

# MS DEGREE PROGRAM IN BIOLOGY INFORMATION SHEET

## WPE

Take and pass the WPE (listed in the Schedule of Classes under UNIV 400) within your **first two** quarters. Make sure you enroll in a section specifically reserved for graduate students. The Dean's office has the prerogative to place a registration hold if not taken and passed. This is routinely monitored by the College of Natural and Social Sciences.

## QUALIFYING COURSES

If admitted in conditional classified standing, four qualifying courses worth 14-16 units total are required. These courses are listed with an asterisk (\*) on your program, must be 400-level, and must be among the first six courses completed. An overall 3.00 GPA in these four courses is required, or disqualification from the program may result. **A student completing qualifying courses may enroll in one 500-level course during this time** (other than BIOL 510 and 598).

## 500-LEVEL COURSES

Pat issues all registration permits for all 500-level (graduate) courses.

## FULL-TIME STATUS

You are considered full-time by the university (for instance, for financial aid purposes) if you are enrolled in even ONE UNIT of 597,598 or 599, or zero units of 900. Rules for the INS may be different; international students should ask Pat.

## GRADUATE PROGRAM OF STUDY and COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS

Your degree program lists the classes you intend to take, and must be completed in your **first quarter**. Course substitutions are changes to your program, and must be requested **BEFORE** receiving a grade in any new course. The Department cannot consider substitutions after a grade is given. Inform Pat as soon as you want to make a change to your program.

## BIOL 598 - GRADUATE DIRECTED STUDY

One unit of Biol 598 may be taken by graduate students who have been accepted into a research laboratory while working on the thesis prospectus; it confers full-time status. No units are applied to the MS degree program. Students with advisors in the Dept. of Biological Sciences should register for 1 unit of 598 each quarter until their prospectus is approved.

## THESIS PROSPECTUS

Consult your research advisor on the prospectus after reviewing the guidelines on the department website. Submit the final draft (with signatures of all committee members) to Pat by the first day of the quarter in which you aim to enroll in supervision units (Biol 597/599). Supervision units cannot be taken until a signed prospectus is submitted to the department, and final approval by the Graduate Affairs Committee is needed for you to continue taking 597/599 units.

## ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

After completing **16 units** on your program with at least a 3.0 GPA, apply for advancement to candidacy. Get the required form from Pat. You **cannot** register for 597 or 599 units until you have advanced to candidacy; do this as soon as possible!

## APPLYING TO GRADUATE

You must apply to graduate **one to two quarters** in advance, according to deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. For instance, you apply by the first week in March to graduate in summer. Application requires department permission and payment of a fee. If you apply but are not ready to graduate in the appointed quarter, your application and fee automatically roll over to the following quarter, but you must reapply if graduation is delayed by more than one quarter.

## THESIS DEFENSE

The department requires a public thesis seminar, to which you may invite friends, family and the department, followed by a closed-door oral defense with your thesis committee. Contact Pat when you are ready to schedule a room & time for your defense. Your committee needs 3 WEEKS to read the final draft of your thesis!

## FILING OF THESIS

You must enroll in Biol 599 or 900 in the quarter you file your thesis with the Library. **The thesis deadline is usually the Thursday of quarter break following exam week.** Thesis guidelines are available from Pat. Early in your writing process you should confirm deadlines and format with the Library Thesis Coordinator, who offers quarterly help sessions.

## TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Inquire when registering for the next quarter; an announcement of TA positions is posted the 4<sup>th</sup> week of every quarter.