Welcome
Welcome to the Department of Integrative Biology and to the Biology M.S. Program Graduate Student Orientation. You have become part of an exciting and dynamic team of students, faculty and staff. You will find graduate school and the Biology M.S. Program challenging, invigorating and rewarding.

Faculty members in the Department are leaders in their fields of specialization. Students graduating from the Biology M.S. Program go on to careers in medicine, research, teaching, and industry. As an evolving program, the Biology M.S. Program offers opportunities for students to conduct cutting-edge research, to teach, to present at scientific conferences, to network nationally and internationally with scientists, to publish, and to establish a defined career path or identify a new career. The next 2-3 years will present you with unanticipated opportunities for professional and academic development.

I am looking forward to working with you and to seeing you achieve great successes.

Regards,
Dr. Timberley Roane
Associate Chair for Graduate Studies
Department of Integrative Biology

Associate Chair for Graduate Studies
Dr. Timberley Roane
Office: 4096 Science Building
Phone: 303-556-6592
Email: Timberley.Roane@ucdenver.edu

Relevant websites
Department of Integrative Biology: http://clas.ucdenver.edu/biology/
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS):
http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/CLAS/Pages/CLAS.aspx
Graduate School:
http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/Pages/default.aspx
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At a Glance

Research (thesis) M.S. degree

Minimum credits required: 30

Required coursework:

- 2 semesters of the Biology graduate seminar (BIOL 6655)
- 4 – 6 credits of thesis (BIOL 6950)
- *No more than 7 credits of independent study/internship can be applied toward degree

Required exams:

- Biology comprehensive written exam (when: end of first fall semester in the program)
- Two specialty comprehensive written exams (when: in last 1-2 semesters in the program)
- Oral comprehensive exam (when: last 1-2 semesters in the program)
- Oral research defense and written thesis (when: last semester in the program)

Minimum required GPA: 3.0

Estimated time to completion: 2-2.5 years

Coursework (non-thesis) M.S. degree

Minimum credits required: 32

Required coursework:

- 2 semesters of the Biology graduate seminar (BIOL 6655)
- *No more than 6 credits of independent study/internship can be applied toward degree

Required exams:

- Biology comprehensive written exam (when: end of first fall semester in the program)
- Two specialty comprehensive written exams (when: in last 1-2 semesters in the program)
- Oral comprehensive exam (when: last 1-2 semesters in the program)

Minimum required GPA: 3.0

Estimated time to completion: 2 years
Your First Semester

This is likely to be an exciting and crazy time for you---a lot happens this first semester. In addition to taking your first graduate level courses, some of you will also be teaching, doing research, and trying to balance a social/family life. Here are a few things to expect your first semester:

Completion of the Pre-registration Agreement Form: This form (available on the Biology graduate program website) should ideally be completed prior to registering for class your first semester. This form is filled out in consultation with your faculty advisor. It lays out a tentative academic plan for your M.S. program. It is up to you and your faculty advisor to determine which courses are relevant to your program focus. It is important to keep in mind, however, that your two specialty comprehensive exams (see below) will be based on aspects of your area of specialization within the program. Your coursework (and research) will center on this area. You and your advisor should keep a copy of the Pre-registration Agreement Form; a copy should also be given to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

Studying for the Biology Comprehensive Exam: A study guide for the Biology Comprehensive Exam will be sent to all incoming students around mid-October, for an anticipated December/January administration of the exam. While the study guide is not meant to provide a detailed analysis of exam topics, it will provide general exam material. Included in the study guide are relevant chapters in a predetermined general biology textbook. The Biology Comprehensive Exam is a 3 hr multiple choice exam. You must pass the exam prior to continuing in the M.S. program. Students who fail the exam may be required to leave the Biology M.S. program.

Research students: Research (thesis) students will be expected to begin, if not complete, their research proposal. Details for the proposal should be discussed with your faculty advisor. However, most students will be expected to write their proposal, with their faculty advisor work through several drafts of the proposal, and prepare their proposal in a professional and academic manner for distribution to their research committee members. Most students will present their proposed research to their committee members* in the first/second semester in the program.

*Composition of the research committee: The research (thesis) committee is consists of 3 graduate faculty members (a minimum of 2 must be faculty within the Department of Integrative Biology; a 3rd member may, with the approval of the Department and the CLAS Dean’s office, be outside the Department). The faculty members chosen for the research committee should be done in consultation with your faculty advisor; and each member (one of which is your faculty advisor) should be able to directly contribute to your research program. For example, if your proposed research involves a lot of microbiology, then you may want to consider including a microbiologist as a committee member.

In Between Semesters

Comprehensive exam committee: A minimum of one semester PRIOR to your specialty exams, you MUST have your comprehensive exam committee formed. This committee consists of three Department of Integrative Biology faculty members (the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and your
faculty advisor). The third member should be able to address your area of specialization. Work with your faculty advisor to compose your comprehensive exam committee. For research students, members of your research committee may also be on your comprehensive exam committee; however, all comprehensive exam committee members must be UCD Biology faculty.

Comprehensive exams: The entire comprehensive exam process includes: the general biology comprehensive exam (administered in the 1st semester); two specialty comprehensive written exams; and an oral comprehensive exam. Each exam within the comprehensive exam series must be passed in order to complete the M.S. degree. Failure on any aspect of the comprehensive exams will result in remediative action, and failure to pass any aspect of the exam a second time will result in suspension and removal from the M.S. program. Failure on multiple aspects of the exam will result in suspension and incompletion of the M.S. program.

Research (thesis) students: research and meeting with your research committee: You are required to hold regular meetings with your research committee to discuss your research progress. These meetings may be formal or informal, but must include the presence of all committee members at once. For example, most students schedule a formal committee wide meeting once/semester. In between formal meetings, you may meet with individual committee members to discuss various aspects of your research.

Putting together the research thesis is a long, involved process. Students should not expect to be able to write and complete their thesis within one semester. Throughout your program, you should be reading the literature, conducting research, troubleshooting and interpreting data, and composing various aspects of your thesis. This will make putting together the final version of your thesis a more pleasant and less stressful experience.

Writing your thesis: Guidelines and the required format for the M.S. thesis can be found on the CLAS website. Your thesis must undergo Graduate School review prior to completion and final submission. You are responsible for writing your thesis in an accurate and professional manner. You are responsible for the accuracy of its content. Your faculty advisor will help you in the process of putting together your thesis; however, the thesis is ultimately your responsibility. It is body of work that will be published with your name attached to it. It is not your advisor’s responsibility to write your thesis. That said, your advisor MUST approve of your thesis prior to submission to the Graduate School and any committee members.

Your Final Semester (e.g., end of year 2)

This is likely to be a very stressful semester. Not only will you be completing your academic requirements, but you may also be completing your research, applying to another graduate/professional program or to a job, completing your comprehensive exams, and possibly defending your thesis. It will be an exciting, but incredibly busy time that will require your utmost dedication and organization.

Completion of the specialty comprehensive and oral comprehensive exams: Many students complete their written specialty comprehensive exams and oral exam their final semester in the program (generally end of year 2). All students (coursework and research) must complete the two specialty written exams and the oral exam prior to graduation.
*Coursework (non-thesis) students only: you MUST complete the Request for Graduate Examination form by the stated deadline PRIOR to your oral comprehensive exam. This form and its deadline are available on the CLAS website. Note, research (thesis) students, you are completing this form prior to and for your thesis defense (see below).

Submission of Intent to Graduate and Application for Admission to Candidacy forms: Both forms must be completed and submitted to the Dean’s office prior to the stated deadlines. Submitting either form after the CLAS deadline will result in a one semester delay in your graduation. It is imperative that these forms be filled out on time. These forms and their deadlines can be found on the CLAS website. Copies of both submitted forms must be submitted to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

*Thesis completion and oral defense (research students only): Your thesis is now close to completion and has been reviewed several times by your faculty advisor for readiness for your research committee members to evaluate. The thesis should be made available to your research committee members no less than 1 week prior to your scheduled oral defense date.

*Oral defense: This is an oral PowerPoint presentation of your M.S. research. Included in your presentation should be, but not limited to, your project goals and objectives, project significance, methods and experimental approaches, results and discussion, and future directions. The oral presentation is an open forum format, e.g., many students coordinate their presentations with the Department’s spring seminar series. Following the oral presentation, all non-committee members will be asked to leave the room for a Q&A period with just the student’s committee members present.

*Prior to the oral defense, a Request for Graduate Examination form MUST be submitted to the CLAS Dean’s office prior to the stated deadline. Forms not submitted on time will not be processed and you will not be able to defend your research and graduate that semester. The form and corresponding deadline is available on the CLAS website.

After Graduation

Congratulations, you are now an alumnus of the Department of Integrative Biology and the University of Colorado Denver. Keep in touch by providing updated contact information for announcements of special alumni events, Department happenings, and University news. Keeping in touch with the Department post-graduation is one way to keep up with professional and academic contacts and references as you proceed in your career.

Additional Information

**Professionalism and demeanor:** As a member of the Biology M.S. program, you are a professional. You will be treated with professionalism and respect, and likewise the program expects the same from you. Any violations of institutional policies, advisor expectations, or program expectations will be dealt with promptly and severely. Unprofessional and unethical behavior will not be tolerated and will be considered for grounds for removal from the program.
**What are the comprehensive exams?** The comprehensive exams are a series of exams designed to assess your mastery of biological and scientific concepts. The Biology Comprehensive Exam, taken upon entry to the program, assesses your working knowledge of general biological concepts. The specialty and oral exams assess your mastery of biological information and concepts in your area of specialization. These exams further help you develop your ability to communicate scientific information in both written and oral formats, a skill difficult to teach in the classroom and a skill highly valued by graduate/professional schools and employers.

**How to prepare your thesis:** You should work with your faculty advisor on the development and progress of your thesis. For many, the thesis is their first scientific publication. This is a professional document that can be used to demonstrate your mastery in your area of specialization. Guidelines for the preparation of and deadlines for the submission of the thesis are available on the CLAS website.

**How to prepare for your thesis defense:** Your research thesis defense is a scientific presentation. To your defense, you should dress appropriately and conduct yourself in a professional, scientific manner. Practice your oral presentation several times in advance of your actual defense. Work with your faculty advisor on presentation style and content. You should be able to openly discuss your research, methodologies, results, etc., and be prepared to answer related questions from the audience. The actual oral defense presentation should be approximately 45-50 min with several minutes for questions. No one knows your research better than you. Demonstrate how well you know your own work. No one project is perfect and there are always limitations to the work. This is okay. Be prepared to address any limitations in your work and be prepared to suggest solutions/alternatives. How prepared you are and how you conduct yourself is part of the evaluation of your defense.

**Teaching:** Many students choose to teach during their M.S. program. Teaching provides you with experiences beyond standing in front of a classroom. You learn to communicate information, handle difficult personnel situations, organize materials, keep accurate records, supervise individuals, and think on your feet. Even if you do not plan to go into teaching as a career, employers recognize the skills above and will value you and your experiences even more, as every job requires these skills. Students in the Biology M.S. program may teach an individual course or multiple courses.

**Travel to professional meetings:** Students in the Biology M.S. program should seek opportunities to present at scientific meetings. Students should work with their faculty advisors for clarification of these opportunities. Should you travel/present at a meeting, you are representing yourself, the Department and the University. Behave in a professional manner. Any cases of unethical, inappropriate, or unprofessional behavior will be dealt with in accordance to the University’s codes for academic and professional behavior.

**Meeting deadlines:** There are a number of deadlines to keep track of. Do so. It is your responsibility (not your advisor’s) to keep track of deadlines and make sure you are getting the appropriate paperwork turned in complete and on time. Violations of deadlines and/or missing paperwork are reported to the Department, the CLAS Dean’s office, and the Graduate School. Missing paperwork/deadlines will result
in a delay in graduation and can result in suspension from the University and incompletion of the degree.

**Transfer credits:** Students may take a limited number of courses (a limited number of credits) outside of the Department of Integrative Biology. To take a course in another Department (at UCD or at another institution), you must first discuss this with your faculty advisor. Upon approval by your faculty advisor, you must then discuss this with the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. Following approval by the Associate Chair, you may need to seek approval by the CLAS Dean’s office and the Graduate School. Transfer credits are limited to courses that are (1) an important component of the student’s training and development; (2) not offered on the downtown campus of UCD (courses taken at the Anschutz Medical Campus are considered transfer credits); and (3) taken at the graduate level. In exceptional cases, a course may be taken outside of the graduate level upon the necessary approval. See the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies for more information.

* A student may not have more than 12 total transfer credits apply toward their M.S. degree.

**Time for completion of the degree:** Students must complete the Biology M.S. degree within 5 years of their start date in the program.
Example Forms

(please check the relevant websites for updated forms and deadlines)
Pre-Registration Agreement Form

(To be retained in the student's graduate folder, with courses added over time and signatures updated.)

**Student’s Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title and Semester</th>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Credits towards M.S. degree</th>
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**Student’s Signature:**

**Advisor’s Name:**

**Advisor’s Signature:**

(Designates approval of the above course)

**Date:**
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY
For an Advanced Degree

University of Colorado Denver
Graduate School

This application is to be completed by the student, approved by the appropriate faculty, and submitted to the Graduate School. For items not applicable for your degree program, write N/A in the space provided.

Date __________________________ Email: ________________________________

Name as shown on University records ______________________________________

Last First Middle Maiden (if different)

Student Number ______________________ Telephone Number __________________

Permanent Mailing Address ________________________________________________

Degree for which applying: M.A. M.I.S. M.H. M.S. M.E. M.S.S. Ed.S. Ph.D.

Department __________________________ Option ____________________________

Certificate (if any): ______________________________________________________

Term Graduating: Semester __________ Year __________

Degree Plan (check one): Thesis ____ Non-Thesis (Project) _____

Does your research involve human subjects (interviews, surveys, etc.) or the use of animals?

Yes _____ No ______

Has your research been submitted to or approved by the Human Research Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee?

Yes ____ No ____ HRC # __________ IACUC # __________

Note: Federal regulations require all research involving human or animal subjects to have above approval. Failure to do so can result in serious sanctions to all involved.

SEE BACK PAGE FOR GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

For Departmental Use Only

Foreign language required? Yes ____ No _____

Foreign language requirement fulfilled by __________________________

Deficiencies __________________________ How and When Removed __________________

______________________________ ________________________________

______________________________ ________________________________

______________________________ ________________________________
List in chronological order the courses which you are applying toward your degree. Do not include courses to satisfy deficiencies. Do not list courses in excess of the minimum requirements. Course numbers must match those on your transcript. Transfer courses and thesis, report, and project hours should be listed in the appropriate sections of this form.

**COURSES APPLYING TOWARD DEGREE**

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<tr>
<th>Instructor’s Name</th>
<th>Sem</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Title of Courses Taken at University of Colorado</th>
<th>Department &amp; Course #</th>
<th>Sem</th>
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### THESIS, DISSERTATION, PROJECT, OR REPORT HOURS

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<th>Instructor’s Name</th>
<th>Sem</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Thesis/Dissertation/Project/Report</th>
<th>Department &amp; Course #</th>
<th>Sem Hrs</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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### TRANSFER COURSES

When transferring credit from other universities to be applied toward an advanced degree at UCD, you must submit the completed Request for Transfer of Credit form to the Graduate School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor’s Name</th>
<th>Sem</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Title of Courses to be Transferred</th>
<th>Department &amp; Course #</th>
<th>Sem Hrs</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Educational Institution</th>
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Department Graduate Advisor (Signature and Date)  
Department Graduate Advisor (type or print name)  
Department Chair (Signature and Date)  
Department Chair (type or print name)  
Student (Signature and Date)  
Student (type or print name)
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

• A Schedule of Deadlines is available from your department, CLAS website or from the Graduate School. It is important that you adhere to the deadline dates if you desire to graduate in a given semester.
• If you have any classes in which you have received an incomplete, this grade must be changed by the date indicated on the Schedule of Deadlines.
• “Guidelines for Preparing Master’s and Doctoral Theses” is available online at: http://thunder1.cudenver.edu/clas/advising/grad/thesisGuidelines.html
• You must be registered for classes or as a Candidate for Degree during the semester that you take your final examination or defend your thesis/dissertation.

PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATION:

Complete and submit to the CLAS Dean’s Office (master’s candidates) or Graduate School (doctoral candidates):

_____ Application for Admission to Candidacy

_____ Intent to Graduate – done online at: https://admin.cudenver.edu/reg/
   (this must be completed at the beginning of the semester you plan to graduate, even if previously submitted)

_____ Request for Graduate Examination (All master’s candidates must submit 1 week prior to exam; doctoral candidates must submit 2 weeks prior to exam)

_____ Preliminary copy of thesis/dissertation to be checked for format review

_____ Finalized copies of thesis/dissertation – 2 copies on bond paper, 1 copy on regular paper must be submitted to the Graduate School by the deadline specified (binding fee must be paid when submitted – CHECKS ONLY PLEASE!)

Ph.D. Students only (in addition to above):

_____ Typed Announcement Form of Dissertation Defense to be submitted 2 weeks prior to defense

_____ Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form (fee must be paid when submitted – CHECKS ONLY PLEASE!)

_____ Survey of Earned Doctorates Form

Exceptions:

Time Limits: If you exceed the following limits, you must submit a request for a waiver

_____ Master’s degree completed within 7 years of acceptance into your program of study prior to spring semester 2009; must be completed within 5 years if accepted in spring 2009 or later.

_____ Ph.D. degree completed within 8 years of acceptance into your program of study
REQUEST FOR GRADUATE EXAMINATION/THESIS DEFENSE

Upon receipt of this form, the CLAS Dean's Office/Graduate School will request a proficiency rating (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) from the student's program. This form must be completed and returned to the CLAS Dean's Office/Graduate School PRIOR (see deadline sheets) to the comprehensive exam; defense/presentation of dissertation, thesis, report, or project; portfolio review; and/or any other means the department determines is appropriate. It is the student's responsibility to set the date and time of the exam, in consultation with advisor.

Master's

- Request due in CLAS Dean's Office one week prior to exam. A minimum of three committee members are needed and all must hold current graduate faculty appointments; committee chair must have a regular appointment to the graduate faculty.
- Application for Admission to Candidacy must accompany this request or already be in the CLAS Dean's Office. (See Master's Deadline Sheet)
- Student must be registered during semester of graduate exam/thesis defense for course work, thesis or project hours, or as a candidate for degree.

Doctoral

- Request due in Graduate School two weeks prior to the comprehensive exam and oral defense. Student must submit typed announcement for oral defense.
- Application for Admission to Candidacy must accompany this request when scheduling comprehensive exam. (See Graduate School Doctoral Deadline Sheet)
- Minimum of four committee members for comprehensive exam and oral defense; one committee member for the oral defense must be from outside the primary department.
- All committee members must hold current graduate faculty appointments; chair must have regular appointment to the graduate faculty.
- Students taking comprehensive exam must be registered for course work and/or dissertation hours. Students scheduling oral defense must be registered for a minimum of 5 dissertation hours.

STUDENT NAME: ___________________________ STUDENT NUMBER: ___________________________
LAST FIRST MIDDLE
DEPARTMENT: ___________________________ DEGREE: ___________________________
DATE OF EXAM: ___________________________
Select One:

_____ Master's Thesis Defense (Plan I)        _____ Doctoral - Comprehensive Exam
Master's Non-Thesis Option (Plan II): _______ Doctoral - Final Defense
_____ Project  _____ Report  _____ Comp Exam

PLEASE LIST COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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