Biology, Ph.D.

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (http://cst.temple.edu)

About the Program

The Ph.D. in Biology offers students rigorous advanced study of the Biological Sciences. Broad preparation is offered in major research areas in Biology through a variety of formal courses and advanced seminars. Students are encouraged to take courses in related sciences. Preparation for both research and teaching is important.

Time Limit for Degree Completion: 7 years

Campus Location: Main

Full-Time/Part-Time Status: Full-time study is required.

Interdisciplinary Study: The program encourages interdisciplinary research and coursework in Biochemistry, Chemistry, Computer Science, Environmental Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Physics. Special interdisciplinary programs in which faculty from the Biology Department participate include the Center for Biotechnology, Center for Computational Genetics and Genomics, the Institute for Computational Molecular Science, the Institute for Genomics and Evolutionary Medicine (see http://igem.temple.edu/education/doctoral), and the Environmental Studies and Neuroscience Programs.

Areas of Specialization: Faculty members specialize in the areas of Aquatic and Terrestrial Ecology, Biochemistry, Biophysics, Cell Biology, Computational Genomics, Developmental Biology, Evolutionary and Organismal Biology, Genetics, Molecular Biology, Molecular Evolution, Neurobiology, and Virology.

Job Prospects: The department produces well-trained biologists who find work in the health professions, pharmaceutical or biotechnology fields, and government or academia.

Non-Matriculated Student Policy: Non-matriculated students may enroll in a total of three courses (9 credits) with permission of the instructor and the department.

Financing Opportunities: Temple University offers a limited number of Fellowships to support outstanding students in the doctoral program. Fellowships typically provide support, including a stipend and tuition, for two years.

Additional support is available in the form of Teaching and Research Assistantships. The principal duties of a Teaching Assistant include assisting faculty in the classroom; offering field and laboratory instruction; preparing materials for demonstration; conducting tutorials and laboratory sessions; and grading labs, quizzes, and tests. Attendance at weekly laboratory preparation sessions is required. The duties of a Research Assistant vary depending on the faculty member or principal investigator who is directing a specific research project. The appropriate project(s) are determined by consultation between the student and the student's academic and research advisors. Research Assistants are expected to devote 20 hours per week to research obligations. Both Teaching and Research Assistantships typically provide a nine-month academic-year stipend and full tuition remission (up to 9 credits per term), but are generally awarded on a per term basis. Summer stipends are also available. Assistantships are awarded competitively.

Admission Requirements and Deadlines

Application Deadline:

Fall: December 15; November 15 international
Spring: October 15; August 1 international

To be considered for a University Fellowship, applicants must have a completed application on file by February 1.

Matriculation in the Fall is highly recommended. Late applications may be considered for admission.

APPLY ONLINE to this graduate program.

Letters of Reference:

Number Required: 3

From Whom: Letters should be obtained from college/university faculty, preferably those in laboratory science areas, who are familiar with the applicant's academic and/or research abilities.

Coursework Required for Admission Consideration: Applicants should have a solid background in Biology and should have taken at least eight undergraduate Biology courses, as well as one year each of Calculus, Chemistry, and Physics. The Biology Department Graduate Committee may allow exceptions to these course requirements after review.
Master's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: A master's degree is not required.

Bachelor's Degree in Discipline/Related Discipline: A baccalaureate degree in Biology or another science field is required.

Statement of Goals: Approximately 500-1,000 words include your interest in Temple's program, your research goals, and your academic and research achievements.

Standardized Test Scores:
GRE: Required. Combined minimum score of 305 on the quantitative and verbal reasoning sections
TOEFL: 90 iBT or 575 PBT minimum

Transfer Credit: Graduate credits from an accredited institution may be transferred into the Biology program. The credits must be equivalent to coursework offered by the Biology Department at Temple University. A grade of "B" or better must have been earned for the credits to transfer. The Biology Department Graduate Committee makes recommendations to the Department Chair for transferring credit on an individual basis. The maximum number of credits a student may transfer is 6.

Advanced Standing: A student who has completed a master's degree at another institution may apply for advanced standing. Students are awarded varying numbers of credit of advanced standing. This differs from transfer credit in that the number of credits awarded is recorded on the transcript without specific information about the courses transferred. The effect of having advanced standing is to reduce the total number of credits the student is required to take at Temple University.

Program Requirements

General Program Requirements:
Number of Didactic Credits Required Beyond the Master's: 10

Required Courses:

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 8003</td>
<td>Introduction to Graduate Research</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 8220</td>
<td>Seminar (1 s.h. in the Fall and 2 s.h. in the Spring)</td>
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<td>Five 3-s.h. Graduate Seminars</td>
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<td>15</td>
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Select other coursework from the following:

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 5101</td>
<td>Evolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5225</td>
<td>Evolutionary Genetics Genomics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5232</td>
<td>Behavioral Genetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5254</td>
<td>Animal Behavior</td>
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<td>BIOL 5307</td>
<td>Conservation Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5311</td>
<td>Herpetology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5312</td>
<td>Biostatistics</td>
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<td>BIOL 5321</td>
<td>Plant Community Ecology</td>
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<td>BIOL 5322</td>
<td>Plant Genetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5337</td>
<td>Comparative Biomechanics</td>
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<td>BIOL 5338</td>
<td>Epigenetics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5358</td>
<td>Cellular/Molecular Neuroscience</td>
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<td>BIOL 5366</td>
<td>Stem Cell Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5403</td>
<td>Genomics</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5416</td>
<td>Tropical Marine Biology: Belize</td>
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<td>BIOL 5428</td>
<td>Virology</td>
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<td>BIOL 5429</td>
<td>Developmental Genetics</td>
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<td>BIOL 5436</td>
<td>Freshwater Ecology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5452</td>
<td>Systems Neuroscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5454</td>
<td>Neurological Basis of Animal Behavior</td>
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<td>BIOL 5456</td>
<td>Organization and Development of the Nervous System</td>
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<td>BIOL 5464</td>
<td>Biochemistry of Embryogenesis</td>
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<td>BIOL 5465</td>
<td>Mammalian Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5466</td>
<td>Contemporary Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5469</td>
<td>Molecular Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 5471</td>
<td>Cell Proliferation</td>
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BIOL 5474  Physical Biochemistry
BIOL 5475  General Biochemistry I
BIOL 5476  General Biochemistry II
BIOL 5479  Biotechnology
BIOL 5501  Analytical Biotechnology
BIOL 5502  Microbial Biotechnology

Total Credit Hours 21

1 One 3-credit seminar may be replaced with three 1-credit seminars.

Additional Requirements:
All graduate-level courses must be passed with a "B-" or better.

All Ph.D. candidates must have experience teaching at Temple University. A minimum teaching requirement of two terms may be satisfied by serving as a Teaching Assistant in the Biology Department.

Attendance at scheduled departmental colloquia is required.

Culminating Events:

Preliminary Examination:
The student independently prepares a written proposal and submits it to the Graduate Committee by April 1 of the student's fourth term. The proposal should follow the general format of a postdoctoral proposal to a federal granting agency (e.g., NIH). It should include background surrounding a particular research problem, including literature related to the problem, and a detailed methodological plan for investigating the problem. The sections of the written proposal should include Title; Abstract (not to exceed 300 words); Specific Aims; Background and Significance; Preliminary Data; Experimental Design, including Rationale, Specific Methods, Interpretation of Possible Results, and Pitfalls and Alternative Strategies; and References in PNAS format. It should be 15 to 20 pages in length. The research advisor is not to make direct contributions to the brief.

The Area Committee has two weeks in which to review the written proposal, and the student is allowed only one re-write. If the proposal is not accepted after the first re-write, the student is considered to have failed the exam. If the written proposal is accepted, an oral examination is scheduled through the Graduate Secretary and held within two weeks. The oral examination tests the student's understanding of the background and substance of the research proposal and her/his understanding of the area of specialization in which the research is embedded.

The preliminary examination is administered by the Preliminary Examination Committee in the absence of the research advisor. A minimum of three examiners serve on the Preliminary Examination Committee. The full exam, both written and oral, is graded by the Preliminary Examination Committee, and one of the following grades is assigned: Fail, Promising, Pass, High Pass, or Pass with Distinction. The evaluators look for a breadth and depth of understanding of specific research areas; a critical application of that knowledge to specific biological phenomena; and an ability to write a proposal in a manner consistent with scientists in the student's specialization. The student is notified of the grade the day the exam is taken. A passing grade requires a 2/3 majority of the Preliminary Examination Committee. The grade of Promising denotes that an exam must be retaken. Examinations that are to be retaken must be completed before October 1 of the following academic year.

Dissertation:
The doctoral dissertation is an original empirical study that demonstrates the student's knowledge of research methods and mastery of her/his primary area of research.

The Doctoral Advisory Committee includes a minimum of four members: three from the department, including the advisor, and one from outside the department. Departmental members must be Graduate Faculty or equivalent research faculty and are chosen by the student and advisor. The Doctoral Advisory Committee is to be formed within 2 to 3 months after successful completion of the preliminary examination, with the exception of the outside member who may be chosen just prior to the Initial Dissertation Defense. The student may petition the Biology Department Graduate Committee to change an advisor or committee member.

The Initial Dissertation Defense is to be an open defense to which faculty and graduate students are invited. It is conducted significantly in advance of writing the final draft of the dissertation and is administered by the Dissertation Examining Committee, including the outside member. This is to be arranged by the dissertation advisor and the results reported to the Chair of the Graduate Committee and the Department Chair in writing, signed by committee members.

The Final Doctoral Examination is to consist of a formal departmental colloquium open to the public, but conducted by the Doctoral Advisory Committee. The outside examiner need not be present. The student then meets with the Dissertation Examining Committee after the colloquium for the Final Dissertation Defense. The penultimate version of the dissertation must be approved by the Doctoral Advisory Committee at least two weeks before the Graduate School deadline for submission of final copies.

The scheduling of the Final Dissertation Defense is to be arranged by the dissertation advisor. The Graduate School must be notified at least 10 working days in advance. Announcements of the dissertation defense are posted around the Biology Department and sent via e-mail or listserv.
Contacts

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https://bio.cst.temple.edu/

Department Information:
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1900 N. 12th Street
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215-204-8877

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340 Carnell Hall (041-03)
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Philadelphia, PA 19122-6104

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