

Biological Sciences

Master of Science in Biology

The graduate degree offered in the Department of Biological Sciences is intended to enrich and enhance education in biological sciences in order to prepare students for leadership roles in industrial, educational and research-oriented careers. The Department of Biological Sciences offers the Master of Science degree with thesis and non-thesis options, as well as a non-thesis Life Science Education option.

Students should have an undergraduate major in biology in order to gain full admission to the program. Those lacking the desired background will be required to complete appropriate leveling work. The departmental graduate advisor will review the student's transcript and determine the nature and amount of leveling work, and will assist the student in establishing his or her advisory committee. The committee chair, who will assume duties for the student through the remainder of their graduate program, should be chosen by the end of the first semester of graduate work. The advisory committee should consist of a minimum of three members. At least two members will be selected from Biological Sciences graduate faculty. Remaining members may be selected from the Biological Sciences graduate faculty or from graduate faculty outside the Biological Sciences that have expertise relevant to the student's area of interest.

The thesis, consisting of the written report of the research, must be the student's original work and must reflect his or her ability to express thoughts accurately and clearly. Both the thesis proposal and thesis must be written according to guidelines and deadlines established by the College of Graduate Studies and the Department of Biological Sciences. Students should refer to the Graduate Handbook, Thesis Manual, and the Biological Sciences Graduate Students Handbook for more detailed information.

Thesis students are encouraged to quickly establish and begin working with their advisory committee on a research proposal. To continue matriculation in the thesis option, students are required to gain approval of their research proposal from their advisory committee and submit the proposal to the College of Graduate Studies by the end of their first year in the program. Students failing to meet this deadline will be required to meet with their advisory committee to discuss a possible extension of the proposal deadline or switching to the non-thesis option. Thesis hours (BIOL 5088 Thesis) cannot be taken until the thesis proposal has been approved by the advisory committee and submitted to the College of Graduate Studies.

Upon completion of the thesis and approval by the advisory committee and College of Graduate Studies, the student is required to schedule a public, oral presentation of his or her research followed by a comprehensive oral examination administered by the advisory committee. The oral examination will emphasize topics related to the thesis and course work. Successful completion of the comprehensive oral examination completes the program. If the attempt at the comprehensive oral examination is unsuccessful, it is at the discretion of the advisory committee to dismiss the student from the program or recommend to the student a plan of action to repeat the comprehensive oral examination. If a plan to repeat the examination is recommended, the plan may include recommendations to repeat courses in the weak areas, take additional course work, or spend more time in individual preparation prior to rescheduling a second attempt at the exam.

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Required Courses

BIOL 5185	Seminar ¹	1
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BIOL 5398	Research Design and Analysis	3
Additional BIOL Coursework*		13
*Select no more than 12 hours from the following: BIOL 5086, BIOL 5310, BIOL 5315, BIOL 5340, BIOL 5345, BIOL 5374, BIOL 5375, BIOL 5378, BIOL 5401, BIOL 5402, BIOL 5406, BIOL 5410, BIOL 5413, BIOL 5415, BIOL 5420, BIOL 5430, BIOL 5436, BIOL 5440, BIOL 5441, BIOL 5445, BIOL 5449, BIOL 5451, BIOL 5460, BIOL 5462, BIOL 5470, BIOL 5475		
Total Hours		18

Additional Required Courses for Concentrations

Thesis

BIOL 5088	Thesis	6
BIOL 5380	Biological Scientific Writing	3
Additional BIOL Coursework*		2
Additional BIOL or Supporting Area*		3
*Select no more than 12 hours from the following: BIOL 5086, BIOL 5310, BIOL 5315, BIOL 5340, BIOL 5345, BIOL 5374, BIOL 5375, BIOL 5378, BIOL 5401, BIOL 5402, BIOL 5406, BIOL 5410, BIOL 5413, BIOL 5415, BIOL 5420, BIOL 5430, BIOL 5436, BIOL 5440, BIOL 5441, BIOL 5445, BIOL 5449, BIOL 5451, BIOL 5460, BIOL 5462, BIOL 5470, BIOL 5475		
Total Hours		14

Non-Thesis

Additional BIOL Coursework*		8
Additional BIOL or Supporting Area*		10
*Select no more than 12 hours from the following: BIOL 5086, BIOL 5310, BIOL 5315, BIOL 5340, BIOL 5345, BIOL 5374, BIOL 5375, BIOL 5378, BIOL 5401, BIOL 5402, BIOL 5406, BIOL 5410, BIOL 5413, BIOL 5415, BIOL 5420, BIOL 5430, BIOL 5436, BIOL 5440, BIOL 5441, BIOL 5445, BIOL 5449, BIOL 5451, BIOL 5460, BIOL 5462, BIOL 5470, BIOL 5475		
Total Hours		18

Life Science Education (Non-Thesis) TMATE

EDUC 5311	Methods of Effective Teaching	3
EDUC 5314	Creating and Managing the Learning Environment	3
EDUC 5390	Selected Topics in Education	3
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READ 5370	Literacy Development	3
EDUC 5315	Content Methodology	3
Total Hours		18

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Requires two semesters.

The non-thesis Master's candidate, during the final semester of course work, is required to successfully complete a comprehensive written and oral examination. For the written exam, instructors of degree plan courses are invited to submit questions over course material as the basis of the written exam. After successful completion of the written exam, students are required to schedule an oral examination with their advisory committee. Successful completion of the written and oral examination completes the program. If an attempt at the written or oral exam proves unsuccessful, it is at the discretion of the advisory committee to dismiss the student from the program or recommend a plan of action to the student to repeat the written or oral comprehensive examination. If a plan to repeat the examination is recommended, the plan may include recommendations to repeat courses in weak areas, take additional course work, or spend more time in individual preparation prior to rescheduling a second attempt at the exam.

Courses

BIOL 5086. Biological Problems. 1-6 Credit Hours (Lecture: 0 Hours, Lab: 1-6 Hours).

Independent research under the supervision of an instructor. A formal report will be submitted to the instructor. A student may not count more than 6 hours of biological problems toward a degree. Lab fee \$10.

BIOL 5088. Thesis. 1-6 Credit Hours (Lecture: 1-6 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Scheduled when the student is ready to begin the thesis. No credit until thesis is completed. Prerequisite: BIOL 5398 and consent of major professor.

BIOL 5185. Seminar. 1 Credit Hour (Lecture: 1 Hour, Lab: 0 Hours).

A graduate seminar course providing the opportunity for students to lead discussions on a current topic in Biology. Topics vary according to interests of faculty and/or students. May be repeated for credit as topics vary. Prerequisite: 12 hours of biology.

BIOL 5302. Ecological Plant Physiology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

The interrelations of plants and their environments with emphasis on those which are subject to manipulation. Critical processes such as dormancy, photosynthesis, nutrition, reproduction, and water relations and their interactions in survival and biomass production. Prerequisite: BIOL 3426 or approval by the department head.

BIOL 5309. Cellular Biology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

A study of cellular morphology and function at the ultrastructural and molecular level. Prerequisites: Organic chemistry and 18 hours of BIOL or approval by the department head.

BIOL 5310. Developmental Biology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Introduction to basic principles of developmental biology. The course will include sections on classical embryology, the molecular basis of development, and evolution of development. In addition, students will read/discuss relevant articles from the primary literature. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5310 and BIOL 4340. Prerequisite: A course in genetics.

BIOL 5315. Vaccines. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This course will cover the basic principles in the study of vaccines by providing a foundation to the understanding of the immune response to vaccinations, development of vaccinations, and the significance of individual human and animal vaccines. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5315 and BIOL 4350. Prerequisite: A course in microbiology.

BIOL 5320. Environmental and Restoration Biology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Study of human interactions with plants and animals within ecosystems with an emphasis on conservation and restoration ecology. Outdoor laboratories and restoration of plant communities are required.

BIOL 5321. The Aquatic Environment. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

A study of the basic principles involved in the ecology of the aquatic community including biotic and abiotic relationships. Emphasis placed on the sources of water contamination to include the effects of the contamination upon the changes in water chemistry and their possible biological implication. Prerequisite: 18 hours of BIOL and 2 semesters of CHEM or approval by the department head.

BIOL 5330. Development of Modern Biological Concepts. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

A study of the development of biological concepts and their impact upon science and society. Biographical as well as contemporary readings will be involved. Prerequisite: Graduate classification or approval by the department head.

BIOL 5331. Conservation Biology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Principles of conservation biology and the major issues that define the discipline. Study of value, threats to, and conservation of biodiversity. Conservation issues at the population and species levels, policy, and practical applications of the science will be included. Prerequisites: Genetics and Ecology, or approval of department head.

BIOL 5340. Pathogenic Microbiology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

A study of the disease-producing capacities of various microorganisms with emphasis on the diagnostic procedure of isolation and identification. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5340 and BIOL 3395. Prerequisite: A course in microbiology Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5345. Behavioral Ecology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

The aim of this course is to understand variation in behavior among species and among individuals within a species. The course will focus on how behavior affects an animal's ability to survive and reproduce. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5345 and BIOL 4320.

BIOL 5350. Environmental Microbiology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This online course will examine the microbial populations in various environments and assess how they interact to impact these environments. Prerequisite: enrolled in graduate school.

BIOL 5360. Bacterial Genetics. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

A graduate course in genetics using bacteria as a model organism. Prerequisite: Enrolled in graduate school. Undergraduate level cell biology or genetics.

BIOL 5361. Evolutionary Biology. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Examination of evolutionary patterns, mechanisms and processes at the organismal, chromosomal and molecular levels; modes of adaptation and the behavior of genes in populations. Prerequisite: Genetics.

BIOL 5374. Biochemistry. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

An introduction to the basic principles of biological chemistry and to fundamental processes of plants, animals and microorganisms. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5347 and BIOL 4374. Prerequisite: Organic Chemistry with "C" or better.

BIOL 5375. Biochemistry II. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

A detailed survey of intermediary metabolism. The metabolism of carbohydrates, lipids, proteins and nucleic acids, and the regulation of metabolism are emphasized. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5375 and BIOL 4375. Prerequisites: Courses in Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry.

BIOL 5378. Biochemistry Lab. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 1 Hour, Lab: 5 Hours).

Principles and applications of basic methodology for the isolation, purification, characterization, and quantitative determination of biologically important compounds. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5310 and BIOL 4378. Prerequisites: Courses in Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5380. Biological Scientific Writing. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

This course covers the basic principles of scientific writing with an emphasis on writing for the biological sciences. A specific focus of the course will be on the design, planning and writing of a research proposal in terms of problem selection, objectives, methodology, and formatting. Students will learn the types of literature and complete a literature search and review. Students will present their research proposal in an oral presentation.

BIOL 5390. Special Topics. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Selected topics in an identified area of biology, biochemistry or biotechnology. May be repeated for credit as topics vary. Prerequisites: 12 hours of biology and 8 hours of chemistry or approval of department head.

BIOL 5398. Research Design and Analysis. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Statistical principles and techniques applicable to the procurement, analysis, and evaluation of quantitative data. Prerequisite: MATH 1314 or approval by the department head.

BIOL 5399. Practicum, Field Problem, or Internship. 3 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 0 Hours).

Supervised practice in specialized laboratory or professional settings. Prerequisites: 12 hours of biology and 8 hours chemistry or approval of department head.

BIOL 5401. Ecology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

The scientific study of the biotic and abiotic interactions that determine the distribution and abundance of organisms. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5401 and BIOL 4401. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5402. Histology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

Introduction to cellular ultrastructure. Study of vertebrate tissues and their arrangement in various organs. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5402 and BIOL 3402. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5406. Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 4 Hours).

The morphology, physiology, and phylogeny of the organ systems of vertebrates. Laboratory study of representative vertebrates. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5406 and BIOL 3406. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5410. Terrestrial Field Ecology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

A study of the structure and functioning of terrestrial communities with an emphasis on plants. Laboratories will be conducted over three weekends. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5410 and BIOL 4420. Prerequisite: A course in plant taxonomy or department head approval Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5413. Molecular Biology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 4 Hours).

Fundamentals of gene expression, gene regulation, DNA metabolism and nucleic acid structure, recombinant DNA techniques and protein structure. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5413 and BIOL 3413. Prerequisites: Course in genetics and organic chemistry Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5415. Plant Taxonomy. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

Principles of plant taxonomy. Field and laboratory studies of common Texas wild flowers and trees with emphasis on identification, collection, and preparation of herbarium specimens. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5415 and BIOL 3415. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5420. Plant Pathology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

Study of the various types of plant diseases and specific examples of each type. Emphasis upon identification, host-parasite interactions, pathogen dissemination, and control methods. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5420 and BIOL 3420. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5430. Ornithology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

A study of the basic biology of birds, including origins, systematics, ecology, biogeography, physiology, anatomy, and reproductive biology. Laboratory emphasizes identification of regional avifauna and includes multiple field trips. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5430 and BIOL 4430. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5436. Plant Physiology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

A study of physiology of green plants with emphasis on nitrogen metabolism, respiration, mineral nutrition, photosynthesis, and growth. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5436 and BIOL 3436. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5440. Herpetology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

A survey of the biology of amphibians and reptiles, with emphasis on phylogenetics, ecology, physiology, morphology, zoogeography, conservation, and taxonomy. Laboratory and field work will provide students with practical experience in collecting, identifying, and preparing specimens of regional species, as well as observing populations in natural settings. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5440 and BIOL 4440. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5441. Freshwater Biology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

The study of aquatic communities and the biogeochemical factors affecting the productivity of ponds, reservoirs, and streams (Limnology). Labs focus on field collections and student-driven experimental research. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5441 and BIOL 4441. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5445. Parasitology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

This course will cover parasite diversity (focusing on parasitic organisms of medical and veterinary importance) and parasite biology including aspects of morphology, identification, pathology, treatment, and ecology of the parasite-host relationship. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5445 and BIOL 4445. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5449. Animal Diversity. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

The study of the morphology, taxonomy, biology, and phylogeny of the invertebrate animals. In lecture, students concentrate on basic concepts of structures, function and evolutionary development of major invertebrate groups. In lab, students are exposed to a large collection of invertebrates, learning about systematics, ecology, structure and phylogenetic relationships. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5449 and BIOL 3449. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5451. Mammalogy. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

A study of the evolution, anatomy, behavior, ecology, systematics, and basic biology of mammals. Laboratory work includes identification of regional mammals as well as techniques for the collection and preparation of mammalian specimens. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5451 and BIOL 4451. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5460. Animal Physiology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

An advanced course in the fundamentals of vertebrate physiology emphasizing physiologic mechanisms from a basic molecular/cellular level up to the level of organ systems, which include the nervous, endocrine, muscular, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive and urinary systems. The basic physiologic mechanisms are presented in the context of human physiology, however, how selected animals are adapted to particular environments is addressed. Laboratory exercises involve the use of electronic instrumentation to measure physiologic responses non-invasively in human volunteers or in surgically prepared animals. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5460 and BIOL 4460. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5462. Ichthyology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

A study of the anatomy, behavior, ecology, evolution, taxonomy, and zoogeography of fishes. Field and laboratory work provide students with practical experience in collecting, identifying, and studying fishes. Emphasis will be placed on local fauna. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5462 and BIOL 4462. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5470. Phycology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

Hands-on training in the taxonomy, ecology, and ecophysiology of algae. Discussion of current uses of algae for water quality, biofuel, food production, forensic science, and nanotechnology. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5470 and BIOL 3430. Lab fee: \$2.

BIOL 5475. Immunology. 4 Credit Hours (Lecture: 3 Hours, Lab: 3 Hours).

Emphasis on the basic concepts of humoral and cell-mediated immunity. Laboratory: current techniques in experimental immunology and serology. Students cannot receive credit for both BIOL 5475 and BIOL 3485. Lab fee: \$2.