

Ten Frequently Asked Questions by Biology Majors

1. What courses should I take?

Along with the help of your advisor, you will be able to figure out what courses are required by your degree program. The degree check sheet or junior audit form lists the requirements set by the University, College of Arts and Sciences, and Department of Biological Sciences. You must have a total of at least 122 credit hours to graduate. That number may be increased because of articulation requirements, transfer credit discrepancies, or other penalties. Of those 122 credit hours, 40 must be 3000 or 4000 level courses. All 40 hours do not have to be in biology or the sciences. Any 3000 or 4000 level course in any subject area including biology will count toward that number.

2. What is the difference between a straight biology degree and one in the pre-health professional area?

The differences are not that great since both receive a biology degree and must fulfill the same requirements. In the biology program, pre-professionals take a full year of organic chemistry rather than one semester, and two semesters of physics, rather than a single physics course. These requirements are mandated by professional schools, not BGSU.

3. How is the marine and aquatic biology specialization as well as the ecology and conservation biology specialization different from a regular biology degree?

These specializations are designed to fit the needs of those interested in these particular areas. The University and College requirements are the same as a biology degree. In addition, the math, chemistry, and physics requirements are the same. However, after completing the core courses in biology (BIOL 2000, 2040, 2050, and 3500), the requirements for each specialization are quite different. See the junior audit check sheet for more details. If you decide to add one of these specializations to your biology degree, you will need to do this in the College of Arts and Sciences office, otherwise it will not be recognized on your degree certificate. After completing one of the specialization programs, you will still graduate with a bachelor of science degree in biology, but the specialization will be noted as well.

4. What is a junior audit, do I need to have one done and where should I go to get it done?

A junior audit is an examination of the courses you have completed and are currently taking. It is required to be completed in consultation with a College of Arts and Sciences advisor sometime between 60-90 credit hours of completion. A detailed list of further requirements for you to complete the degree is provided by the individual reviewing your audit. Thus, you will know precisely what you must do to complete your degree. So, the best time to do your junior audit is during your junior year so you have time to correct any deficiencies during your senior year.

5. Does the Department of Biological Sciences have an Honors Program?

Yes, the department offers an Honors Program that is distinct from the University Honors Program. The information concerning the program may be obtained from the Departmental Honors Chair, Dr. Ray Larsen. A thesis is required (BIOL 4020H) of students in the departmental honors program as well as a public presentation of the research results achieved in BIOL 4010H (Honors Introduction to Biological Research). Description of the Biology Honors Program can be found in this handbook.

6. What is an internship and how do I go about getting/doing one?

An internship is an opportunity to get academic credit while working on a job. If a summer job is biological in nature, you may receive up to 3 hours credit in BIOL 4890. Check this out with your advisor. It is important to check with your advisor and make arrangements before the experience. There are many summer internships which pay a stipend, provide room and board, and other costs. These are usually associated with a university or medical school. The Career Center has a link with a list of websites to look for internships (<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/career/page98212.html>) or you may check with the Cooperative Education & Internship Program Office, Room 318C, Math Sciences Building. Also, look for emails from the Department of Biological Sciences announcing internship opportunities.

7. What is Biology 4010?

Biology 4010 is an independent study course that will introduce you to research. You may define a problem and seek the support of a biology faculty member to sponsor you or you may be involved in the on-going research program of a professor. Simply talk to a professor in the area of your interest. They can direct you from that point as to how to register for the course and what will be expected of you. You must have completed four semesters of biology prior to enrolling in BIOL 4010. You may repeat the course, but a maximum of 4 hours will count toward the 32 credit hours of biology courses needed in the major.

8. Are there opportunities for scholarships in the Department of Biological Sciences?

Yes, the department awards a number of scholarships each year. The scholarships are based on academics and not financial need. Thus, your academic record must be competitive. Early during spring semester, announcements will be posted in the Life Sciences Building and via email informing you of the scholarships available, the requirements for each, and where to pick up application forms. In addition, scholarship descriptions and application forms can be found on the department's website. A list of scholarships can be found in this handbook for further details.

9. What student organizations or honor societies related to biology can I join?

There are several organizations that might be of interest to you for membership. These include: Tri-Beta (BBB) biological honors society; Alpha Epsilon Delta (AED) pre-health professional honor society; Pre-Veterinary Medicine Association (PVMA); Marine Biology Association (MBA); American Medical School Association (AMSA) and the Herpetology Club. Look for emails and flyers in the Life Sciences building for information about these groups or ask in the Department of Biological Sciences office.

10. What sort of exams must I take for admission to professional or graduate schools?

Graduate Record Exam (GRE) for graduate school.

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) for medical school. (Gaining admission to medical school will be influenced by your MCAT score, undergraduate GPA, letters of recommendation, and success in the interview at the college of your choice.)

Veterinary College Admission Test (VCAT) for veterinary school. (Some veterinary schools will accept other tests.)

Dental Admission Test (DAT) for dental school.

Optometry College Admission Test (OCAT) for optometry school.