

MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

2007-09 Cal Poly Catalog

[Biological Sciences Department](#)

Fisher Science Hall (33), Room 273

(805) 756-2788

General Characteristics

This degree offers a broad background in the biological sciences. The program is designed to offer sufficient breadth and depth to strengthen the student's academic understanding and improve competence for: (a) many types of biological work that require advanced training beyond the bachelor's degree; (b) employment in industry and/or civil service; (c) teaching biological sciences at the elementary, secondary, and community college levels; (d) independent research in the field of specialization; or (e) continued graduate work at other institutions.

Prerequisites

Admission as a conditionally classified or classified student in this program requires a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in the last 90 quarter units attempted, satisfactory scores on the Graduate Record Examination, and letters of recommendation from persons knowing your academic potential. Advancement to candidacy requires a satisfactory background in biology, and completion of 12 units of courses specified in an informal study plan with a minimum grade point average of 3.0.

Information pertaining to specific departmental requirements for admission to graduate standing—classified or graduate standing—conditionally classified may be obtained from the Director of the Graduate and Research Committee (Graduate Coordinator) of the Biological Sciences Department.

Program of Study

The formal program of study for the degree must include 45 units of committee-approved graduate work, at least 30 units of which must be at the 500 level. At least 18 units of the formal program of study must be completed after the student has been advanced to candidacy. A grade point average of 3.0 or better is required in all courses taken as a graduate student. Two approaches to the M.S. degree in Biological Sciences are possible. The requirements for these two approaches are listed below.

CURRICULUM FOR MS BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

	Thesis Plan	Coursework Plan
BIO 501 Molecular and Cellular Biology	4	4
BIO 502 Biology of Organisms	4	4
BIO 503 Population Biology	4	4
BIO 590 Seminar in Biology	3	3
BIO 599 Thesis, including oral defense of thesis	9	—
BIO 500 Individual Study, including written report	—	4
Comprehensive Exam:		
GRE Advanced Biology	Yes	Yes
Essay	No	Yes
Electives from 500-level courses ...	6	11
Electives from 400- and 500-level courses	15	15
	45	45

All 45 units must be acceptable for graduate credit and in accordance with Graduate Guidelines of the Biological Sciences Department. For further information, students should communicate with the Chair of the Biological Sciences Department or with the Director of the Graduate and Research Committee.