THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
RULES FOR GRADUATE STUDY
Master of Science - Plans I and II

Most of the following rules are in addition to those of the Graduate College and are subject to change at any time (but not retroactively) by the Graduate Faculty of the Department:

I. The Department of Biological Sciences offers the Master of Science degree under Plan I which requires a thesis, and a non-thesis program designated as Plan II.

II. All applicants for the Master of Science degree must have their Graduate Record Examination scores transmitted to the Graduate College.

III. The Department Graduate Coordinator (Chair of Graduate Committee) will act as the major advisor until the student has selected a definite area of specialization. The checklist for the M.S. will be initiated upon choosing an area of specialization.

IV. All students entering graduate studies toward the Master of Science will meet with their advisor no later than the end of the first semester of full-time graduate study. The purpose of that meeting will be to establish either a Plan I or Plan II course of study and to select the student's committee.

V. The student's committee shall consist of the major advisor and at least two other members of the Graduate Faculty in Biological Sciences. An Outside (Associate) or Adjunct Graduate Faculty member may fill one of the committee positions, but may not act as the major advisor. [Consult "Policy Concerning Utilization of Non-contract Personnel in Graduate Committees" approved by Graduate Faculty, October 20, 1976.]

VI. A proposal meeting consisting of an oral defense of a written thesis research proposal is required of students pursuing Plan I. The proposal must be approved by the student's committee; a copy of the approved proposal must be submitted to the Departmental Graduate Secretary for the student's permanent file; and the Graduate College Applications/Report form must be completed and filed with the Graduate College.

VII. The Tentative Degree Program (TDP) shall be prepared and approved by the student's committee and transmitted to the Graduate College through the Departmental Graduate Coordinator by the semester following completion of 15 semester hours of graduate course work. Any substantial change in the student's plan of study after the TDP has been submitted will have to be approved by the Graduate Committee.

VIII. Candidates for the Master of Science degree shall have completed the following requirements prior to the master's examination:

A. A laboratory course in organic chemistry.
B. A course in calculus (Mathematics 1310 or equivalent).
C. One hour of Biol. 602 (Biodocumentation for Plan II students only); one hour of Biol. 7810 (Department Seminar); and Biol 6010 (Biodocumentation).
D. At least 10 hours of formal courses, letter-graded, carrying graduate credit in Biological Sciences exclusive of readings, topics, problems, issues, seminars and workshops.
E. At least 18 hours of graduate credit at the 6000-level or above (Biol. 6910 cr. hrs. do not count).

None of the course requirements, A through E, can be satisfied by audit.

F. In addition, the student shall be responsible for the knowledge equivalent to that offered in the undergraduate core in biological sciences (Biology 2040 and 2050).
IX. All candidates who follow Plan I will engage in research and report the results in the form of a thesis. The thesis will show evidence that the candidate has mastered the literature in his/her research area and has analyzed and assimilated the candidate's research results into that body of literature. The thesis will follow the format prescribed by the Graduate College, and will follow the rules of style of the Council of Biological Editors Style Manual or the editorial rules of a recognized journal. At least 30 semester hours of graduate credit are required for Plan I including 3-6 hours of Biology 699 (students register for Biol. 6910 until topic approved). All candidates who follow Plan II must complete an additional hour of Biology 6020 which will consist of a substantive written document (library or laboratory research paper) with the topic approved by the student's committee at a proposal meeting. Plan II candidates must complete 34 hours of graduate credit.

X. Final examinations for the Master of Science degree, Plan I and Plan II:

All candidates for the Master of Science degree must pass a final examination administered by the advisor and the student's committee.

A. Master of Science Plan I -- The examination will be oral. The time and place of the oral portion of the examination shall be announced to all members of the department faculty at least one week in advance of the examination date. This exam will consist of two parts:

1. General questioning of the candidate over broad areas of biology and more specific questioning in the student's area of specialization.

Once the date of the oral examination is set and the examination is in progress, the committee must render a decision at the end of the examination period. No recess or adjournment is permitted except in extenuating circumstances. If such circumstances are encountered, they must be reported to the Graduate Committee prior to a resumption of the examination. No more than one dissenting vote will be permitted in the decision to pass the student for the examination and oral defense of thesis. The vote to approve the thesis document must be unanimous.

B. Master of Science Plan II -- The final examination for the degree will consist of two components:

1. A written examination testing comprehensive biological knowledge.
2. An oral portion, with questions concerning the written examination, the student's Biology 6020 research paper, and comprehensive biological knowledge. The oral portion will be scheduled within one week of the written examination. The time and place of the oral portion of the examination shall be announced to all members of the department faculty at least one week in advance of the examination date.

As with the Plan I degree, a committee decision must be made at the end of the oral exam. The vote to approve all written work, i.e., Biology 6020 paper and written examination, must be unanimous. No more than one dissenting vote will be permitted in the decision to pass the oral portion.

C. The duties of each master's examination committee are:

1. To determine the acceptability of the thesis (Plan I only).
2. To determine whether the student has passed the final examination for the Master of Science degree.
3. To make recommendations to the student and the departmental Graduate Committee regarding continuation toward the Ph.D. degree in this department. The recommendation of the committee will be made in writing and will become a part of the student's department record (Plan I only).

XI. Each candidate (Plan I and Plan II) must complete the clearance procedures listed on the appropriate checklist one week before leaving the campus or before commencement. The completed checklist must be turned in to the departmental Graduate Coordinator (Chair, Graduate Committee) as the final step in the clearance procedure.

XII. Time Limits and Funding

Students must complete all requirements for a master's degree within 6 years from the end of the earliest course used to fulfill degree requirements on the Tentative Degree Program. Funded students should expect continued funding for two years if they are in good standing and follow the degree timeline (see checklist for M.S. programs). Students should not expect support beyond the second year.