

Course Title: Plagues and People

Course Number/Level: ENTOM2100/BSOC2101

Academic year: 2023-2024

Semester: Fall 2023

Enrollment: 191 students (non-major undergraduate students)

Instructors: Dr. Laura Harrington, Dr. Courtney Murdock, and Dr. Emilie Gray.

Graduate TAs: Anna Shattuck, Augusto Santos Rampasso, and Petra Hafker.

Undergraduate TAs: Dylan Beegal, Jaylyn Senise, Keona Moya, Michael Roudik, Nicole Blattman, and Rahul Verma.

Course description: Dear students, we are excited to teach Plagues and People this semester! Diseases have impacted human lives and society throughout our history. This course focuses on the pathogens and parasites that cause human plagues including flu, typhus, plague, and other viral infections. Special attention will be paid to those plagues that have had the greatest impact on human culture, society, and expression. Lectures will be supplemented with readings, classroom activities, interactive assignments, and videos. In addition to the biology and impacts of these plagues, we will also address the reasons why new pathogens emerge; the social factors that influence how diseases emerge, spread, and cause harm; and the risk of future outbreaks.

Responsibilities: For the course as a whole, my responsibilities were to attend each lecture and weekly teaching meetings, grade and provide feedback on three pre-lecture assignments every week, offer one weekly office hour, proctor exams, contribute to grading of two exams and the final project, write multiple choice questions that could be used for exams for each lecture, respond to students' messages daily, and contribute to classroom management. One of the weekly classes had an active learning format. Students were divided into groups of 5 members, and each instructor is responsible for managing their groups. Throughout the semester, I mentored 4 groups, providing them support in class, as well as grading and providing feedback on their assignments.

Student evaluations – quantitative

Student evaluations – comments sample:

“Augusto was wonderful! I really appreciated that he learned my name and checked in every week and he gave helpful feedback.”

“Augusto was amazing! Very helpful and always checked in with my group and gave great insight on our activities!”

“Augusto was great and very approachable and always willing to help when needed throughout the semester.”