MASTER OF SCIENCE IN BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Program Director
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Program Description
Biological Sciences offers a graduate program leading to the M.S. degree. This program provides both a strong foundation in fundamental principles and theories and an understanding of the advanced application of this information within the diverse disciplines of the life sciences. Students prepare, through coursework and faculty-guided original research, to pursue career paths in the professions, academia, research, business, and industry.

The Biological Sciences program includes faculty in:

1. molecular biology, microbiology, and genetics;
2. physiology and anatomy; and
3. environmental biology.

Students may pursue specific areas of specialization within and among these areas, including:

- ecology,
- microbiology,
- molecular biology,
- genetics,
- immunology,
- entomology,
- vertebrate physiology,
- neuroendocrinology,
- neurobiology,
- cell biology, or
- human anatomy.

The program is housed in Ward Beecher Hall. Specialized facilities include an analytical research laboratory housing modern analytical instruments, tissue culture laboratories, an animal facility, laboratories equipped for molecular and cellular research, and an extensive greenhouse facility. The department has exclusive use of two unique outdoor laboratories for field studies: the Youngstown State University Arboretum (a 115-acre reserve) and the Meander Reservoir (a 6,000-acre wildlife refuge and water impoundment), which collectively provide a valuable resource for environmental biology.

Advisement
Each student's course of study will be devised in consultation with the student's major advisor and will be approved by the student's graduate committee. The course of study will be based on the student's area of specialization, background, and career interests. Students must have their course schedules approved by their major advisor or the graduate director every semester.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadline
Summer and Fall Start – Applications accepted through April 15th
Spring Start – Applications accepted through November 15th

requirements
In addition to the minimum College of Graduate Studies admission requirements applicants must have completed:

- at least 20 credit hours of undergraduate Biology courses with at least a 3.0 grade point average,
- plus one semester of Statistics, and
- 20 additional credit hours of coursework in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics (pre-calculus or higher), additional Statistics, or upper level courses in Environmental Sciences or Geographic Information Systems.
- An acceptable score for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE, general test only) is required. The Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), Dental Admission Test (DAT), or Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) may be submitted in lieu of the GRE.

Students with deficiencies in these areas should contact the Biology Graduate Director prior to applying for admission.

Graduate Faculty
David K. Asch, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Gene regulation in eukaryotic organisms; carbon catabolite repression in Neurospora crassa

Michael Butcher, Ph.D., Professor
Comparative biomechanics: muscle structure and function with regard to locomotion and adaptive behaviors

Jonathan J. Caguiat, Ph.D., Professor
Industrial microbiology and genetic and molecular biology techniques to characterize selinite and heavy metal resistant bacteria

Susan Ann Clutter, M.F.S., Associate Professor
Crime scene investigation; blood spatter interpretation; forensic toxicology; fingerprint development at fire scenes

Chester R. Cooper, Ph.D., Professor
Molecular biology and microbiology; morphogenesis and virulence of pathogenic fungi; identification of anti-fungal targets

Thomas P. Diggins, Ph.D., Professor
Field-based community and ecosystem ecology of streams and riparian zones

Jill M. Gifford, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Effects of environmental influences on acute inflammatory and chronic neuropathic pain

Carl G. Johnston, Ph.D., Professor
Microbiology; microbial and fungal ecology; interactions within microbial communities

Xiangjia Min, Ph.D., Professor
Bioinformatics; gene and genome annotation and evolutionary analysis; knowledge database development for secretomes and alternatively spliced genes

Ian J. Renne, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Plant community ecology; invasive species; community structure; allelopathic systems; avian ecology

Robert E. Wardle, M.S., Associate Professor
Forensic science education; forensic chemistry; drug analysis; ethics in forensic science; investigation of the "CSI Effect"; fingerprint science

Degree Requirements
Students may pursue the M.S. degree in biological sciences in one of two options.
Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to integrate and critique information in a specified sub-discipline of biology.
2. Students will be able to evaluate the scientific literature in the biological sciences.
3. Thesis students will conduct independent research in the biological sciences.

Graduate Courses

BIOL 5806 Field Ecology 4 s.h.
Field study involving quantitative methods for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of ecological data in populations and communities. Pre-field trip lectures, specified experiments, independent study, a written report, and an oral presentation of the independent study project. Required off-campus travel. Field conditions may be rigorous and/or primitive.
Prereq.: BIOL 3780.

BIOL 5811 Ornithology 4 s.h.
Structure, physiology, behavior, ecology, and evolution of birds. Natural history of common bird species and important bird groups, especially those in Ohio. Basic methods and skills for field study of birds. Three hours lecture, three hours lab.
Prereq.: BIOL 3741.

BIOL 5811L Ornithology Laboratory 0 s.h.
Ornithology Laboratory.

BIOL 5813 Vertebrate Histology 4 s.h.
The microscopic study of mammalian tissues and organs. Three hours lecture, two hours lab.
Prereq.: BIOL 3711 or BIOL 3730.

BIOL 5813L Vertebrate Histology Laboratory 0 s.h.
Vertebrate Histology Laboratory.

BIOL 5823 Advanced Eukaryotic Genetics 3 s.h.
Mechanisms and control of eukaryotic DNA replication, current advances in understanding the genetics basis of cancer and other genetic diseases, problems and benefits of the various eukaryotic genome projects (human and others), gene therapy and genetic engineering in animals and plants.
Prereq.: BIOL 3721 and BIOL 4890.

BIOL 5824 Behavioral Neuroscience 4 s.h.
Explores the biological basis of human experience and behavior. Topics include basic neuroanatomy and neuropharmacology, emotions, learning and memory, sleep and biological rhythms, reproductive behavior, and communication. Three hours lecture, three hours lab.
Prereq.: BIOL 3730.

BIOL 5824L Behavioral Neuroscience Laboratory 0 s.h.
Behavioral Neuroscience Laboratory.

BIOL 5827 Gene Manipulation 2 s.h.
Techniques of modern molecular biology including the use of restriction enzymes, plasmid and phage vectors, Southern blots and the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Introduction and manipulation of foreign DNA in bacterial and eukaryotic systems. Six hours lab.
Prereq.: BIOL 4890.

BIOL 5833 Mammalian Endocrinology 3 s.h.
Detailed examination of the hormones of the hypothalamus, pituitary, thyroid, adrenal pancreas, gonads, and other organs with putative endocrine function. Focus on the physiological functions of hormones and their mechanisms of action with emphasis on the human.
Prereq.: BIOL 3730.

BIOL 5840 Advanced Microbiology 3 s.h.
Molecular mechanisms for virulence of pathogenic organisms.
Prereq.: BIOL 3702 or equivalent.

BIOL 5844 Physiology of Reproduction 3 s.h.
Current concepts of reproductive processes and their physiological control in mammalian systems.
Prereq.: BIOL 3730.

BIOL 5853 Biometry 3 s.h.
Application of fundamental theory and procedures to the statistical analysis of biological data.
Prereq.: 20 s.h. of Biological Sciences.
BIOL 5888 Computational Bioinformatics 3 s.h.
Project-based learning course with a focus on using a Linux environment and PERL for processing large genomic datasets and data mining. Relational database and BioPERL will also be introduced for genomic data analysis and display. Three hours of combined lecture and lab per week.

BIOL 5888 Environmental Biotechnology 3 s.h.
This course provides an overview of environmental biotechnology, engineering fundamentals, theory, and principles in application of biological treatment to solve environmental problems. Topics include relevant biological, chemical, and ecological processes, biological treatments of waste, land, and water. Environmental biotechnology is an essential tool to help humanity face enormous environmental challenges, especially pollution, climate change, loss of habitat, and resulting threats to wildlife and human populations, their health outcomes and survival potential. This course is designed to summarize modern insights regarding evaluation and applications of environmental biotechnology.
Prereq.: CHEM 3719 or CEEN 3736.

BIOL 5888L Environmental Biotechnology Laboratory 0 s.h.
Environmental Biotechnology Laboratory.

BIOL 6900 Advanced Bioinformatics 3 s.h.
An examination of how computer and informatics technology is applied to biological data analysis, particularly in the area of genomics data mining, and its use in genomics, molecular, and systems biology research. Three hours of lecture per week.
Prereq.: BIOL 4890 or permission of instructor.

BIOL 6901 Advanced Ecology 3 s.h.
This course covers the gut microbial communities and their interactions with the enteric and central nervous systems of humans and other animal hosts. Through its interactions with the nervous system, the gut microbiome influences the emotional and cognitive centers of the brain, which in turn may affect mental health, response to stress, and other nervous system disorders. This course explores these topics based on the scientific literature, discussions, and presentations.
Prereq.: BIOL 6909.

BIOL 6935 Advanced Physiology: Regulatory Mechanisms 3 s.h.
Examination of advanced human physiology through a detailed study of selected body systems. Systems examined may include the musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal, metabolic and thermoregulatory. Three hours lecture.
Prereq.: BIOL 3730 or equivalent.

BIOL 6935L Advanced Physiology: Regulatory Mechanisms Laboratory 1 s.h.
The experimental approach to the examination of advanced human physiology through a detailed study of selected body systems. Systems examined may include the musculoskeletal, gastrointestinal, metabolic and thermoregulatory. Three hours lab.
Prereq.: BIOL 6935 or concurrent enrollment in BIOL 6935.

BIOL 6937 Conservation Biology 3 s.h.
A socioeconomic, political and ecological approach to issues associated with the maintenance and value of biodiversity and ecosystem services; consequences of anthropogenic climate change, fragmentation, overharvesting, extinction, and invasion of non-native species; biofuels; ecological restoration, nature reserve design and sustainability.
Prereq.: BIOL 3759 or BIOL 3750 or permission from instructor.

BIOL 6940 Microbial Physiology 4 s.h.
This course will present advanced topics in biomolecule synthesis, molecular biology, bacterial genetics, gene expression, energy production photosynthesis, bacteriophages, and microbial stress response. An integrative laboratory project emphasizing some of these topics will be included. Three hours lecture and three hours laboratory.
Prereq.: Graduate standing.

BIOL 6942 Advanced Fungi 4 s.h.
Examination of fungal and fungal-like organisms with emphasis placed upon their taxonomy, phylogenetic relationships, structure, function, physiology, genetics, and ecology. Their role in agriculture, medicine, and scientific research is explored as well. Three hours lecture and three hours laboratory.
Prereq.: BIOL 3702 Microbiology and graduate standing.

BIOL 6948 Biology of Fungi 4 s.h.
This course will present advanced topics in biomolecule synthesis, molecular biology, bacterial genetics, gene expression, energy production photosynthesis, bacteriophages, and microbial stress response. An integrative laboratory project emphasizing some of these topics will be included. Three hours lecture and three hours laboratory.
Prereq.: BIOL 3702 or equivalent, and graduate standing.

BIOL 6950 Comparative Animal Physiology 4 s.h.
The study of physiological mechanisms and adaptations of animals to environmental stresses of their habitats. Three hours lecture and three hours laboratory per week.
Prereq.: BIOL 3730 Human Physiology or equivalent.

BIOL 6950L Animal Physiology Lab 0 s.h.
Animal Physiology Laboratory.

BIOL 6954 Advanced Ecology 3 s.h.
Interrelationships of species within the community and their influence upon the ecosystem.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.
BIOL 6957  Advanced Immunology  3 s.h.
Fundamentals of immunological systems, including both humoral and cellular immunological responses. Immune response to infections, transplantation rejection, autoimmune diseases, allergy, and autoimmunity. Three hours of lecture a week.
Prereq.: BIOL 3702 Microbiology or equivalent.

BIOL 6957L  Advanced Immunology Laboratory  2 s.h.
Immunologic laboratory techniques. Four hours of laboratory a week. Should be taken concurrently with BIOL 6957.

BIOL 6961  Forest Ecology  2 s.h.
A study of the structure, function, and management/conservation of forest ecosystems, including the biology and taxonomy of woody plants. Major emphasis on eastern North America. Two hours lecture. Crosslisted: BIOL 4866.
Prereq.: 20 semester hours in BIOL or GES, or combination thereof, or permission of instructor.
Coreq.: BIOL 6961L.

BIOL 6961L  Forest Ecology Laboratory  2 s.h.
Laboratory and field experiences in Forest Ecology. Two hours lab, twice a week.
Coreq.: BIOL 6961.

BIOL 6963  Virology  3 s.h.
Viral structure, replication, infection, and pathogenesis. The molecular biology of viruses and their interactions with host cells, and the use of viruses as tools for gene therapy and genetic engineering. Current research and viruses important in world health, such as HIV, will be emphasized.
Prereq.: Graduate standing or permission of instructor.

BIOL 6963L  Virology Lab  0 s.h.
Virology Laboratory.

BIOL 6964  Advanced Molecular Genetics  3 s.h.
An examination of the mechanisms of transcription, translation, DNA replication, and RNA processing and transposition in both prokaryotes and eukaryotes.
Prereq.: BIOL 4890 Molecular Genetics or permission of instructor.

BIOL 6967  Stem Cell Biology  3 s.h.
This course deals with the study of stem cells and their role in biology. Developmental aspects of stem cells and the relevance of stem cells to medicine and applied biology will be discussed.
Prereq.: BIOL 5827 or equivalent.

BIOL 6968  Cell Culture Methods Laboratory  2 s.h.
This course provides instruction and training in standard animal cell culture techniques. Theory and practice using established cell lines. In addition, more advanced cell cultivation will be explored, bio-reactors and 3D bio-printing.
Prereq.: permission of instructor.

BIOL 6974  Neuroendocrinology  3 s.h.
Current concepts of neuroendocrine processes will be discussed.
Prereq.: BIOL 5833 or equivalent, or permission of instructor.

BIOL 6975  Neuropharmacology  3 s.h.
An examination of how drugs interact with the nervous system, including the locus of action for neuroactive substances and the mechanisms by which these substances cause change in physiology and behavior.
Prereq.: Graduate standing or permission of instructor.

BIOL 6976  Cellular Neurophysiology  3 s.h.
Detailed study of ionic currents, regulation of neuronal firing patterns, synaptic transmission, and synaptic plasticity.
Prereq.: BIOL 5832 or permission of instructor.

BIOL 6978  Teaching Practicum: Principles of Biology  1 s.h.
A course dealing with principles of pedagogy for both classroom and laboratory settings. This is a broad-based course, which will address basic principles and concepts of modern biology. Emphasis is on relationships between instruction and learning outcomes. Required of all graduate teaching assistants in the Biological Sciences. Students will be assigned a grade of S/U. May be repeated.

BIOL 6979  Teaching Practicum: 1545 Anatomy and Physiology  1 s.h.
A course dealing with the principles of pedagogy for BIOL 1545 Allied Health Anatomy and Physiology. This course addresses classroom and laboratory topics in human anatomy and physiology, with an emphasis on the relationships between instruction and learning outcomes. Required of graduate teaching assistants providing instructional support for BIOL 1545. Students will be assigned a grade of S/U. May be repeated.

BIOL 6981  Teaching Practicum: 1551 Anatomy and Physiology  1 s.h.
A course dealing with the principles of pedagogy for BIOL 1551 Anatomy and Physiology I. This course addresses classroom and laboratory topics in human anatomy and physiology with an emphasis on the relationships between instruction and learning outcomes. Required of graduate teaching assistants providing instructional support for BIOL 1551. Students will be assigned a grade of S/U. May be repeated.

BIOL 6982  Teaching Practicum: 1552 Anatomy and Physiology  1 s.h.
A course dealing with the principles of pedagogy for BIOL 1552 Anatomy and Physiology II. This course addresses classroom and laboratory topics in human anatomy and physiology with an emphasis on the relationships between instruction and learning outcomes. Required of graduate teaching assistants providing instructional support for BIOL 1552. Students will be assigned a grade of S/U. May be repeated.

BIOL 6988  Seminar in Biological Sciences  1 s.h.
May be repeated up to two semester hours.

BIOL 6989  Graduate Research Experience  1-3 s.h.
Independent study for graduate students wishing to learn specific biological research techniques. Applicable only to biology graduate students following the nonthesis or biology education options. May be repeated for up to a total of three semester hours.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor or department chair.

BIOL 6990  Master's Thesis Research  1-6 s.h.
Research selected and supervised by departmental advisor and approved by graduate faculty of Biology Department and graduate dean. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours.
Prereq.: Acceptance by departmental committee.

BIOL 6991  Research Methods for Thesis  3 s.h.
Discussion and demonstration of current methods and concepts related to research in biological sciences and writing of a graduate thesis proposal. Not applicable for students enrolled in the nonthesis or biology education options. May be repeated once.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.

BIOL 6994  Research Methods for Nonthesis  2 s.h.
A course focused on reviewing current biological concepts as reported in the scientific literature. Not applicable for students enrolled in the thesis or biology education options.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.

BIOL 6996  Topics in Ecology  1 s.h.
An arranged course in terrestrial and aquatic ecology. May be repeated with a different subject up to 2 s.h.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.

BIOL 6997  Topics in Molecular and Cellular Biology  1 s.h.
An arranged course in subjects at the molecular level of life. May be repeated with different subject up to 2 s.h.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.

BIOL 6998  Topics in Physiology  1 s.h.
An arranged course for advanced subjects in vertebrate physiology. May be repeated with a different subject up to 2 s.h.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.

BIOL 7000  Topics in Microbiology  1 s.h.
An arranged course on subjects of microbiology. May be repeated with a different subject up to 2 s.h.
Prereq.: Permission of instructor.