic micro-organisms.
- 4 Summarizing and discussing published literature data.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Lecture, self-reliant study activities

Extra information on the teaching methods

Oral lectures, group sessions and individual assignments

Learning materials and price

Powerpoint presentations of each oral lecture will be made available in pdf format via Ufora.

References

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive support via Ufora. Personal contact with lecturers is possible after electronic appointment.

Evaluation methods

end-of-term evaluation

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period

Written examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period

Written examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

- Bioinformatics exercises
- Literature assignment
- Written examination with knowledge and interpretive questions

Calculation of the examination mark

- Exercises: 20%
- Literature assignment: 20%
- Written examination: 60%