

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Masters of Science Degree (Plan B) Non-Thesis

The Plan B Master of Science Degree in Biology is a non-thesis, graduate degree program. The purpose of the program is to provide advanced exposure to biology for interested professionals, to provide additional training for those wishing to resume or change careers, or to provide additional preparation in biology for students interested in pursuing professional studies in the health sciences.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER'S DEGREE

The Biology Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC) assigns an advisor to each candidate based on the student's declared area of concentration (cellular, molecular and developmental biology, organismal biology, or ecology and evolutionary biology). If the candidate has another preference, the student is free to obtain an alternative advisor. Within the first semester of study, the candidate and advisor must complete a Program of Study form and submit it to the Chair of the GAC. The Program of Study form will specify the course work required to complete the academic requirements for the M.S. Degree and may be amended at any time during the degree program as circumstances warrant. The selection of the comprehensive examination committee should reflect the student's chosen area of concentration. These nominations will be submitted to the Chair of the GAC for its approval. At least two members of the Examination Committee must hold faculty appointments in the Biology Department. The GAC will approve members of the Examination Committee with regard to their competence in the area of biology selected by the student and advisor.

A. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

1. Program of Study

All candidates must complete a total of 30 credit hours in course work at the 300 level or higher. At least 18 of these credit hours must be at the 400 levels or above. Further, at least 15 credit hours must be in courses offered by the Biology Department. At least one course must be taken in each of the following areas of biology: cell and molecular biology (including chemical biology), organismal biology, and population biology. The remaining course work may include courses offered by any department within the University, subject to the advisor's approval and Graduate School Regulations. Candidates are limited to a total of 6 credit hours of independent study (BIOL 599 or 601). Both of these courses require completion of a Course Proposal Form (available in the Biology Departmental Office) and approval by the advisor. In the case of enrollment in BIOL 599, the letter grade assigned will reflect the evaluation by a three person committee recruited by the student and advisor.

2. Maintenance of Good Standing

To maintain good standing, a candidate must complete a program of study after the first semester of graduate study and have a cumulative grade point of 3.0 or higher at the end of each year. Receipt of two grades of "C" or a grade of "F", "NP" or "U" in any courses will be considered cause for separation from the graduate program.

B. EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATE

The comprehensive exam will be oral and will be administered by a committee of three examiners and chaired by a non-voting member of the GAC. Candidates for the Master of Science degree are required to report to the Chair of the GAC by the end of the third semester of study to schedule the examination. The candidate must also obtain all appropriate forms for completion of the degree program from the Graduate

School. Failure to comply with these regulations may prevent a student from completing degree requirements in the desired semester. At least one month prior to the examination, the Examining Committee must meet with the student to provide of the comprehensive examination.

Examination Results

The Examination Committee will recommend one of the following outcomes of the comprehensive exam:

a. Pass.

All three examiners agree that the student has passed the exam.

b. Fail with recommendation for reexamination.

At least one of three examiners votes to fail the candidate.

c. Fail.

All three examiners vote to fail the student and do not recommend re-examination, or one or more examiners vote to fail a candidate upon re-examination. The candidate may appeal to the GAC for review. The GAC may then set another examination or sustain the Examination Committee's decision.