

## **BIOL 2144: Fundamental Clinical Microbiology Laboratory**

### **General Information:**

**Lab Meeting Times:** TR (1:00 – 2:20 pm or 3:30 – 4:50 pm) Bolin Hall 223  
**Instructor:** **Kaitlin Raber**  
**E-mail:** keraber0127@my.msutexas.edu  
**Office/Tutoring Hours:** Tuesday/Thursday: 11am-1pm

### **Course Description:**

This laboratory section complements the lecture portion of the course as an introduction to medically important bacteria, fungi, helminthes, protozoa, and viruses. Students will learn and apply practical laboratory techniques to the study and identification of microorganisms, particularly bacteria, which affect the health and lives of humans. **NOTE:** Microbiology relies on studying living organisms. As a result, time is required for organisms to grow after inoculation into growth medium. We have made every attempt to restrict student activity to the scheduled periods. However, students may still need to come into the lab outside of the scheduled laboratory period to collect data and interpret results.

### **Required Text:**

**Microbiology Laboratory Theory & Application: Brief Edition** by M J Leboffe & BE Pierce. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Morton Publishing Company, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-61731-477-3

### **Course objectives:**

1. Practice general laboratory safety
2. Practice safe handling of microorganisms, including aseptic technique
3. Recognize various cellular and colony morphologies of microorganisms
4. Correctly use and maintain a compound microscope
5. Use differential and selective growth media to obtain pure cultures
6. Correctly perform and interpret Gram Stains and other staining techniques
7. Correctly interpret results of tests used in the clinical identification of bacteria
8. Use the above techniques to identify unknown isolates of bacteria in a simulated patient specimen

### **General Laboratory Policies:**

1. All general course policies, as provided in the lecture syllabus, hold for the laboratory portion of the course.

2. Laboratory safety rules **must** be followed at all times (see section below). Failure to comply with these regulations will result in dismissal from the lab session and deductions from the laboratory participation grade (see below).
3. Cell phones and pagers are to be turned off before lab begins.
4. Students are expected to read the introductory material prior to each lab session.
5. Cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone suspected of cheating will be subject to the consequences outlined in the University's academic honesty policy.
6. All lab sessions should be attended. We will not offer make-up labs.
7. Punctuality is expected at all times. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will miss the quiz for the day and be counted as absent.
8. Absences may be excused only by prior arrangement with the laboratory or course instructor. Absences will be excused for:
  - a. **Death of an immediate family member.** Immediate family members include: a grandparent, parent, sibling, spouse, in-law, aunt, uncle, or child.
  - b. **Summons to appear in court or jury duty.** A copy of the summons is required.
  - c. **Call to military service.** A copy of your orders to report is required.
  - d. **University sponsored event.** Members of athletic teams, college bowl participants, etc. will be excused with proper notification.
  - e. **Debilitating illness or disability.** Illnesses will be addressed on an individual basis. If a student is affected by an illness that is not debilitating, (i.e. flu, virus infection) which may result in the student missing one or more consecutive class sessions, that student will be marked as **unexcused** for the amount of days missed **unless a doctor's note is provided**.

**ROUTINE APPOINTMENTS, medical or otherwise, AND VACATION TRAVEL ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE Reasons for excused absences**

9. All quizzes, exams, or assignments missed due to unexcused absences will be recorded as zeros.
10. Each group is responsible for proper clean up at the end of the laboratory period. This includes proper cleaning and storage of microscopes, proper disposal of contaminated materials, disinfection of benches and workspaces, etc.
11. If you have a documented disability that will impact your work in this class, please contact the TA or instructor to discuss your needs.
12. The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. Furthermore, guns or other weapons create a coercive environment that is neither safe nor conducive to learning. Therefore, weapons of any kind will not be permitted in my classroom. This includes guns, concealed or otherwise, regardless of licensure. Any student bringing a weapon to class or to lab will be immediately dropped from the course. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.
13. The instructor reserves the right to amend these rules as needed throughout the term.

**Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should so inform students of the specifics in writing at the beginning of the semester in a syllabus or separate attendance policy statement.

An instructor who has an attendance policy must keep records on a daily basis. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. Instructor's records will stand as evidence of absences. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor. Any individual faculty member or college has the authority to establish an attendance policy, providing the policy is in accordance with the General University Policies. [MSU Student Handbook, p. 61]

**If you feel ill** (esp. with signs and symptoms of COVID-19): Stay Home and Isolate yourself. Inform your instructor immediately of your circumstances.

**Three unexcused lab absences will result in failure (receiving 0 points) of the laboratory portion of the course.**

**Grading:**

<b>Quizzes:</b>	100 points
<b>Assignments:</b>	80 points
<b>Forum:</b>	30 points
<b>Unknown report:</b>	40 points
<b>Poster/Patient Case:</b>	80 points
<b>Participation/safety:</b>	70 points
<b>Total:</b>	400 points

Lab constitutes approximately 40% of the BIOL 2144 grade.

**Quizzes** will be given in the first 10 minutes of one laboratory period per week (see General Course Rules). Quizzes will cover the exercises from the previous lab and material from the upcoming exercises (including materials from the online pre-labs). Thus, it is important both to understand your previous results and to have read the exercises for the week so that you are prepared.

There will be **4 assignments** that will evaluate **key laboratory skills**. Each assignment will be worth 20 points. One will focus on use of proper aseptic technique. One will focus on correct use and care of the compound microscope. One will focus on successful completion of a Gram stain. One will focus on the streak plate technique of isolating colonies.

Each semester, the University sponsors the **Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Forum**. In this Forum, students present their research findings or creative works. For this assignment, students will **critically evaluate** three (3) poster presentations or three (3) oral presentations (or combination thereof). This will provide experience in both how to present results and how to critically evaluate data present by others in preparation for the Case Study reports at the end of the semester.

The **patient sample unknown** will be a simulated sample based on an actual case study. Each student will be responsible for identifying one isolate from their group's sample. Identification of the isolates will be conducted using traditional culture and morphological assays, along with biochemical/metabolic tests. The results and conclusions of this analysis will be written up as a brief (1-2 pages) **identification report**. Each isolate will also be identified using the BIOLOG Microbial Identification System. The group will **present their case study during a poster session** in the final week of lab. The poster will not only present the isolate identifications, but also provide background information regarding the case, describe the possible reasons for taking the specimen being studied, and discuss the importance of microorganisms within that body site. A separate project sheet describing expectations in more detail will be handed out around mid-semester.

The **laboratory participation/safety** grade is based on adherence to laboratory safety and attendance policies. Everyone starts the semester with 70 points. During the first week or two of lab, students will be given gentle reminders regarding lab safety and attendance as needed. After that, points will be deducted for each violation. The severity of the deduction is at the discretion of the instructor. The exception to this regards appropriate dress. As stated above, students wearing open-toed shoes or short pants/skirts will not be permitted to enter the laboratory.

**Tentative Schedule of Laboratory Exercises**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Exercise</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1T	Aug 24		<b>No Labs (online lab safety videos)</b>
1R	Aug 26		
2T	Aug 31	1-1	Check-in, Laboratory Safety, Glo-Germ [Assign. 1,2,3,4]
2R	Sept 2	2-1; 3-1	Ubiquity; Microscope Use <b>(A1)</b>
3T	Sept 7	1-4; 3-3	[Read results]; Aseptic Technique <b>(A2)</b> ; Examine Eukaryotes
3R	Sept 9	2-13; 3-3	[Read results]; Antiseptics; Examine Eukaryotes
4T	Sept 14	2-2; 2-3; 2-4; 3-4A	[Read results]; Growth: plates, broths, slants; Making smears
4R	Sept 16	3-4	Simple stain; Colony morphology (fungi)
5T	Sept 21	1-5	Streak plate <b>(A3)</b> ; Case Introduction; Group unknown
5R	Sept 23	(1-5)	[Read results]; Streak plate; Case - Individual
6T	Sept 28	3-6	[Read results]; Gram stain <b>(A4)</b> ; Subculture case isolate
6R	Sept 30	5-21; 4-2; 4-1 4-4; 4-5	Blood Agar; CNA; PEA; MAC; EMB
7T	Oct 5	2-6; 2-7; 2-8	[Read results]; Aerotolerance; Temperature
7R	Oct 7	2-9; 2-10; 3-12	[Read results]; pH; Salt; Bergey's Manual
8T	Oct 12	2-5; (3-7; 3-9)	[Read results]; Evaluation of media; (Acid-fast stain; Endospore stain)
8R	Oct 14	6-5	[Read results]; Differential Counts
9T	Oct 19	5-18; 5-3; 5-7 5-2; 5-8	SIM; MRVP; Citrate; Phenol Red; Decarboxylase; Subculture unknowns
9R	Oct 21	5-4; 5-5; (5-23) 5-6; 4-3; 5-15	[Read results]; Catalase; Oxidase; (Coagulase); Nitrate; MSA; Urease
10T	Oct 26	5-10; (5-20; 5-16; 5-22)	[Read results]; Starch; (Antimicrobial Susceptibility; Bile Esculin; CAMP)
10R	Oct 28	Various	[Read results]; Elective diagnostic tests

11T	Nov 2	7-2	[Read results]; Kirby-Bauer
11R	Nov 4		Plate for BIOLOG; final diagnostic tests
12T	Nov 9		Set up BIOLOG plate
12R	Nov 11		BIOLOG plate – 48 hour read; <b>Unknown Reports Due</b>
13T	Nov 16		BIOLOG plate repeat (if necessary); case susceptibility; work on poster presentation
13R	Nov 18		BIOLOG repeat read (if necessary); work on poster presentation
14T	Nov 23		Lab open; work on poster presentation
14R	Nov 25	<b>Thanksgiving Break – No Labs</b>	
15T	Nov 30		Poster presentations
15R	Dec 2		Poster presentations

**Laboratory Safety:**

As you will see in one of our exercises, microbes are found everywhere within the environment – in the air, on surfaces, on your body. In the Microbiology Laboratory, we deal with microbes at higher concentrations than found in the environment. We will also be dealing with organisms that are potentially pathogenic to humans – thus we treat EVERY organism as if it were pathogenic.

1. No food or drinks are to be taken into or consumed in the laboratory. Further, ANY activity that involves hand-to-face contact (applying cosmetics, handling contact lenses, etc.) should be avoided.
2. Disinfect the work area before starting lab, after completing lab, and after any spills that occur. Do not assume that the lab members before you cleaned up after themselves.
3. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before leaving the laboratory – even if you need to leave only for a short time.
4. Open-toed shoes, sandals or similar footwear are not appropriate and should not be worn in the laboratory. Shorts and short skirts are also inappropriate in terms of laboratory safety. These regulations are for your personal safety. Students wearing inappropriate dress will not be permitted to enter the laboratory.
5. Long hair must be tied back as it is not only a potential source of contamination, but also a fire hazard.
6. Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used in the lab whenever work is being done. For this laboratory, PPE includes a labcoat, safety glasses and laboratory gloves.

7. Be aware of the location of safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, eyewashes, showers, First Aid kits, etc.
8. Follow all waste disposal guidelines. (see below)
9. Refer to the Introduction section of your lab manual for additional discussion of laboratory safety issues.
10. When in doubt, ASK!
11. SDS (Safety Data Sheets) are located in Bolin 223 in the white bookcase

### **Waste Disposal and Cleanup:**

Proper cleanup of the laboratory is essential to reduce contamination and to ensure that subsequent lab sections have a clean and organized work area. The following guidelines must be observed during each lab session. Each student must take an active role in proper cleanup and waste disposal. Do not leave it for someone else.

**Lab benches:** There are squirt bottles of disinfectant (Cidecon) located on the lab benches. You must clean the lab bench before AND after each lab. If you should run out of disinfectant, refill the bottle from the large carboy next to the microscope cabinet. The best technique for disinfection is to stream disinfectant over the surface, then use a paper towel to even the fluid over the surface so that a light film remains. Do not wipe to dryness but allow the disinfectant to air dry. The extended contact of the fluid to the surface increases effectiveness.

**Paper towels** and **soap** are located next to the sink.

**Waste material:** Bacterial cultures must be killed prior to disposal. Each group must dispose of their cultures once they have obtained and recorded their results. Dispose of each type of waste according to the following guidelines.

- **Liquid cultures:** add bleach to the tube. Squirt bottles containing bleach (1:2 dilution of household bleach in water, 2.5% final) are kept next to the sink. Add 1/5 the culture volume (usually about 1 cm) and place the tube into the holding racks next to the sink. The tube cap should go into the appropriately marked basket. **NEVER** pour your cultures down the drain or into the trash.
- **Solid cultures (plates):** All cultures on plastic Petri plates are disposed of in the Contaminated Material Container (CMC), large box with the red plastic bag) next to the sink.
- **Solid cultures (slants):** For cultures on agar slants – remove the cap and place the cap in the appropriate basket. The tube is disposed of in the CMC. DO NOT bleach your slants.
- **Semi-solid cultures:** Some growth media are termed semi-solid because they do not contain enough agar to completely solidify. These media are treated like agar slants.
- **Additional note on CMCs:** Only materials that are visibly contaminated are to be put into CMCs. Paper towels used for washing hands go into the trash, as do transfer pipette wrappers, sterile swab wrappers and the like. If the organisms are dead/killed – as with paper towels used to wipe up Cidecon from the benches – the material still goes into the trash.