

Graduate Regimen

**Department of Biology
University of Louisville**

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Graduate Regimen

I. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the policies that govern the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in the Department of Biology. Graduate students in this department must additionally adhere to the University-wide regulations in the Graduate Catalog. Students may elect to follow the policies in revised versions of this regimen, but if they do so they must follow the new version in its entirety.

This regimen is enforced by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in conjunction with the Graduate Committee of the Department of Biology. The Graduate Committee consists of the DGS, three faculty members elected by the department, and one current graduate student elected by the Biology Graduate Student Association.

II. ADMISSION TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN BIOLOGY

The faculty members of the Graduate Committee will review all applications. The minimum graduate admission requirements to either M.S. or Ph.D. programs in the Biology Department are as follows:

- 1) A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
- 2) Sufficient undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen field. Typically this would include at least a one-year course in general biology, upper division courses in cell biology, genetics, and ecology, one year of inorganic chemistry, and one year of organic chemistry. Students with deficiencies in their coursework may be admitted conditionally with a requirement for completion of the missing courses.
- 3) A satisfactory scholastic average, usually a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and a minimum science GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- 4) A combined score (verbal plus quantitative) of 300 on the Revised GRE. For exams given prior to August 2011, a combined score of 1100 is required. Either an MCAT score of 8 on each section or a DAT score of 17 on each section is an acceptable alternative for admission; however, only students providing GRE scores will be considered for teaching assistantships.
- 5) Evidence of proficiency in the English language. For all applicants from countries where English is not the primary official language, one of the following is required: a) a TOEFL score of at least 550 on the paper exam; b) 235 or better on the computer-based TOEFL; c) at least 83 on the TOEFL iBT (internet-based test); or d) a score of 6.5 or greater on the IELTS exam. Students are exempt from this requirement if they have a baccalaureate or advanced degree from an accredited institution in the United States or other country where the official language is English.

6) All applicants to the Ph.D. and thesis M.S. programs must have a major advisor, i.e. a full-time faculty member who agrees to sponsor the student's admission by accepting that student into his or her laboratory. Accordingly, applicants should indicate on their applications the name of the faculty member who has agreed to serve as their advisor. Non-thesis M.S. students are not required to have an advisor before admission and have until the end of their first semester in the program to obtain an advisor.

Special graduate program: the accelerated non-thesis M.S.

This program is available only to University of Louisville undergraduate students. Undergraduates who pursue this degree can apply up to nine hours of graduate coursework to their Baccalaureate degree. An additional 24 hours of graduate coursework are then required to complete the non-thesis M.S. degree.

Application to the accelerated non-thesis M.S.

Students must meet the following criteria:

1. Completion of all core courses in Biology with grades of B or higher. These courses include Biology 240, 242, 244, 329, 330, 331, and 363.
2. A grade point average of 3.35 or higher.
3. Acceptable standardized test scores. These scores are identical to those listed above for standard graduate programs (see point 4 on page 1).
4. Students must apply for admission before the end of their junior year or completion of 90 credit hours toward their degree.

Programmatic rules for students in the accelerated non-thesis M.S.

1. The nine graduate credit hours that will be applied to the baccalaureate degree must be from courses that fulfill the requirements for general background courses for M.S. students. The four general background areas are a) cellular biology and physiology; b) subcellular biology and genetics; c) evolution; and d) population, community and ecosystem ecology. A list of courses that fulfill these requirements is available on line.
2. Students in this program will be non-thesis MS students and must follow all policies for Biology graduate students as presented in this Graduate Student Regimen.
3. At the discretion of the student's advisory committee, Honors research projects performed under the direction of faculty in the Biology Department may be accepted for the research experience required for the non-thesis M.S. degree (See section E under Academic Requirements).

III. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Selection of a major professor.

All doctoral and M.S. students will have a major advisor before they are accepted into the program, and non-thesis M.S. students are expected to have an advisor before the end of their first semester. If beneficial for a student and if approved by the Chair of the

Department of Biology, that student may be co-mentored by two faculty members who serve together as the student's major professors.

Changing advisor

No faculty member is obligated to serve as a student's major professor, nor is a student obligated to continue to work with a particular faculty member. In the event of a change of advisor, the student must have a new advisor designated within 30 days. A student lacking an advisor for more than 30 days is out of compliance with the Regimen.

A faculty member may stop serving as major professor for various reasons, including, for example, personal or professional conditions that would make it detrimental to continue serving, inadequate support facilities for the completion of the student's research, or unsatisfactory progress of the student (also see section XV). However, the major advisor must notify any student in writing of specific deficiencies in performance, and the student must be given a reasonable time to correct these deficiencies.

Should issues of personal or professional incompatibility arise during the student's program, these steps should be followed:

- 1) Student and advisor should discuss the potential change. Then the student or advisor initiating the change should request a meeting with the DGS, or with the Chair of the Department if the DGS is one of the parties involved in the change. The DGS will confer with the Chair as needed, and the DGS and/or Chair will follow up with the other individual after that meeting.
- 2) The student or faculty member initiating the change must submit a written request to the Graduate Committee for a change in mentor, specifying the reason for such a change and identifying a new major advisor if a faculty member has been selected by the student and has agreed to serve as advisor.
- 3) The student will have 30 calendar days from submission of the written request to the Graduate Committee to provide evidence of having a new advisor. A note from the advisor or a new, signed Form 1 will suffice. If the student does not provide such evidence within 30 days, the student will be subject to dismissal from the program.
- 4) The Graduate Committee will make a recommendation to the Chair of the Department of Biology on the change in mentorship.
- 5) The Chair of the Department of Biology will make the final decision on the change in mentorship.

B. Student Advisory Committee (SAC)

By the end of the second semester in the program (including only Fall and Spring terms), each graduate student must seek approval of a permanent SAC by submitting Form 1 to the DGS (all departmental forms for the graduate program are available from the departmental web site). The major professor is chair of the SAC and guides the student

in selecting committee members. The SAC must consist of at least three faculty members for the M.S. degree and five for the doctoral degree.

For doctoral and thesis M.S. students, at least one member of the committee must be an outside member, someone who does not hold an appointment in the Department of Biology. For non-thesis M.S. students, committees may consist of three faculty members from the Department of Biology, or two Biology faculty members and one outside member. Faculty from our Department of Biology must constitute a majority of each SAC. Outside members should have expertise in the student's area of research, and they must have credentials that merit their appointment as adjunct faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences. A list of current adjuncts is available on the College web site. If a proposed outside member is not already an adjunct in the College, the student who wishes to add that member should submit the following to the DGS: 1) a curriculum vitae for the proposed member; and 2) a paragraph explaining how that person will enhance the committee. The DGS and Chair of the Department will apply to the Dean of Arts and Sciences for the addition of appropriately qualified faculty.

Graduate student and major advisor share the responsibility of forming the committee. The DGS will file each student's Form 1 with the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

The SAC must meet at least once each calendar year the student is in the program. A simple majority of the SAC members must be present for the meeting. For students starting the graduate program in Fall, their first SAC meeting will occur in the next calendar year, typically in Spring. Students starting the graduate program in Spring must convene a meeting of their SAC in that calendar year, i.e. by the end of the following Fall term.

The SAC is an integral component of a student's graduate program and should be formed thoughtfully with discussion between the advisor and student. Therefore, it is expected that the SAC will be permanent and requests for any change made only for significant reasons. However, certain infrequent and unusual circumstances might necessitate a modification of the SAC membership. Once the committee is formed, changes in membership can be made only with the concurrence of the Graduate Committee and the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. These changes must be initiated by written request from student and advisor to the Graduate Committee.

That written request will only be considered by the Graduate Committee if a) a significant reason is provided, e.g. a current member becomes unavailable or the proposed research moves in a new direction; b) a new member is suggested and a rationale provided for the membership of that specific member; and c) a new Form 1 is provided with the signature of the new member on the line previously occupied by the leaving member. If the new member does not belong to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, a basis for his or her appointment must be provided along with a current CV. The Graduate Committee will make a recommendation to the Chair of the Department of Biology.

IV. PROGRAM OF STUDY

The Program of Study is the coursework required (or recommended by a student's SAC) for completion of the degree. The SAC will approve the Program of Study (Form 2), which must be filed with the DGS by the end of the second semester in the program. Graduate students must take coursework at the highest level offered. Recommendations of the DGS on deficiencies in a student's background coursework are to be considered binding and will take the form of a conditional admission.

Transferring and credit hour requirements for the doctoral program

Two rules apply in all situations:

- a. The 18-hour rule. All doctoral students must register as full time (9 credit hours) for a minimum of two consecutive semesters (Fall and Spring of an academic year or Spring and Fall of a calendar year).
- b. The 24-hour rule. All students must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours at the University of Louisville. These hours can include dissertation hours.

Students entering with a Bachelor's degree must complete the full coursework program of 34 credit hours and 7 dissertation credit hours.

Students entering with a partially completed M.S. degree

There is a University limit on transfer hours, and hours from classes taken more than three years previously may not transfer. Students can transfer up to 6 credit hours by request and can petition the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies to transfer an additional 6 credit hours. Credits received for thesis work will not transfer. Students must complete the full coursework program of 34 credit hours less any transferred hours, as well as 7 hours of dissertation credit.

Students entering with a completed M.S.

No hours are transferred, but requirements are reduced in recognition of the previous work. Students must follow the two above rules, i.e. they must be full time doctoral students for two consecutive semesters and complete 24 hours at U of L. As 7 of those hours will be dissertation credits, the student must complete a minimum of 17 coursework hours in our doctoral program. If previous graduate coursework fulfills the required graduate classes in our program, the courses taken at U of L can be electives. If the previous graduate coursework have not met our program's requirements, then the 17 hours should be used to fulfill them. Coursework beyond the minimum 17 credit hours may be included in the Program of Study to correct any deficiencies in prior preparation or to address career objectives.

Transferring from M.S. program at University of Louisville to the Ph.D. program

A student in good standing in the M.S. program in Biology can petition the Graduate Committee for admission to the doctoral program without completing the M.S. degree. The petition should include a rationale for the change in program and a letter of support from the mentor. Such students will be evaluated by the Graduate Committee and DGS,

who may recommend completion of the M.S. degree, completion of the M.S. program coursework before admission to the doctoral program, or immediate admission to the doctoral program.

Changing research and Program of Study

The two tracks for graduate studies within the Biology Department are Ecology, Evolution, & Behavior, and Molecular, Developmental, & Cellular Biology. These two tracks have distinct coursework requirements, and as a result a student who changes from one track to another is likely to exceed the normal credit requirements for the degree.

V. ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Each graduate student pursuing a doctoral or MS-thesis degree shall prepare an Annual Progress Report (Form 3). This report is due in the Biology office no later than noon on the last Friday of January each year.

Students should complete their portion of the progress report and give it to their advisor and committee members no later than January 15th. Advisors will then complete the major professor evaluation that is part of Form 3; students and advisors should meet to discuss the finished progress report. Each committee member will review the student's progress report and then fill out a separate committee feedback form (Form 3A). If a committee member has questions about a student's progress after reading the progress report, the committee member should confer with the student or the student's advisor. Students are responsible for collecting the committee feedback forms and attaching them to their progress reports for subsequent evaluation by the departmental Graduate Committee.

All doctoral students must also meet annually with their advisor and the Graduate Committee to discuss their progress. These meetings will be held in February and must be held before March 1st.

Deadlines

These deadlines are markers of satisfactory progress toward the degree. Students who do not meet the deadlines for selecting an advisor, forming a committee, or passing their qualifying exam are considered to demonstrate unsatisfactory performance (see section XV) and may be placed on probation. They will be subject to dismissal from the program if they do not make satisfactory progress by the end of the probationary period. Students who fail to make satisfactory progress in their research (as determined by the annual evaluation) are unlikely to be considered for further financial support and will also be subject to dismissal from the graduate program. Students who do not meet the deadline for completing their dissertation are not likely to receive further financial support from the Department.

The deadlines fall at the end of a given number of semesters after students begin their programs, as shown in the table below. Only Spring and Fall semesters are included in these counts, not summer.

Program	Select Advisor	Select Committee & turn in Form 2	Pass Qualifying Exam	Thesis/Dissertation Defense
PhD with MS	Before admission	2	4	10
PhD without MS	Before admission	2	5	10
MS - thesis	Before admission	2	4	6
MS – nonthesis	1	2	4	Not applicable

VI. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The general requirements stated in the Graduate Catalog apply to all graduate students in the Department of Biology. Additional academic requirements include:

A. Course Approval

If a student requests tuition remission for any course taken while in the graduate program, that course must be approved in advance by the SAC, or the DGS if a SAC has not yet been formed.

B. Audit/Pass-Fail

No course taken as part of the approved Program of Study (Form 2) may be audited. No graduate course taken on a pass-fail basis can fulfill requirements for a graduate degree.

C. Undergraduate Course Deficiencies

An undergraduate course, taken to fulfill an undergraduate deficiency requiring conditional admission, may, with the permission of the instructor of the course and the DGS, be taken on a pass-fail basis.

D. GPA

All graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative 3.0/4.0 (B) average in coursework (3.25/4.0 while on a University Fellowship) or be considered on probation. Students must report their cumulative grade point average to the DGS within 2 weeks of the end of any semester in which the cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0. The DGS will communicate probationary status to the mentor, student, the Graduate Committee and the College of Arts and Sciences. Students will be allowed to remain in the program with probationary status (and retain GTA or Fellowship support) for one further semester, after which the student must attain an acceptable GPA. If the student fails to meet this goal, the Graduate Committee will consider recommending to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences that the student be dismissed from the program for unsatisfactory progress toward the degree.

E. Research Experience for Non-Thesis Degree:

The non-thesis M.S. degree requires completion of a “Research Experience”, a project in which data are gathered or generated to test a hypothesis. This requirement must be

fulfilled by registering for a course with a research component and submission of a completed Form 2a signed by the instructor. By signing Form 2a the instructor will verify that an acceptable research experience was completed under his or her direction and that the results of the experience were communicated through a graded product that could include an oral presentation, a poster presentation or a written report.

F. Variances

A variance is a request (usually to the Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies or the Vice-Provost for Graduate Studies) to waive or modify a policy pertaining to graduate education at the institutional level. This could include requests to accept for transfer a greater number of hours from another program than policy allows, to modify the residency requirement, or to exceed the 20-hour work rule for Graduate Teaching Assistants, among others. Requests for variances must be initiated through the DGS.

VII. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Graduate Seminar Courses

Seminar I is taught each Fall and Seminar II each Spring. Seminar I covers aspects of professional development, and Seminar II focuses on presentation skills. All Ph.D. students must take each course once. Students who have already completed Seminar II may attend the course again but will only receive credit once.

B. Oral Communication

1. Ph.D. students must make four research presentations prior to final dissertation approval. Two of the four presentations must be given in the department. One of the departmental presentations will be the dissertation defense.

M.S. thesis students must make two research presentations prior to final thesis approval. One of these will be the thesis defense.

Non-thesis M.S. students are not required to give research presentations.

2. Research presentations at regional, national or international meetings satisfy the requirements for non-departmental presentations. In order to meet the oral communication requirements, all other presentations must either be open and publicly announced on an academic calendar, or be part of a regularly scheduled seminar series. Presentations to the Seminar II course or on Biology Research Day, which is held at the end of the spring semester, meet this requirement. Presentations at a student's advisory committee meeting do not meet this requirement.

3. Students must be the presenter, not merely an author, of the presentation to fulfill the requirements of the regimen. Poster presentations are acceptable as long as the student is the sole or primary presenter.

4. Faculty mentors must verify their students' presentations (Progress Report Form

3).

VIII. ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY: QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

Upon completion of their approved Masters or Doctoral coursework, students in both programs must initiate and successfully complete their qualifying exams before the end of the following spring or fall semester. The Graduate Committee must approve any proposed deviation from this schedule.

This qualifying examination, conducted by the student's advisory committee under the chairmanship of the Major Professor, may be oral, written, or both for students in the Masters Program, but must include both oral and written components for students in the Doctoral Program. A student who fails one portion of the qualifying exam may attempt that portion of the exam a second time. The written portion of the exam will precede the oral component and must be passed to take the oral portion of the exam. If the qualifying exam involves both written and oral components, each may be attempted twice. A student who fails to satisfactorily complete the exam on a second attempt will be dismissed from the program for failure to make progress. The student's SAC will determine the nature and conditions of the exams (e.g. open vs. closed book or whether the written portion will consist of essay questions or the submission of an original grant proposal). The successful completion of this examination requires that the report of the qualifying exam committee (Form 4) be completed and given to the DGS.

Any oral exam will be open to attendance by all Departmental faculty members. Unless requested by the Student Advisory Committee, only Advisory Committee members may participate in the exam by asking questions. Examinations should include questions designed to test proficiency in both the foundations of biological knowledge as well as the student's major field of study.

IX. THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

All Doctoral students must write a dissertation and all Masters students in the thesis option must write a thesis. The thesis/dissertation topic must be approved by the student's Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC will also be responsible for reviewing the finished thesis or dissertation, providing feedback on its contents, and ultimately deciding whether a student has satisfied the requirements for the degree following an oral defense of the thesis or dissertation (see section VIII below). The format of theses and dissertations will follow that set forth in the current edition of the "Standards for the Preparation of Dissertations and Theses" of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies (SIGS).

Students should be aware of all deadlines pertaining to graduation as established by SIGS and are advised to verify these dates during the first two weeks of the semester in which they plan to graduate. SIGS determines the date at which the completed thesis or dissertation must be submitted each semester, which is typically three weeks in advance of commencement. The dissertation or thesis must be submitted in complete form to the members of the SAC 14 days prior to the oral defense and no later than 30 days prior to the SIGS due date. This timetable provides the SAC sufficient time to read the thesis or

dissertation prior to the oral defense and provides the student the opportunity to incorporate any feedback from the defense into the dissertation or thesis prior to the SIGS due date.

X. FINAL ORAL EXAMINATIONS

All Masters thesis and Doctoral students must present an oral defense of the thesis or dissertation. Both M.S. and Ph.D. oral defenses will be open to all faculty and students in the Biology Department and to the public. The oral defense must be scheduled with SIGS a minimum of two weeks prior to the defense (Form 5). Following the defense, the SAC will vote on whether the student has passed (Form 6). The oral defense must be completed no later than 14 days before the end of the semester in which the degree is to be granted. See section VII of the Graduate Regimen for additional details regarding how this date is determined.

XI. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Teaching assistantships (TAs) are awarded by the Graduate Committee in consultation with the DGS and are subject to final approval by the Chairperson of the Department of Biology. Award decisions and course assignments are based on the instructional needs of the Department of Biology and student qualifications, as described below. The Department generally provides continuing TA support for those who have been effective teachers.

- A. Only full-time graduate students are eligible for TA support. The total number of TA positions available in the Department of Biology is determined by the College of Arts and Sciences.
- B. M.S. students typically do not receive TA support. Ph.D. students may receive up to four years of support, with the fourth year dependent on satisfactory progress.
- C. All students supported on TAs have priority for an additional year of TA support providing they are making adequate progress toward their degree, their teaching has been satisfactory, and TA positions are available.
- D. Temporary TAs may be awarded for periods of one year or less. Service under this arrangement does not include priority for subsequent assignment.
- E. All non-supported full-time graduate students, including newly accepted applicants, are automatically considered for TA support.
- F. Priority for awarding TA support will be as follows:
 - 1. Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants and University Fellows from previous years
 - 2. Research Assistants with previous TA support
 - 3. Doctoral students without previous TA support
- G. TA assignments will be based upon a composite evaluation of entrance examination scores, undergraduate grade point average, performance in this

Graduate program, letters of recommendation, specific training, and previous experience. For students already in the program, satisfactory progress towards the degree and satisfactory performance evaluations from prior TA are also considered. Students on academic probation are not eligible for TA support.

H. Responsibilities of all teaching assistants include:

1. meeting with the professor(s) of the course(s) prior to the first day of class to make arrangements for the semester,
2. meeting with the professor(s) regularly at a time agreeable to the assistant and faculty member,
3. attending all lectures in the course(s) in which the student is assisting, if requested by the professor(s),
4. presenting the techniques of the laboratory exercises in a clear, concise manner,
5. maintaining the laboratory facilities in good condition and enforcing safety rules,
6. preparing, administering, and grading laboratory examinations and keeping accurate records of the students' performance in a form suitable for the professor's use,
7. proctoring lecture examinations,
8. scheduling regular office hours or appointments for student consultation,
9. notifying the professor(s) when, due to exceptional circumstances, the assistant cannot meet the laboratory, so that a temporary substitute may be obtained,
10. preparing all materials required for each laboratory session, and assisting the professor in charge to maintain an inventory of all necessary supplies and equipment in the laboratory,
11. attending the Orientation Programs of the Graduate School and Department of Biology.

I. If a professor determines that a TA is not meeting his/her responsibilities or is guilty of unethical behavior (as determined by University guidelines), the professor will send a written notification to the TA and the DGS with a copy to the Chair of the Department of Biology.

1. Within one week of the receipt of the written notice of unsatisfactory performance, the student may submit a letter of rebuttal to the Graduate Committee for their consideration.
2. Within one week of receipt of the student's rebuttal a closed hearing will be held to decide whether a probationary semester or other action is warranted. Both the accused student and the faculty member who

wrote the letter of unsatisfactory conduct or performance must be present at the hearing, and both will have the opportunity to present and defend their cases. The hearing committee will consist of the Graduate Committee, DGS, and the Major Professor of the student in question. If the accused student or the accusing professor is also a member of the above committee, then the remainder of the committee will select another student or faculty member to serve as a replacement for the purpose of the hearing. After hearing the evidence from both parties, the committee will make its decision by simple majority vote. The decision must be made and conveyed to the parties involved on the day of the hearing.

3. Either party may appeal decisions by this committee to the Biology Faculty at the next faculty meeting after the initial decision. All members of the hearing committee as well as the student and faculty member involved must be present. After hearing evidence from all parties, the Biology Faculty will vote to accept or reject the decision of the hearing committee. Vote will be simple majority, and the professor making the complaint will abstain from voting. The decision of the Biology Faculty will be considered final.
- J. Following a written warning and a probationary semester, a Teaching Assistant may lose eligibility for continued support on the grounds of:
1. continued non-compliance with responsibilities,
 2. continued unsatisfactory progress toward a degree,
 3. further documented evidence of ineffective teaching,
 4. proven unethical behavior.
- K. Upon recommendation of the Biology Faculty, the Chair of the Department will notify the student in writing of non-renewal, with copies to the DGS and the student's Major Professor.

The Department of Biology provides desk space for all teaching assistants and for other graduate students when possible. Usually, graduate students are assigned desks close to or in their major advisor's laboratory or outer office. Major professors are expected to accommodate as many of their students as possible. Students who cannot be accommodated by their supervisor will be assigned space after the needs of teaching assistants have been satisfied. Students who have not selected a major professor are assigned space based on availability.

Common courtesy and collegiality is expected of all persons sharing an office. Repeated disruption of the work environment can result in the loss of desk space. Any problems concerning desk assignments, conflicts, or resource needs should be brought to the

attention of the DGS. Desks, bookcases, filing cabinets and other office furniture designated for student use should not be moved without permission of the DGS.

All Teaching Assistants, and all students who receive a stipend and/or tuition remission through the Department, the University, or grant funds, must register for a minimum of 9 credit hours of coursework in Fall and Spring, and 6 hours in Summer, or for candidacy once their coursework is completed.

XII. RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

A. All Graduate Research Assistants must be full-time students in the Department of Biology.

B. Assistantships funded by grants obtained by individual faculty members are filled at the discretion of the principal investigator(s). Students should contact the faculty member who holds the grant to inquire about the availability of this support.

XIII. UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIPS

A. Recommendations from the Department of Biology to the University Fellowship Committee for awards of pre-doctoral fellowships will be based on the criteria established by the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies (SIGS).

B. The nominees for fellowships are selected and rank-ordered by the Graduate Committee and presented to the Chair, who makes final decisions on forwarding nominees to SIGS and confirming Departmental commitments.

C. According to SIGS policy, University Fellows must register for 24 hours per year (9 hours - Fall, 9 hours - Spring, 6 hours - Summer).

XIV. EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE THE PROGRAM OF STUDY

Graduate students receiving university grant support are expected to limit outside employment to activities that will not interfere substantially with the student's progress toward obtaining the degree being sought. The Graduate Committee may make exceptions for work that substantially enhances a student's career prospects.

XV. CHANGES IN STATUS AND TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM

A. A leave of absence from the program may be requested for various reasons, including those that significantly affect a student's progress in the program or offer opportunities for a student's professional growth that require an extended absence from campus. The student and mentor must petition the Graduate Committee in writing to support a leave of absence, indicating the reason(s) for the request and the intended duration. The Graduate Committee will not usually consider requests for absences that exceed one calendar year. The Graduate Committee will forward its recommendation to the Chair of the Department, who will then formally support or reject the petition through a written communication with the Dean of SIGS. The Dean will respond to the petitioner in writing. The SIGS Graduate Catalog specifies that a student not registered for one calendar year is assumed to have withdrawn from the graduate program. Therefore, any necessity for extension of an absence should be submitted to the Graduate Committee for action at

least one month prior to the effective date of the withdrawal, to avoid disruption of further progress.

B. Changes of student status and termination of students can occur as a result of unsatisfactory progress. "Unsatisfactory progress" of a graduate student is defined as failure to make satisfactory progress in completing all requirements of the Regimen for Graduate Students and the Graduate Catalog. In particular, students must demonstrate satisfactory progress in completing the selection of a mentor and advisory committee, convening yearly SAC meetings, completion of Annual Progress Reports, and adherence to deadlines as outlined in Section V. They must also demonstrate satisfactory and timely progress toward completion of required coursework, the qualifying exam, and activities related to the completion of the thesis or dissertation (for thesis M.S. and Ph.D. students), as determined by their SAC and the Graduate Committee (See Section V).

C. If the student has not shown satisfactory progress towards a degree by completion of the stated requirements by the appropriate deadlines, that student will be placed on probation for one semester. At the end of each semester the DGS shall provide the Chair of the Department of Biology with the names of those students failing to make satisfactory progress. The Graduate Committee shall communicate this information in writing to the students and their mentors. If satisfactory progress toward a degree has not been achieved by the end of the probationary period, the Graduate Committee will reexamine the student's status in the program.

D. Unsatisfactory progress can result in loss of University or Departmental support (teaching assistantships, research assistantships, University Fellowships, or any other types of such support).

E. The Graduate Committee may also recommend termination of the student from the program on the basis of unsatisfactory performance. If it is determined that there is a probable cause for dismissing a student, the DGS will notify the student and mentor in writing, specifying the deficiencies, and providing the student a reasonable opportunity to answer the charges and correct the deficiencies. If the student continues to make unsatisfactory progress, the DGS will notify the student that a recommendation for termination will be made.

F. Students may appeal placement on probation or possible termination of support to the Graduate Committee.