

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO GRADUATE STUDY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Persons wishing to work toward a graduate degree (Master of Science [M.S.] with thesis or non-thesis or Doctor of Philosophy [Ph.D.] in Biology must apply for admission to the Graduate School and the Department of Biology of the University of Memphis. It is essential that applicants for any of the degree options listed below apply to both the Graduate School *and* the Department of Biology. Acceptance by the Graduate School does not necessarily indicate acceptance by the Department. The application procedure for the Graduate School can be found at: (<http://academics.memphis.edu/gradschool/>).

All applicants must submit the following directly to the Department of Biology:

- (1) A written letter from a prospective advisor within the Department of Biology that states that he/she will accept the applicant and how the student will be funded while in the program. This is a critical first step; no applicant will be accepted to the Department without an advisor. Faculty research interests are listed on the Departmental website, and you are encouraged to interact directly with those faculty who have research interests matching yours.
- (2) Copies of all college transcripts (these can be unofficial copies). Note that International students whose transcripts are not in the standard US format (i. e., A, B, C, D, & F on a four-point scale in which an A = 4 pts.), must have transcripts evaluated before submitting to the Dept. of Biology. World Educational Services (<http://www.wes.org>) provides this service for a fee.
- (3) Copies of Graduate Records Examination scores (GRE - only the General test is required; these can be unofficial copies)
- (4) Two letters of recommendation from professors or others that can speak of the applicant's academic abilities and potential.
- (5) A statement of interests and goals by the applicant that includes which degree they wish to pursue (MS, MS-non-thesis, or PhD) and in which term they wish to enroll.
- (6) **International Students** for which English is not their native language must submit proof that they have taken both the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL: acceptable minimums are 550 for paper-based and 210 for computer-based exams). If an international students desire a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (i. e., wish to be supported by the department) they must submit results from a test that certifies they are competent in spoken English. This can be satisfied by the Test of Spoken English (a score of 50 is the minimum accepted) or the spoken English component of the TOELF iBT (a score of 26 or above is required). All exams are available from the Educational Testing Service at <http://www.ets.org>.

A personal visit to the department is strongly encouraged; however, it is not required before admission. **Applications will not be considered by the Department of Biology until a complete file containing the above materials has been compiled.**

The Biology Department prefers that students begin in the fall, though in some cases a student may be accepted for the spring term. Students wishing to be considered for a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) for support must apply by 1 February; however, because some important funding sources have a February deadline, we recommend that students apply as early as possible. Applicants who will not be supported through a departmental GTA must apply no later than 15 June for consideration for fall admission. Applicants for spring semester admission must apply by 15 October. Generally, spring GTAs will not be available to students applying for spring admission, although they may apply for a GTA in subsequent terms. Applicants who fail to apply by the above stated deadline, may take courses as an undeclared major and up to nine credits may be applied to their graduate degree **if** they are accepted when their completed applications are reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Note: the Biology Department deadlines are considerably earlier than those of the Graduate School. It is essential that you apply in a timely manner to both the Department of Biology and the Graduate School to assure that your materials reach the Department of Biology by the above dates. **Acceptance by the Graduate School does not guarantee acceptance into the Department of Biology's graduate program.**

MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The MS program is normally open only to students who hold a Bachelor of Science (BS) or Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Biology or a related field from a recognized institution, although those on the verge of completing their undergraduate degree with a very good record to date may be considered. There are two options for the Master's degree in the Department of Biology. The Master's degree requiring a thesis is designed for those students who plan to continue work toward a doctorate or who are otherwise interested in research. The **non-thesis** Master's degree is for students who expect the Master's to be a terminal degree in biology.

Applicants must submit scores for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). A combined score of at least 1000 on the Verbal and the Quantitative portions (the minimum acceptable score on either portion is usually 400) of the GRE is generally considered competitive for admission. An undergraduate degree with an overall minimum grade point average of 2.75 at the undergraduate level is required. A personal visit to the department is encouraged; however, it is not required before admission. It is critical that applicants submit all of the materials listed (see points 1 - 5 above) in the General Requirements for Admission section to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in the Department of Biology. Applications that do not include all of the requested materials will not be considered. Admission to the MS program of the Department of Biology will be determined by the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. **Meeting entrance requirements for admission does not guarantee acceptance into the program.**

Applicants must also apply for admission to the Graduate School (see the Graduate School website <http://academics.memphis.edu/gradschool/> for details of the application procedure.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Applicants with a Bachelor's degree but not a Master's degree: A combined score of at least 1100 on the Verbal and the Quantitative portions (the minimum acceptable score on either portion is usually 500) of the GRE is generally considered competitive for admission. An overall minimum grade point average of 3.00 at the undergraduate level is required. A personal visit to the department is encouraged; however, it is not required before admission. It is critical that applicants submit all of the materials listed (see points 1 - 5 above) in the General Requirements for Admission section to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in the Department of Biology. Admission to the Ph.D. program of the Department of Biology will be determined by the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. **Meeting entrance requirements for admission does not guarantee acceptance into the program.**

Applicants with a Master's degree: Applicants must submit transcripts from the institution from which they received their graduate degree and the materials listed in the General Requirements for Admission section (see points 1 - 5 above) to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies in the Department of Biology. Applications that do not include all of the requested materials will not be considered. Admission to the Ph.D. program of the Department of Biology will be determined by the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. **Meeting entrance requirements for admission does not guarantee acceptance into the program.**

Applicants must also apply for admission to the Graduate School (see the Graduate School website <http://academics.memphis.edu/gradschool/> for details of the application procedure).