BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE (PHD)

Description

The Ph.D. in biological science is a research degree. It prepares graduates for various academic, industrial, or governmental professional positions that involve freshwater biology, medicine, education, molecular genetics, ecology, and conservation biology.

Minimum Total Credit Hours: 54

Course Requirements

All students pursuing a Ph.D. degree must satisfactorily complete a research prospectus, a dissertation based on potentially publishable research, two research seminars (one of which is the dissertation seminar), a written and oral comprehensive examination, and an oral defense of the dissertation. Additional requirements may be stipulated by the advisory committee.

A minimum of 54 semester hours of graduate credit acceptable to the advisory committee are required, which must include 18 dissertation hours and at least 24 hours of formalized coursework. All students must take BISC 6910 Seminar during the two semesters in which they present research seminars. The M.S. degree is not a prerequisite for the Ph.D. degree. Credit for previous graduate-level coursework may be applied toward these requirements at the discretion of the student's advisory committee, with approval by the department chair and graduate program coordinator, and as long as application of previous graduate-level coursework is consistent with policies of the Graduate School and the Department of Biology.

Once coursework and presentation of the research prospectus have been completed, a written and oral comprehensive examination will be administered by the advisory committee. Upon satisfactory completion of the comprehensive examination, satisfactory progress toward publication of research results, and before the student begins the final 12 months, the advisory committee shall request the department chair to recommend admission to candidacy. Students must complete all requirements for the degree within five years from the date of the comprehensive examination.

Other Academic Requirements

Dissertation Advisory Committee--During the first two semesters, a Ph.D. student should become familiar with the research programs in the department and establish an advisory committee. The committee's initial role is to recommend courses and approve a research topic. The committee is then responsible for evaluating the student's course work, research productivity, and knowledge of the research topic, and for approving the dissertation.