

professional degrees. The Biology Department has further informational materials available on request.

Master of Science Degree Requirements

The Master of Science program in Biology assumes preparation equivalent to a California State University, Fresno undergraduate major in biology. Students having undergraduate majors in fields other than the biological sciences may enter the program, but may reasonably expect additional requirements to produce equivalent preparation.

A master's candidate interested in pursuing marine science studies must meet California State University, Fresno Biology Department master's candidate requirements as well as those of MLML. Such candidates are encouraged to consult the Biology Department's MLML coordinator for information and to read the MLML information presented at the end of the graduate information.

There are five steps that must be completed for the Master of Science degree in Biology:

1. Admission to the university as a postbaccalaureate student
2. Admission to classified graduate standing (constitutes admission to the department program)
3. Advancement to candidacy (formalizes thesis committee and research project)
4. Completion of a thesis and associated requirements
5. Completion of all additional requirements for award of master's degree

Normal progress toward the Master of Science degree in Biology requires that classified graduate standing be achieved in the first semester of graduate study and that advancement to candidacy be granted the following semester. Completion of the thesis and all other program requirements will normally require two additional semesters of study. Procedures for completing these steps are outlined in the following sections. Students should meet with the departmental graduate coordinator at the earliest possible date. **Students are personally responsible for ensuring that all graduate degree requirements have been met in sequence; therefore, each student should read the procedures thoroughly to be sure all requirements are understood.**

Admission to Graduate Standing

Admission to the university is handled through the Graduate Admissions Office of California State University, Fresno. For admission as a postbaccalaureate student to the university, a student must have completed a four-year

college program and hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 in the last 60 units.

To be considered for graduate classified standing in biology, the following additional steps are required of students planning to enter the biology graduate program.

1. Submit current scores (within the last five years) for the General Graduate Record Exam.
2. Contact the graduate coordinator in the Biology Department prior to registration for assignment of a temporary faculty adviser who will assist in the planning of initial courses. Students may request the assignment of any biology faculty member to serve in this capacity.
3. Meet with the temporary adviser prior to registration and develop an approved initial program of at least 9 units that is mutually agreeable to the student and the adviser. These courses are to be entered on the "Approved Preliminary Program" form (available from the Biology Office) and signed by the student, temporary adviser, and departmental graduate coordinator. This will constitute the Approved Initial Graduate Program. These courses may or may not be included on your Advancement to Candidacy Application; make-up classes, for example, are not included. All students are required to have the "Approved Preliminary Program" form approved and on file prior to registration. Upon completion of all prerequisites, the student must file for classified standing.

Admission to Classified Graduate Standing

Admission to classified graduate standing constitutes official admission into the graduate program in the Department of Biology and requires the approval of the Biology Department. Classified standing must be attained no later than the semester in which a student completes 10 units, including transfer and postbaccalaureate credit, to be used toward the master's degree; students should attempt to obtain classified graduate standing as early as possible in their graduate careers to avoid possible loss of units. Normal progress toward the degree requires that this be accomplished in the first semester of graduate work.

Students applying for classified standing should be sure they have submitted an "Approved Preliminary Program" form to the departmental graduate coordinator.

Admission to classified graduate standing must be recommended by the graduate co-

ordinator in consultation with the Graduate Committee of the Biology Department. To be recommended, the student must demonstrate competency in verbal or written communication, quantitative analytical skills and disciplinary knowledge.

Competencies may be demonstrated in the following manner:

1. For verbal or written communication, students must achieve one of the following: (1) 60th percentile or better on the verbal portion of the general GRE, (2) a grade of **B** or better in an upper-division writing course, (3) a score of 4.5 or better on the writing portion of the General GRE, or (4) 80% or better on the Upper-Division Writing Exam. In exceptional cases the Graduate Committee may consider alternative evidence of verbal or writing skills.
2. For quantitative analytical skills, students must achieve either (1) a quantitative GRE score of 60th percentile or better or (2) a **B** or better in a mathematics class at least at the level of MATH 70 (introductory calculus).
3. For disciplinary knowledge, students must achieve at least one of the following:
 - a. A score on the subject Biology test of the GRE of 60th percentile or better.
 - b. No less than a grade of **B** in the following upper-division core courses or their equivalents: genetics, evolution, either cell biology or ecology, and one other upper-division or graduate course appropriate to the student's specialty. Evaluation of coursework will be conducted by the graduate coordinator in consultation with faculty teaching the core courses at California State University, Fresno.
 - c. No less than a grade of **C** in each of the courses listed in (b) above, as well as an overall GPA of 3.0 or better for at least 25 semester units of upper-division lecture or lecture/laboratory courses in natural science.

On recommendation, students will be assigned to one of the following two categories:

1. Classified graduate standing will be assigned to students meeting the standards in verbal written communication, quantitative analytical skills, and disciplinary knowledge.
2. Conditional classified standing will be assigned to students meeting a majority of the classification standards yet having specific identifiable deficiencies that may be easily corrected within two semesters. While this classification gives students