

Sponsor/Major Advisor

Once the application materials have been received by the Graduate Coordinator in the Department of Biology, potential students will be contacted to determine if they have a sponsor/major advisor. This person is a full member of the Graduate Faculty that serves as the student's advisor for their graduate career. Potential graduate students may request assistance in finding a sponsor/major advisor from the Department's Graduate Coordinator, but it is ultimately the student's responsibility to secure a sponsor. A student **WILL NOT** be admitted without a sponsor/faculty advisor.

Program Requirements

Undergraduate requirements include a B.S. or B.A. in a biological sciences discipline or a bachelor's degree with sufficient science background. Selected undergraduate biology classes may be identified as deficiencies by the student's graduate advisory committee.

A candidate for the Master of Science degree pursuing the thesis option must complete a minimum of 33 semester hours of biology and related courses, including six semester hours of Biology 599.

!

A candidate for the Master of Science pursuing the non-thesis option must com

Tuition Waivers

Students receiving assistantships are also awarded a tuition waiver. In-state graduate tuition and out-of-state fee will be waived for the regular semester or summer session during which a student holds an assistantship. The out-of-state fee is also waived for the summer term following the spring semester in which an assistantship is held if the student does not graduate that semester. Graduate assistants are required to pay general fee, activity fee, ID validation fee, technology fee, and if applicable, a vehicle registration fee and international student service and insurance fees.

Major Professor

The major professor serves as the primary advisor for a graduate student during the student's tenure in the Biology graduate program. The

(www.ulm.edu/gradschool/GradSchoolForms.html) MUST be submitted to the Biology Department Head by the end of the student's first semester. Students without a major professor will not be allowed to continue in the program.

The major professor for a Thesis M.S. graduate stud

Degree Plan

A proposed plan of course work, called the degree plan, should be approved during the first meeting of the graduate advisory committee. The degree plan lists the student's deficiencies (if any), and courses to be taken in the major area, minor area (if applicable) and related course work from other departments. All members of the advisory committee will sign the completed (www.ulm.edu/gradschool/GradSchoolForms.html) that is submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Note on course load: Graduate students may take up to 18 hours per semester, unless they hold an assistantship. Graduate assistants must have approval of the major professor and Dean of the Graduate School to enroll in more than 15 hours in a regular semester. Nine hours is the minimum enrollment in a regular semester and three hours in a summer semester for a full-time graduate student and is required for the student to receive an assistantship. Graduate students may enroll in a maximum of seven hours during a summer semester.

Comprehensive Exams

Written comprehensive exams are administered to Thesis and Non-Thesis M.S. students. The exams are scheduled within a time period specified in the calendar circulated by the Graduate School. Written comprehensive exams may be taken by the graduate student during any semester once the student has enrolled in all courses on the degree plan. Questions for the Thesis M.S. students are submitted by each member of the student's graduate advisory committee. These questions may be derived from material covered in classes the student has had under a committee member or refer to a student's area of research interest. Questions for the Non-Thesis M.S. students are submitted by faculty who have taught each class listed on the student's degree plan. These questions will be gathered by the Major Professor and administered to the student.

Oral comprehensive exams are given to Thesis M.S. students at the conclusion of the Thesis Seminar, and only occur after successful completion of the written portion of the comprehensive exams. Advisory committee members examine the student's rationale, hypothesis, analysis, conclusions, and general knowledge of the subject area. A student may also be queried on subject matter that was covered on the written exam, especially if the student's response on the

