Master of Science in the Biological Sciences

Master of Science students are required to complete a minimum of 30 credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree. The course requirement provides students with basic understanding and skills in the Biological Sciences, while allowing individuals to tailor the specific coursework to meet their needs. Courses are selected in consultation with the student’s advisor and must satisfy the following requirements:

1. 6 credit hours of Thesis Research (BIOS 7000).
2. 6 credit hours of 6000-level coursework.²,³
3. 4 credit hours of Graduate Seminar (BIOS 6091).⁴
4. The remaining 14 credit hours must be 5000 or 6000-level.²
5. A minimum of 12 of the 24 non-thesis credit hours must be in the Department of Biological Sciences.

¹ Students generally enroll in BIOS 7000 every regular semester in residence, but only 6 credit hours may count toward the 30 credit hour degree requirement.
² A maximum of 3 credit hours of BIOS 6090 may count toward the degree.
³ May not include BIOS 6091.
⁴ Students are expected to enroll in BIOS 6091 every regular semester in residence.

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in all required coursework. Any course in which a student earns a C will be reviewed by the graduate committee to determine whether it will count toward the degree requirements. In no case, will more than 6 credit hours of C be applied to the degree requirements.

Up to 10 hours of graduate-level credit taken previous to admission into the M.S. program may be applied towards the 30 hours required for the M.S. degree, subject to approval by the student’s advisory committee, the graduate coordinator, and the Graduate School.

Advisory Committee: Each M.S. student has an advisory committee that directs the course work and research. In the first semester in the M.S. program, the student selects a faculty member from the Department of Biological Sciences to serve as chair of the advisory committee. By the end of the second semester, the advisory committee is expanded to a minimum of three members. Members of the advisory committee must be members the graduate faculty and at least half must be from the Department of Biological Sciences.

Students will submit Annual Reports documenting progress in the program, which will be evaluated by the graduate committee. A Candidate Plan of Study that includes coursework completed, in progress, and remaining, must be approved by the graduate coordinator and submitted to the graduate school no later than the semester prior to the completion of the degree.

Thesis: The Master of Science degree requires a thesis embodying original research in a specialized area. The thesis must be presented in a seminar open to the public, defended in an oral final examination, and approved by the student’s advisory committee. After the defense, the thesis is revised according to committee recommendations and approved by the College of Sciences and the Graduate School.

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