

# Prairie Horticulture Certificate

## Student Information Handbook

### Important Olds College Contact Numbers and Addresses

#### Registration Office:

Olds College  
Continuing Education  
4500 – 50 Street  
Olds, AB T4H 1R6  
Phone: (403) 556-4740 or  
Toll Free: 1 (800) 661-6537  
Email: [coned@oldscollege.ca](mailto:coned@oldscollege.ca)

#### PHC Administration Office:

Samantha Comish – PHC Coordinator  
Continuing Education  
4500 – 50 Street  
Olds, AB T4H 1R6  
Phone: (403) 556-8321 or  
Toll Free: 1 (800) 661-6537, ext. 8321  
Email: [scomish@oldscollege.ca](mailto:scomish@oldscollege.ca)

### Welcome to the Prairie Horticulture Certificate Program

This handbook has been designed to provide you with details of how we administer the Prairie Horticulture Certificate (PHC) courses, certificate requirements and about the College which are not included in your course materials package. **Please read this handbook carefully.**

Three western Canadian institutions – Assiniboine Community College (ACC – Brandon, MB), University of Saskatchewan (USask – Saskatoon, SK), and Olds College (OC – Olds, AB) – have joined together to offer the Prairie Horticulture Certificate Program (PHC). This is the first home study horticulture certificate program specialized for the Prairie Provinces. Each school has developed courses for the certificate program in their areas of expertise (referred to as “Delivering Institution”). We are very excited to be able to share the expertise of three western Canadian educational institutions with people interested in horticulture across the country.

At Olds College, the Prairie Horticulture Certificate program is administered by Continuing Education.

## Who to Contact

### Instructors

Academic concerns are the responsibility of the course instructor. They are responsible for the course content, assignments, exams and for all marks.

### PHC Coordinator – Olds College

The overall coordination of administrative matters is the responsibility of the Continuing Education, PHC Coordinator at the College. This office handles:

- All formal requests to withdraw (must be submitted in writing)
- Reviews for Certificate Completion
- And all other details associated with the program

### The Student Services Office

The student services office handles Official Transcripts. Student Services can be reached at [studentservices@oldscollege.ca](mailto:studentservices@oldscollege.ca) or at 403-556-8281.

If you have a documented disability and require Learning Support, please contact Accessibility Services at 403-507-7946 or at [accessibility@oldscollege.ca](mailto:accessibility@oldscollege.ca).

## The Program

You may register into the program through the institution of your choice (the “Home Institution”). You will have five years to complete the program. Upon successful completion of the program, the Prairie Horticulture Certificate of Professional Education will be awarded by the Home Institution, provided that at least 50% of the program content has been taken through participating institutions.

The program consists of sets of courses which focus on specific subject areas. There are four streams of study:

- Fruit and Vegetable Production
- Greenhouse Crop Production
- Landscaping and Arboriculture
- Nursery Crop Production

**To receive your certificate, you must complete all courses specified for your particular stream and maintain an overall average of 60%.** Completion of 9 courses totaling at least 360 credit hours represents the minimum requirement for a certificate. You do not need to take PHC courses in any particular order. You can take as many (or

as few) courses as you like, and you are free to choose courses that interest you from any stream. **If you are interested in pursuing the certificate of Professional Education, we recommend that you start with Applied Botany and/or Soils for Horticulture, then the required courses, and then work your way through the elective courses.**

You can expect to work roughly 12–15 hours per week for a 60 hour course and roughly 6-10 hours per week for a 30 hour course completing course readings and preparing assignments.

PHC courses are offered in a distance education format and exclusively through online delivery that is meant to mimic the structure of in-person instruction. Some courses will require the purchase of textbooks. All coursework, assignments, and exams are completed in online learning environments such as Moodle and Canvas. Access to a personal computer and common computer literacy skills (technological comfort, word processing, email and file sharing/collaboration tools, internet and database navigation, etc.) are necessary for success in the program. Scheduling time for and staying on top of course content and assignment deadlines also requires a level of self-directed commitment from each student. The course information is provided directly to you and you work according to your schedule within the timeframe outlined for the term.

Following are the course requirements in each of the four streams of study:

### **Fruit and Vegetable Production Stream Requirements**

#### ***Required Courses:***

- Applied Botany (60 hrs)
- Soils for Horticulture (60 hrs)
- Postharvest Handling of Food Crops (30 hrs)

#### ***And at least 3 of:***

- Integrated Plant Management (60 hrs)
- Safe Work/Pesticide Application (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Business Management (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Marketing (30 hrs)

#### ***And at least 2 of:***

- Vegetable Production (30 hrs)
- Fruit Production (30 hrs)
- Plant Propagation (60 hrs)

**Plus an Open Elective Course to meet the minimum requirement of 9 courses totaling at least 360 hours.**

## **Greenhouse Crop Production Stream Requirements**

### ***Required Courses:***

- Applied Botany (60 hrs)
- Soils for Horticulture (60 hrs)
- Greenhouse Crop Production (60 hrs)
- Greenhouse Structures and Environments (30 hrs)

### ***And at least 3 of:***

- Integrated Plant Management (60 hrs)
- Safe Work/Pesticide Application (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Business Management (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Marketing (30 hrs)

### ***And at least 1 of:***

- Indoor Landscaping (60 hrs)
- Plant Propagation (60 hrs)

**Plus an Open Elective Course to meet the minimum requirement of 9 courses totaling at least 360 hours.**

## **Landscaping and Arboriculture Stream Requirements**

### ***Required Courses:***

- Applied Botany (60 hrs)
- Soils for Horticulture (60 hrs)
- Woody Landscape Plants (30 hrs)
- Arboriculture (30 hrs)

### ***And at least 3 of:***

- Integrated Plant Management (60 hrs)
- Safe Work/Pesticide Application (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Business Management (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Marketing (30 hrs)

### ***And at least 2 of:***

- Landscape Design (60 hrs)
- Landscape Construction (30 hrs)
- Indoor Landscaping (60 hrs)
- Turfgrass Production and Management (60 hrs)
- Herbaceous Landscape Plants (30 hrs)

**Plus an Open Elective Course (if necessary) to meet the minimum requirement of 9 courses totaling at least 360 hours.**

## Nursery Crop Production Stream Requirements

### *Required Courses:*

- Applied Botany (60 hrs)
- Soils for Horticulture (60 hrs)
- Nursery Crop Production (30 hrs)
- Plant Propagation (60 hrs)

### *And at least 3 of:*

- Integrated Plant Management (60 hrs)
- Safe Work/Pesticide Application (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Business Management (30 hrs)
- Basics of Horticultural Marketing (30 hrs)

### *And at least 1 of:*

- Woody Landscape Plants (30 hrs)
- Landscape Design (60 hrs)
- Landscape Construction (30 hrs)

**Plus an Open Elective Course to meet the minimum requirement of 9 courses totaling at least 360 hours.**

### **Open Electives**

- Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (30 hrs)
- Floral Design (30 hrs)
- Cannabis Crop Production (60 hrs)
- Human Resource Management (60 hrs)
- Any course from another elective stream

YOU'VE REGISTERED FOR YOUR COURSE, NOW THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

Read this handbook thoroughly to understand how Olds College administers our PHC courses. If you are a returning PHC student, it is still important to read this through as this handbook may be updated annually.

Do you have the textbook that your course may require? Refer to our website to see if your course has a required textbook.

Read your course welcome, introduction, or schedule thoroughly as it notes all of the assignment deadline dates. **It is important that you follow and meet those deadline dates in order to be successful and stay on track in your course.**

## Schedule of Fees

Tuition fees vary from course to course. The course fee is payable in full at the time of registration to your Home Institution. *Please be advised that fees are subject to change without prior notice.*

## Late Registration Fees

Registration deadlines are listed on our Olds College website. Late registrations may or may not be accepted and are subject to a \$75 fee. Students will not be accepted after a course has started. Late registration fees are non-refundable.

## Course Materials and Resources

If you have registered in a course that is delivered by one of the other consortium partners (USask or ACC), your name, date of birth, address and phone number will be forwarded to that institution by Olds College.

Expect to receive an email from the delivering institution indicating the steps you are required to take in order to log into the class. Expect to receive the email in the week or two before the term start date.

## Cancellations

**Students have two weeks (14 days) after the start of the term to withdraw from any course. An administration fee of \$50 per course will be charged.** You must send an email to the PHC Coordinator indicating that you are cancelling (in the first 2 weeks of the course). **Refunds are NOT issued after the second week of the term.** Non-payment of fees, or failure to submit assignments does not constitute cancellation of registration. The effective date of cancellation is the date on which the email is received. If you have registered for a course and do not officially cancel, you will be liable for all fees incurred.

Withdrawals without a refund can be made within the first five weeks of class resulting in a “W” grade. Courses dropped after the first five weeks will result in an “F” grade.

## **Improving Your Study Skills**

As a student, you will require a great deal of persistence and self-discipline. By keeping on top of your course work, you will save yourself from much of the stress associated with exams, assignments and course deadlines. Each term is only ten weeks long, and you cannot allow yourself to fall behind because you will have very little time to catch up again. Attempt to solve course content problems by seeking help from the instructor. If you are unable to reach the instructor, contact the PHC Coordinator. Due to the distances involved in the PHC courses, it is impossible to monitor students individually so if you are having problems, please contact us.

## **Extensions and Term Transfers – \*\*STRONGLY ENFORED\*\***

It is imperative that you meet the assignment deadlines as it will prove to be too difficult to catch up later on in the term. Falling behind for a variety of reasons is easily done, but we do not allow extensions and transfers without just cause. Extensions and Term Transfers will ONLY be granted for compassionate reasons. Supporting documents may be requested. Please call your PHC Coordinator to discuss your situation immediately so some suitable arrangement can be worked out with your instructor.

## **Deferred Examinations**

Olds College students will have the opportunity to write a final examination on a date other than the preset exam date, under specific guidelines established below.

Deferred final examinations may be granted to students who are unable to write final examinations because of personal or family illness, bereavement, severe family difficulties, religious observance or circumstances beyond their control. Deferred final examinations may differ from the original examination and may not necessarily follow the same format.

Students who miss a scheduled deferred final examination(s) are denied further consideration and assigned a grade of 0 (zero) for the final examination(s).

## **Your Final Mark(s)**

You can access your grades online at the Olds College Continuing Education Registration Site. Please login at <https://oldscollegece.augusoft.net/> Once logged in, choose Menu, then “my transcript”.

## **Team Work**

If you have a question or complaint about a mark on an assignment/lab, the first step is to contact the person who marked it. The quickest and easiest way to clear these matters up is to find out why you received the mark you did. Instructors are not infallible and there may be a very simple solution to your problem.

## **Final Examination**

For final examinations, you are encouraged and strongly advised to communicate informally with your instructor before seeking a review under more formal procedures. Again, this will usually clear up any questions you may have about your final examination and your final mark.

If you are dissatisfied after the above process, or are unable to communicate informally, you should apply in writing to the Coordinator in Continuing Education indicating the nature of your complaint and requesting a review. This should be used as a last resort, once all other channels have been tried. You will have 30 days from the release of your final mark in which to initiate the first formal step.

## **Plagiarism**

The College maintains high academic standards and is strict when it comes to plagiarism, an offence that may lead to serious academic penalties being imposed upon a student. You are not permitted to submit any portion of another person's work for credit. You may hold discussions prior to writing an assignment, but you should not collaborate with another student in the actual writing of assignments.

## **Certification Requirements**

You will be eligible for a Prairie Horticulture Certificate of Professional Education when you have met the following requirements:

Students must complete a minimum of 9 courses totaling at least 360 credit hours including the required courses in a particular stream.

1. Overall average grade required for graduation is 60%.
2. Students will be permitted to take classes over to improve their grades.
3. The passing grade for individual courses is 50%.
4. At least 50% of the courses taken to meet the requirement for the certificate must be taken through the PHC Program.



**Income Tax Deduction Information (Available at the end of February for classes taken in the previous year)**

You can access your Tax Receipt online at the Olds College Continuing Education Registration Site. Please login at <https://oldscollegece.augusoft.net/> Once logged in, choose Menu, then choose My Transactions, then choose T2202 Form Year, select year from drop down menu, click green action button, choose Print T2202.

**Graduation**

When you have completed your program requirements, please alert the program coordinator. The PHC office will then review and confirm your eligibility for Certificate Completion.