

1. Take the Aptitude and Subject Biology, or Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental sections of the Graduate Record Examination prior to application. Information about dates, fees, and application procedures may be obtained through the Division of Graduate Studies. The Biology Department requires that GRE advanced scores be current. Scores dating from five years previous to application are not considered valid.
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 conditional status, 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 coordinator 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 either (1) 60th percentile on the verbal portion of the general GRE or (2) a grade of *B* or better in an upper-division writing course. 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 section of the GRE of 60th percentile or better. The subject Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology section will fulfill this requirement *only in conjunction with coursework in ecology*.
  - b. No less than a grade of *B* in each of the upper-division core courses or their equivalents. Equivalency will be determined by the graduate coordinator in consultation with faculty teaching the core courses at this university.
  - c. No less than a grade of *C* in each of the upper-division core courses or their equivalents, 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 three 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 a single semester. While this classification gives students the opportunity to remedy identified deficiencies, those remedial courses taken to correct deficiencies may not be applied to the graduate program.
3. Nonclassified standing will be assigned to students who do not meet the classification standards or whose deficiencies will require more than one semester for remediation.

Students recommended for classified graduate standing may proceed with the completion of requirements for advancement to candidacy, the next step in the graduate program. Students granted conditional classified status or denied admission (remaining in postbaccalaureate unclassified standing) will not have been admitted to the graduate program in biology and must attempt to increase their classification score to gain classified standing. The graduate coordinator will provide further information on how this may be accomplished.

When any requirements for a change in graduate standing have been completed, the student must see the graduate coordinator and file appropriate forms with the graduate division.

**Advancement to Candidacy**

Acceptance to **classified graduate standing** indicates that the student's academic background and perceived ability are sufficiently high to merit admission into the biology graduate program. **Advancement to candidacy** signifies that the student has developed a coherent program of study for the Master of Science degree that meets with the approval of the Biology Department. Advancement to candidacy requires the establishment of the Thesis Committee, identification of the thesis topic, and the approval of all coursework that must fit within the following framework:

	<i>Units</i>
<b>Courses in 200-series</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Electives</b> .....	<b>9</b>
(May be 100- or 200-series)	
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>30</b>