

**Survey Conducted by**  
**the Soil Education Committee of the Canadian Society of Soil Science**

**BACKGROUND AND CONSENT**

Welcome! This survey is designed to collect information about the current state of Introductory Soil Science (or equivalent) courses in Canada from the principal instructors of such courses. Data collected from this survey includes information on course content, pedagogy, and student audience. This is an initiative of the Soil Education Committee of the Canadian Society of Soil Science, and once compiled it will be shared broadly as a resource for soils educators in Canada and beyond.

Approximate time to complete: 20 minutes

For the purposes of this survey, your "Introduction to Soil Science" course is the course at your institution, which serves as: (1) the entry course for upper-level soil science courses or (2) if there are no upper-level soil science courses offered, the course that contains the greatest focus on basic principles of soil science of any course at your institution.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

This survey is being led by Dr. Maja Krzic ([maja.krzic@ubc.ca](mailto:maja.krzic@ubc.ca), 604-822-0252). If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, please contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the University of British Columbia Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 (or call toll free 1-877-822-8598) or e-mail [RSIL@ors.ubc.ca](mailto:RSIL@ors.ubc.ca).

•Are you currently listed as the instructor (or co-instructor) for the undergraduate-level Introductory Soil Science or similar course at your institution? Yes/no

- If you currently do not teach the Introductory Soil Science course, have you taught it during past 10 years? Yes/no. If no, how long ago have you taught this course

**Part 1: Information about your institution**

- Is your institution postsecondary university, college, or institute?
- What is the type of undergraduate program that your Introductory Soil Science course contributes to?

Bachelors  
Associates  
Certificate  
Diploma  
Other

- What is the expected time to completion for this program?

2 years  
3 years  
4 years  
other

- What is the official name of the department or unit that offers the Introductory Soil Science or equivalent course at your institution?

- How many faculty members (not including staff) are in the department or unit you mentioned above?

<5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, or >20

- How many undergraduate students are enrolled your department or unit?

<20, 21-50, 51-80, >81

- Is there a soil science (or closely related) major, minor, certificate or option available to undergraduates at your institution?

-Major, minor, certificate or option

-What is the official title of the major, minor, certificate or option?

## **Part 2: Information about your Introductory Soil Science course**

•What is the official title of the Introductory Soil Science course in your department or unit?

•Does your department or unit have more than one course that could be classified as Introductory Soil Science course?

Yes/no

If yes, what are the titles of those courses

If yes, please provide information only for the course that you teach

•Is the Introductory Soil Science course cross-listed by an/other departments or academic programs outside of your department?

Yes/no

If yes, provide the name of that other department or unit

•How often is the course taught?

Two times per academic year

Once per academic year

Every second academic year

Other

•Is this course offered as a campus-based only, online only, or hybrid of campus-based and online?

•Is the Introductory Soil Science a required course for any major or minor program at your institution? Yes/no. If yes, by what programs

•Is the Introductory Soil Science course a pre-requisite for (an)other course(s)? If yes, specify the course(s).

•What, if any, are the pre-requisite requirements for the Introductory Soil Science course at your institution? Chemistry, math, physics, other

•What is the typical enrolment in your Introductory Soil Science course each time it is taught?

•Please estimate the percentage of students in your Introductory Soil Science course who are:

1<sup>st</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 3<sup>rd</sup> year, 4<sup>th</sup> year, grad students, other

•Do you see a need to increase enrollment numbers? *Are there programs that could include this course?*

•Did you develop the course yourself or adapt an existing version of the course?

• Is this a course you would choose to teach? Yes/no

•How many primary instructors are involved in the teaching of your Introductory Soil Science course every year?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or >5

•What is the highest level of education of the primary instructor (or instructors)?

PhD, MSc, other

•What is/are the official position title/s of the instructor/s of your Introductory Soil Science course?

Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Lecturer, Sessional, Adjunct Professor, other

•What is the disciplinary background of the instructor (or instructors) of your Introductory Soil Science course?

•Are there teaching assistants or technicians that support your course? Yes/no

•Is there a *required* textbook for your Introductory Soil Science course?

Yes/no

If yes, what is the title and author(s) of the required textbook?

•Is there a *recommended* textbook for your Introductory Soil Science course?

Yes/no

If yes, what is the title and author(s) of the recommended textbook?

•Do you use any online educational resources in your course? Yes/no. If yes, specify them

•Please estimate the percentage of total course hours per week, in which each of the following teaching/learning activities are utilized in the current offering of your Introductory Soil Science course:

traditional lecture

flipped classroom

laboratory

field trips

discussion sessions

self-guided field trips via mobile devices

online learning (e.g., self-guided quizzes, video clips, tutorials)

other

•If there is the lab component, who is teaching it?

Course instructor, graduate TA, undergraduate TA, other

•How many lab sections are typically run during each course offering?

N/A, 1-2, 3-5, 6-10, >11

•What is the average size of each lab section?

N/A, <10 students, 11-20 students, 21-30 students, >30 students

•Is there a lab manual (or set of reference resources) for your Introductory Soil Science course?

Yes/no

If yes, is it published or that you created?

•Are there aspects of the lab component that could be improved?

Yes/no

If yes, what would they be and what are the barriers to future improvements?

•What assessment methods are used in your Introductory Soil Science course, please choose all that apply:

Traditional (in-class), closed-book exam

Traditional (in-class), open-book exam

Take-home exam

Quizzes

Lab assignments or reports

Term papers

Self-guided field tours

Mobile device aided games

Role-playing

Interpretive dance

Other

- Have you identified aspects of the structure or administration of your course that could be improved?

Yes/no

If yes, how could the course structure be improved (e.g., addition of discussion component, expanded to two semesters, etc.)?

### **Part 3: Reflective questions**

- What are your goals (as an instructor) in teaching the Introductory Soil Science course?
- What are the most exciting aspects for you in teaching the Introductory Soil Science course?
- What are your main challenges in teaching the Introductory Soil Science course?
- Aside from being a required course in some programs, what do you think motivates students to take your course?
- If you have taught your Introductory Soil Science course for longer than 15 years, could you comment on some key aspects of the course (and/or student) evolution?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share about your experience in teaching the Introductory Soil Science course?

***We thank you for your time spent taking this survey!***