Departmental Policy on Review of Special Topics Course Proposals

• All new Special Topics course proposals are reviewed for approval by the chair; a reasonably well-developed syllabus should be provided for the chair’s consideration before formal approval is granted.

• Special topics courses are taught under the existing course numbers: PBIO 095 “Special Topics,” PBIO 195 “Intermediate Special Topics”, and PBIO 295 “Advanced Special Topics.” If more than one course is taught in the same semester, multiple sections of that course number will be created.

• The Chair will seek the advice of the PBIO Curriculum Committee in the review of Special Topics course proposals from part-time faculty and faculty outside of the department. The PBIO Curriculum Committee will review all Special Topics courses originating outside the Plant Biology Department, both for regular-term courses and for summer offerings, and bring them to the Plant Biology faculty for a vote.

• The PBIO Curriculum Committee will not as a rule review Special Topics courses developed by Plant Biology faculty: the “Special Topics” designation is intentionally flexible, in order to permit the development of new courses. The committee encourages exploratory course offerings by qualified instructors.

• Faculty are welcome, however, to contact the Curriculum Committee, the members of which have years of curriculum experience at multiple levels, for advice or feedback on a proposal under development.

• Plant Biology faculty developing a Special Topics course will present it at a regular department meeting so that everyone knows about it and can recommend it to advisees and other potential students.

Note that a Special Topics course being submitted for approval as a Sustainability (SU) or a Diversity (D1, D2) course must be submitted through CourseLeaf in order that it may be directed to the appropriate General Education curriculum review committee.