



Online Master Gardener Basic Training Course Syllabus – Fall 2009

Course Outline and Syllabus

Course description: In this course, you will learn about the art and the science of caring for plants. Specifically, our focus will be on the prevention and diagnosis of plant problems, as well as a least toxic approach to tolerating and/or managing plant problems in the home horticultural landscape.

We examine plant types (e.g. woody, herbaceous), garden types (e.g. container, vegetable), and elements (pathogens, soils, insects, management decisions) that influence the growth and vigor of plants in the home garden.

This course is designed for anyone who is interested in learning more about the effective and sustainable management of their home horticultural landscape. A basic understanding of plants is helpful, but not required.

On average, students should expect to spend 6 hours per week, viewing narrated lectures and completing readings, assignments and quizzes. Some modules, such as the sustainable landscaping and container gardening modules, are likely to require less time. Individuals without a background in science or horticulture may find that it will take more than 6 hours per week to complete some of the more technical modules, such as basic botany, soils and entomology.

The Master Gardener basic training course is hosted in OSU's Blackboard (Bb) Learning Portal System. To access Blackboard, please go to:

<http://my.oregonstate.edu/>

To login, you should use the username and password, which was provided to you by ECampus upon successful registration for this course.

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Please note: the *best* way to contact your instructor is via the discussion board on the Blackboard course page.

Text: Sustainable Gardening: the Oregon-Washington Master Gardener Handbook. OSU Extension Publication EM 8742.

Electronic versions of the assigned readings from the text will be posted on the Blackboard Course page. A hard copy of the entire Sustainable Gardening text may be purchased for \$30.00 from OSU's Extension Service Publication and Multimedia Catalog:

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/index.php>

Simply use the search function to locate EM 8742.

Objectives: My goals in teaching this course include introducing students to the basic terms, concepts and practices associated with installing and maintaining a home garden in a manner that is both successful and sustainable. Here, a 'successful garden' is defined a garden that meets the needs and expectations of the gardener. Similarly, a 'sustainable garden' is defined as one where the gardener is able to meet these needs and expectations, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (modified from the definition of sustainable development, in: United Nations. 1987. "[Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development.](#)" General Assembly Resolution 42/187, 11 December 1987. Retrieved: 2008-08-30). Ultimately, I hope to equip students with information and ways of thinking that will enable them to make informed decisions about their choice of plant materials and management approach in the garden.

Method of Instruction: Narrated Power Point Lectures, Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, Supporting Web Materials, Internet Threaded Discussions, Online Chats, Final Exam.

Policy on Class Participation: It is up to the student whether s/he chooses to actively participate in class via the completion of readings, assignments, quizzes and discussion. All of these are optional, and students will not be formally graded on their performance of these tasks. However, you are likely to acquire and retain more knowledge, and to enjoy your online learning experience more, if you are

actively engaged in the course. Thus, students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to complete all readings and assignments, to challenge themselves with the quiz, and to post or respond to posts on the discussion board on a weekly basis.

Final Exam: There will be a single, open book and open note final exam for this course. In order to earn your Certificate of Home Horticulture, you must earn a 70% or above on this exam.

The final exam will be available to students, beginning at noon on December 7, 2009. Access to the final exam will end at 11:59 pm, Pacific Standard Time on December 13, 2009. During this time, all course modules will be open and available for student use.

Like the quizzes associated with each module, the final exam format is multiple choice, true/false, matching and short answer. However, where the quizzes are between 10 and 20 questions in length, the final exam is between 80-100 questions in length.

The goal of the final exam is not to test how well you can remember items presented during the course, but to instead test how well you can carefully consider a question and utilize proper resource materials to formulate an answer.

Thus, you are allowed and encouraged to use all course materials, including lectures, readings, previous assignments and previous quizzes to help you complete the final exam. You may also use the PNW Handbooks and other OSU Extension materials to complete the final exam.

- PNW Plant Disease URL: <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/>
- PNW Weeds URL: <http://weeds.ippc.orst.edu/pnw/weeds>
- PNW Insects URL: <http://insects.ippc.orst.edu/pnw/insects>
- OSU Extension Publications: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>

If you earn less than 70% on your first attempt at the Final Exam, you must make an appointment to discuss your results with the instructor. You will then be given one chance to retake the exam. If you score less than 70% on this second attempt, you will not earn your Certificate of Home Horticulture, as you will not have successfully completed the requirements for this course.

Online Social Networking: Students come to the online Master Gardener course from a range of professional backgrounds and with a variety of knowledge that can

enhance the learning experience of their class. Students with questions are thus encouraged to share these questions with the entire class, via the Blackboard Discussion Forum. Likewise, students are encouraged to regularly check the Discussion Forum, and to read and respond to their classmates' postings.

Facebook™ is a social utility that allows users to connect with friends and family across the globe. I regularly use Facebook to keep in touch with my overseas friends, and with my family on the east coast of the United States. Via Facebook, I have also gotten to know several of the students who have taken the Master Gardener Online basic training course.

You may find it enjoyable to get to know your classmates outside of the Blackboard Learning Portal System. A Facebook group has been set up for the Oregon Master Gardener Program:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=42640010760>

You will need a Facebook account to access this group, as well as the other features of Facebook. These features include: photo sharing, video sharing, virtual bookshelf and a variety of games that you can play, online, with friends and family.

You may also choose to become a 'fan' of the OSU Master Gardener Program. Doing so allows you to receive updates from the Program, on your Facebook page. Typically, we send out announcements about Master Gardeners in the news, seminars and garden tours, or other events that may be of interest to Master Gardeners and their friends.

To become a 'fan' of the OSU Master Gardener Program on Facebook, please visit:

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/pages/OSU-Oregon-Master-Gardener-Program/68313153203?ref=ts>

ADA Students: Students who qualify for assistance under the ADA should notify the instructor the first week of class if they require assistance in the course. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of his/her needs.

Module Availability: Course modules will be made available to students by noon of the day on which a specific module begins. Once modules are made available to students, the modules and their associated content will remain open and available for the duration of the course. Thus, the Basic Botany module will be available,

beginning at noon on September 7th and continuing through the close of this course, at 11:59pm Pacific Standard Time (PST) on December 13th. The Plant Pathology module will be available, beginning at noon on October 5th, and continuing through the close of the course at 11:59pm (PST) on December 13th.

Missed Classes: Because course modules will remain open during and after the week for which they are scheduled (through 11:59pm PST on December 13th, 2009) you will be able to make up any coursework that you might have missed. Simply work through the missed module at your own pace. Remember, your completion of quizzes, readings and assignments is optional, but is strongly encouraged, so that you can better learn and integrate the content of this course.

Notice: The contents of this syllabus are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, or if the instructor deems it necessary.

Course Schedule

Week of	Module #	Module Name	To avoid falling behind in the course material, please plan to have optional Quizzes and Assignments completed by:
September 7 – September 13	1	Botany Basics	11:59pm Pacific Standard Time (PST), September 13
September 14 – September 20	2	Soils and Fertilizers	11:59pm PST, September 20
September 21 – September 27	3	Vegetable Gardening	11:59pm PST, September 27
September 28– October 4	4	Introduction to Entomology	11:59pm PST, October 4
October 5 – October 11	5	Plant Pathology	11:59pm PST, October 11
October 12 – October 18	6	Sustainable Landscaping	11:59pm PST, October 18
October 19 – October 25	7	Container Gardening	11:59pm PST, October 25
October 26 – November 1	8	Herbaceous Ornamentals	11:59pm PST, November 1
November 2 – November 8	9	Understanding Pesticides	11:59pm PST, November 8
November 9 – November 15	10	Integrated Pest Management	11:59pm PST, November 15
November 16 – November 22	11	Woody Landscape Plants	11:59pm PST, November 22
November 23 – November 29	THANKSGIVING BREAK. No new modules will become available this week. Please use this time to relax and/or review modules 1-11, in preparation for the final exam		
November 30 – December 6	12	OSU Master Gardener Program	11:59pm PST, December 6
December 7 – December 13	FINAL EXAM	Comprehensive	MUST BE COMPLETED BY 11:59pm PST, April 12