

Revised May 2006

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Department of Biological Sciences
University of Idaho**

[Updated May 2006]

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
GRADUATE EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT	4
FOREWORD	4
ACADEMIC POLICIES	5
Description of Degrees Offered	5
Advising	5
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES	6
Admission to Graduate Studies	6
Registration	6
Major Professor	6
Appointment of the Advisory Committee	6
Study Plan	7
Admission to Candidacy	7
Curriculum	8
Foreign Language Policy	8
Teaching Requirement	8
Satisfactory Progress	8
ASSISTANTSHIPS	10
Duties of Departmental Fellows	10
Duties of Research Assistants	11
POLICY ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ETHICS	12
POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY	12
POLICY ON HARASSMENT	12
POLICY ON GRADUATE STUDENT COMPLAINTS	13
POLICY ON GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS	13
POLICY ON DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS	13
POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT EXAMINATIONS	14
SCHEDULING OF EXAMS	14
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) DEGREE	14
MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.) DEGREE	18
MASTER OF NATURAL SCIENCE (M.N.S.) DEGREE	20
DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS POLICIES	22

Audio-Visual Aids Policy	22
Biology Stores.....	22
Keys, Building Access and Security	22
Office Space.....	22
Office Supplies and Secretarial Assistance.....	22
University Stationery	22
Purchasing.....	23
Leave.....	23

GRADUATE EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

Training new scientists is one of the fundamental missions of a basic biology department at a research university. The Ph.D. and M.S. degree programs are designed to strike a balance between broad training in biology and the specialization required for focused research in three areas: Evolution and Ecology, Neurobiology, and Reproductive Biology. Biological Sciences faculty members also serve as advisors for students in the two interdisciplinary programs: Bioinformatics & Computational Biology and Neuroscience.

FOREWORD

This handbook is a compilation of policies and interpretations of policies that pertain to graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. It is written for graduate students and intended for use as a guide in planning and pursuing graduate study.

Students who are enrolled in interdisciplinary degree programs but work in the laboratories of Biological Sciences faculty are also subject to the departmental policies outlined in this handbook. However, these programs have their own degree requirements, and students should refer to the appropriate handbook for those requirements.

Faculty should also keep a copy of the Handbook for reference.

Every effort has been made to accurately summarize University policies. However, since policies and interpretations may change over time due to actions taken by the University or the State Board of Education, this Handbook should be considered an unofficial source of information. Individuals are encouraged to consult the appropriate source documents, such as the General Catalog or the Faculty/Staff Handbook, or other authorities to learn more on specific policies as needed. If, at any time, inaccuracies or ambiguities are detected in this Handbook, please bring them to the attention of the Graduate Affairs Committee Chair so corrections can be made.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Description of Degrees Offered

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Admission to this degree program is based on the compatibility of your research interests with those of a prospective major professor, the availability of assistantships, as well as your academic preparation and academic promise. The prerequisites for applicants to the Ph.D. degree program include the equivalent of an undergraduate major in biology, including a year of physics, mathematics through calculus, and chemistry through organic chemistry. If you otherwise meet eligibility requirements for graduate admission, but have not completed all of these prerequisites, you will be required to take additional undergraduate courses to satisfy any deficiencies.

Doctoral students must earn a minimum of seventy-eight approved credits beyond the baccalaureate degree, with at least fifty-two credits in courses numbered 500 and above, and at least 33 of the 78 credits must be in courses other than BIOL 600 Doctoral Research and Dissertation. However, it should be noted that no more than 45 credits in BIOL 600 Doctoral Research and Dissertation can be counted toward meeting the degree requirements. The remainder of courses may be at the 400 level in Biological Sciences or 300 and 400 levels in supporting areas. For details see the general degree requirements in the General Catalog.

Master of Science (M.S.)

Admission to this degree program is based upon the compatibility of your research interests with those of the prospective major professor, the availability of assistantships, and your academic preparation and academic promise. Applicants for the M.S. degree are expected to have met the same prerequisites as specified for the Ph.D. degree program.

A minimum of thirty credits is required for the degree. Of these at least eighteen must be in courses at the 500 level; the remainder may include 400 level courses in Biological Sciences, and 300 or 400 level courses in supporting areas. Although there is no limit imposed on the number of credits that may be earned in BIOL 500 Master's Research and Thesis, no more than 10 credits in BIOL 500 can be used to fulfill master of science degree requirements. A written thesis is required.

Master of Natural Science (M.N.S.)

This degree program is primarily intended for students who are currently or are planning to teach in grades K-12 or junior college.

The program of coursework should be designed to provide a broad understanding of biology. Of the minimum of 30 credits required for the degree, at least 10 credits must be in courses at the 500 level. In addition to these 10 credits, you may use a maximum of 3 credits in BIOL 599 Research toward the fulfillment of the M.N.S degree requirements. The terminal project will consist of a major paper and a comprehensive examination.

Advising

The Department Chair will be your advisor of record until a major professor is formally appointed.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES

Admission to Graduate Studies

See “Admission Procedures” in the General Catalog.

Registration

You are required to register each semester, including summer session, while you are in residence even if you are only doing research. Registration for research should be continuous from the first semester you register until your program is completed, unless you are not utilizing faculty time or departmental facilities. Departmental Fellows (DFs) and Research Assistants (RAs) must register for 12 credits each semester.

Major Professor

Your major professor is tentatively appointed when you are admitted to the department based upon your expressed area of specialization, and is formally appointed by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies during the first semester of residence. Your major professor serves as your advisor, the chairperson of your advisory committee, and convenes most of the planning and examination committees associated with the degree program. For the research degrees (Ph.D. and M.S.) the importance of the major professor-student relationship cannot be over-emphasized. You and your major professor plan, perform, and publish the thesis research. Even so, you should solicit the advice of your advisory committee in all phases of your research.

Appointment of the Advisory Committee

During the first semester of residence you should compose your advisory committee in consultation with your major professor. An “Appointment of Major Professor and Committee” form is available in the back of this handbook or on the College of Graduate Studies website. Complete the form, have it signed by your major professor and advisory committee members, then submit it to the department office.

The advisory committee for Ph.D. candidates consists of at least of four people: the major professor as chair, two other faculty members from within the department, and a faculty member from a discipline outside the department. Half of the members on the advisory committee must be graduate faculty from the department.

The advisory committee for M.S. and M.N.S. degrees consists of at least three people: the major professor who serves as chairperson, at least one additional departmental faculty member, and a faculty member from an allied academic department. Additional faculty members from inside or outside the department may be included as appropriate. Half of the members on the advisory committee must be graduate faculty from the department.

Any changes in the thesis degree advisory committee must be mutually agreed upon by you and your major professor, followed by approval from the department chair, as advised by the Graduate Affairs Committee. You can initiate a change in major professor, but the department chair must approve it. Any major professor or advisory committee member can resign from a student’s advisory committee. In accordance with the College of Graduate Studies protocol, the department chair becomes the advisor of record for a student if the major professor resigns. As a rule, a change in major professor or substantial change in the focus or methodology used in your research will require that you repeat the pre-thesis examination.

Study Plan

You and your major professor, in consultation with your advisory committee, must prepare a study plan (list of courses to be taken) that meets the minimum requirements of the Graduate School and department, and is consistent with your academic needs and aspirations. This is done during the first semester of residence if you are an M.S. or M.N.S student, or by the end of the second semester of residence if you are a Ph.D. student. Typically, you or your major professor will provide the advisory committee with a list of pertinent courses already completed, along with the year, place and grade obtained, as well as a list of pertinent courses that might be included in the study plan, and any other information and documentation that might be helpful. You and your advisory committee then meet to discuss the proposed study plan, and the advisory committee will develop a consensus of opinion regarding the courses that should be taken. This study plan is entered on a "Study Plan" form that is available in the back of this handbook or on the College of Graduate Studies website, signed by your major professor and advisory committee members, and submitted to the department office.

Effective as of the 2003-04 academic year, graduate students majoring in Biology (M.S. and Ph.D.) and Biological Sciences (M.N.S.) are required to include the following in their study plans:

Ph.D. students

BIOL 552 Professional Development for Biologists (3 cr)

BIOL 553 Ethical Issues in Biological Research (1 cr)

A statistics and methods course to be identified by your advisory committee (3-4 cr)

At least 5 credits in seminar or journal club courses (5 cr)

Electives to be identified by your advisory committee

BIOL 521 Graduate Teaching Practicum (3 cr) (effective academic year 2004)

Master of Science students

BIOL 552 Professional Development for Biologists (3 cr)

BIOL 553 Ethical Issues in Biological Research (1 cr)

A statistics and methods course to be identified by your advisory committee (3-4 cr)

At least 2 credits in seminar or journal club courses (2 cr)

Electives to be identified by your advisory committee

BIOL 521 Graduate Teaching Practicum (3 cr) (effective academic year 2004)

Master of Natural Science students

A statistics and methods course to be identified by your advisory committee (3-4 cr)

At least 2 credits in seminar or journal club courses (2 cr)

Electives to be identified by your advisory committee

BIOL 521 Graduate Teaching Practicum (3 cr) (effective academic year 2004)

Admission to Candidacy

See General Catalog "Procedures for Doctoral Degrees".

Curriculum

The Graduate Faculty at the University sets requirements for graduate degrees. Academic departments have the prerogative of establishing additional requirements. Requirements for the various degrees are explained under the descriptions of the individual degree programs. Your specific program of course work is determined by your advisory committee as previously described. The Study Plan is submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and becomes the official degree program. If it becomes necessary to change the Study Plan, you must complete the standard "Study Plan and Committee Change" form noting changes made by the advisory committee, have it signed by your major professor and advisory committee members, and then submit it to the department office.

Foreign Language Policy

There is no foreign language requirement for any graduate degree in the Department of Biological Sciences.

Teaching Requirement

As of the 2004-05 academic year, the Department of Biological Sciences requires all graduate students (Ph.D., M.S., M.N.S.) to teach at least two sections as part of their degree requirements. All students must attend Intr 503 WS: Teaching Assistant Training prior to teaching.

Satisfactory Progress

The performance of Departmental Fellows and Research Assistants will be evaluated at least once every year. Any graduate student deficient in progress toward his/her degree or in performance of assistantship duties may lose their financial support. Satisfactory performance as a graduate student is taken as completion of requirements on a reasonable schedule and adequate progress on dissertation/thesis research as judged by the major professor in consultation with the advisory committee. If you have legitimate reasons that explain why there has been insufficient progress toward these objectives, you may submit requests for deadline extensions to the Graduate Affairs Committee.

Time Schedule for Ph.D. Students

Ph.D. students should follow the schedule below:

1. Your major professor and advisory committee should be selected by the end of the first semester,
2. Your study plan should be submitted by the end of your second semester in residence.
3. The pre-thesis defense should be completed prior to the end of your third semester in residence.
4. The preliminary examination (oral and written) should be completed by the end of your fifth semester in residence.
5. The advisory committee should be consulted to determine the amount of time they will need to review your thesis prior to the thesis defense. Normally amount of time required should not be more than one month.
6. The thesis defense can be scheduled after your advisory committee has approved a draft of your thesis.

Time Schedule for M.S. Students

M.S. candidates should complete the program in two or three years. The following schedule below should be followed:

1. Your major professor and advisory committee should be selected by the end of the first semester,
2. Your study plan should be submitted by the end of your first semester in residence.
3. The pre-thesis defense should be completed prior to the end of your eighth week of the second semester.
4. Your thesis should be completed and approved by your committee before the end of the sixth semester (third year).
5. The thesis defense can be scheduled after your advisory committee has approved a draft of your thesis.

Time Schedule for M.N.S. Students

1. You should select your major professor and advisory committee, and submit your study plan by the end of the first semester in residence.
2. Your advisory committee must approve the major paper no later than two weeks before the end of your last semester in residence.
3. The comprehensive oral examination can be scheduled after your advisory committee approves your paper.

ASSISTANTSHIPS

There are two types of “assistantships” at the University of Idaho: Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships. In the Department of Biological Sciences, Teaching Assistants are referred to as Departmental Fellows (DFs). The two types of assistantships are distinguished by the nature of the duties.

Duties of Departmental Fellows

As a Departmental Fellow (DF), you have been given a primary teaching responsibility in this department. Assistantships are half-time appointments and, by implication, require approximately 20 hours per week in performance of duties. However, this is a professional appointment and strict time-accounting is not appropriate. Rather, a high level of performance is expected and the time required to meet this expectation depends upon your experience and efficiency. These fellowships typically require teaching 3 sections of a laboratory per academic year. In some cases these can be scheduled all in one semester if so desired.

Your assignment to a specific course as a Departmental Fellow (DF) will be made prior to the beginning of each semester, and you will be responsible to the faculty member in charge of that course in the performance of your duties. You are expected to be present on campus from your official start date until final grades are submitted. You are responsible for all lecture material as well as laboratory materials and other material assigned by the faculty member.

Attendance of Lectures

DFs are expected to know the material being taught in lectures of the course. The faculty member teaching the course will decide if particular DFs must attend lectures.

Grading

DFs often will be given responsibility for determining a grade for laboratory components of a course. Be sure that you understand the methods to be used in arriving at the grade and its relationship to the final grade for the semester as outlined by the faculty member in charge of the course. Grading may also be required on exams and/or assignments from the lecture portion of the course.

Record Keeping

Grades are based upon recorded performance. Keep complete records and arrive at grades as objectively as possible. When in doubt, consult with the faculty member in charge. These records are to be given to the faculty member in charge of the course at the time the grades are reported to him/her.

Testing

Tests should be constructed in consultation with the faculty member in charge of the course.

Laboratory Policies

As an instructor you should not institute policies in laboratories without specific approval of the faculty member in charge.

Evaluations

Student evaluations are mandatory. These evaluations will help you to improve as an instructor. Your teaching performance will also be evaluated by the faculty member in charge of the course on an ongoing basis.

Other responsibilities

DFs are expected to be available from the official reporting date each semester of their appointment until final grades are submitted. Failure to do so may result in loss of your appointment as a DF.

The faculty member teaching the course should explain the full responsibilities of the DF at the beginning of each term. Your actual duties as a DF will vary somewhat with the course(s) to which you are assigned and the faculty member in charge of those course(s). DFs are not to delegate any responsibilities to other graduate students without the approval of the faculty member in charge of the course and the Department Chair.

Continuation of DF support requires approval of the Department Chair.

Duties of Research Assistants

Research Assistants receive support for conducting research, usually from a grant; and, therefore, there may be requirements not covered here. Frequently, the major professor is also the employment supervisor and determines the duties and responsibilities.

POLICY ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND ETHICS

As graduate students and professional scholars-in-training, you are expected to exercise high standards of ethical and professional behavior toward your students, your peers and your professors. Obviously, what constitutes “professional conduct” within a particular university community or scientific discipline cannot be spelled out in complete detail. Organizations like the American Association of University Professors, however, have formulated some general philosophical guidelines.

As professional teachers, professors and teaching assistants should encourage learning on the part of their students, and should model high standards of scholarship. You should protect students’ academic freedom and confidentiality, and make every effort to evaluate students rigorously and fairly. Students should not be exploited or humiliated by their instructors, but inspired to excel in their studies whenever possible.

Science as a whole can only make progress if individual scientists are truthful and trustworthy. As academic professionals and members of the larger community of scientists, graduate students should practice intellectual honesty at all times. You should exercise scholarly discipline and good critical skills, while engaging in civil, collegial discussion of scientific and professional matters. Ideally, scientific professionals should strive to be objective and fair in their criticism and discussion of colleagues’ work. Graduate students must never engage in, permit or otherwise support professional misconduct, including plagiarism, falsification of information, or deception of any kind. Each of us is obligated to report professional misconduct to a supervisor or Department Chair as appropriate.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

As stated above, graduate students are expected to uphold high standards of intellectual and academic honesty at all times, and to enforce university and departmental standards for academic honesty. This is true particularly when it comes to your own academic and scientific work and the work of your students.

The University Faculty and Staff Handbook (Chapter 2: Policy 2300; Article II-1.) states, “cheating on classroom or outside assignments, examinations or tests is a violation of [the academic honesty] code. Plagiarism, falsification of academic records, and the acquisition or use of test materials without faculty authorization are considered forms of academic dishonesty...”

Should you encounter academic dishonesty on the part of one of your students, you should immediately bring it to the attention of your teaching supervisor. Other instances should be discussed with your major professor or the Department Chair.

POLICY ON HARASSMENT

Graduate students are expected to treat their students, peers, professors, and other colleagues in the university workplace respectfully at all times. By the same token, you are also entitled to respectful behavior on the part of your coworkers.

“Harassment” in the workplace is often defined in sexual terms. However, harassment in a broader sense can also take the form of teasing, insults and other hostile or harsh speech, crude gestures, or otherwise acting toward another person in an extremely objectionable or humiliating manner, even when that behavior lacks a sexual context. Legally prohibited harassment includes not only sexual harassment but also harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran.

The University of Idaho Faculty and Staff Handbook (Chapter 3: Policy 3220; B-1) defines sexual harassment as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual behaviors, or other verbal or physical

conduct of a sexual nature.” Such conduct is deemed especially deplorable when it occurs in a relationship where there is a significant power differential, such as harassment of a student by an instructor, “...creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment,” or interfering with a student’s education.

Under no circumstances should a graduate student engage in behavior that might be construed as harassment, sexual or otherwise. If you feel you have been harassed or are aware of a possible violation of the University’s harassment policy, you are strongly encouraged to contact—your major professor, supervisor, the department chair, the Graduate Affairs Committee, the Women’s Center, or the university’s Human Rights Compliance Office.

POLICY ON GRADUATE STUDENT COMPLAINTS

A graduate student may request a hearing before a department grievance committee. Complaints may include, but are not limited to, conflicts that involve a colleague, teaching supervisor, employer, or major professor. You must attempt to resolve the problem by informal discussion with those involved in the grievance before requesting a hearing. To request a hearing, you will approach the Department Chair or the Graduate Affairs Committee Chair, with whom the discretion to convene a hearing will rest. The Graduate Affairs Committee Chair will appoint at least two other tenured faculty and will chair this committee. If the Graduate Affairs Committee Chair is involved in the grievance complaint, then s/he will be excused, and the Department Chair will appoint a grievance committee of three tenured faculty. The committee will hear both sides of the dispute. After the hearing, the Committee will discuss the matter, and then will give the Department Chair a written summary and a recommendation for action.

[Approved by Department of Biological Sciences on May 7, 1998]

POLICY ON GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS

It is each student’s responsibility to complete the following three tasks by the appropriate deadline: 1) select members of the advisory committee; 2) file the appointment of major professor and committee form with the graduate school; 3) submit the plan of study. In the second week of each spring term, the Department office will give the Graduate Affairs Committee a list of those students who have not met deadlines for the appointment of major professor and advisory committee, or approval of the plan of study. In the seventh week of each spring semester, the Department office will give the Graduate Affairs Committee a list of those students who have not met the deadline for the pre-thesis defense. The Committee will then meet with each student and the appropriate major professors and will make recommendations for action to be taken by the Department Chair.

[Approved by Department of Biological Sciences on May 7, 1998.]

POLICY ON DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

One essential difference between undergraduate departments and graduate departments is the seminar method of instruction: discussions at a professional level. Although several discussion groups will be held on specific topics, there is a Departmental Seminar Series that all faculty and graduate students are expected to attend. This is an excellent opportunity to learn the latest research developments from outstanding investigators who have been invited to visit the department and present their recent work.

All candidates for thesis degrees must present their research results in a departmental seminar immediately before the final defense.

POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT EXAMINATIONS

SCHEDULING OF EXAMS

Because of scheduling difficulties during the summer, it is strongly recommended that students schedule all exams and thesis defenses during the academic year. Please be aware that scheduling conflicts also arise at the end of semesters.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) DEGREE

The following department examinations will be required of all graduate students matriculating for the Ph.D. in biology.

Pre-Thesis Defense of Student's Research Proposal

It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all advisory committee members are available. When advisory committee members are queried to determine their availability, the department chair should also be consulted and his/her schedule should be accommodated if possible. The chair retains the right to oversee any examination. In his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.

- 1) Arrangements for the examination:
 - a) The examination must be scheduled for some time before the end of the third semester in residence.
 - b) The proposed research plan (objectives, hypotheses to be tested, and experimental protocol) must first be reviewed by your advisory committee. All corrections, additions and/or changes to the plan must be made before it is submitted to the Department Chair and a copy put in the main office. This should be done two weeks before the oral defense.
 - c) A memorandum announcing this examination must be sent to department faculty and posted within the department by main office staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. You are responsible for making arrangements for this to be done, and for completing a "Pre-Dissertation Defense Announcement" form that can be obtained from the main office.
 - d) The chair retains the right to oversee any examination; in his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.
- 2) The examination:
 - a) The examination committee will consist of your advisory committee and any other faculty members as deemed appropriate by the advisory committee.
 - b) You are expected to give a 20 minute oral presentation of your research protocol, with special emphasis on the following:
 - i) Background information on the research topic, including a description of previous work done by others that led to the proposed research. This introduction should familiarize the advisory committee with what has and has not been done in this area of research.
 - ii) Rationale for conducting each segment of the research plan.
 - iii) Hypotheses to be tested should be clearly and concisely stated.

- iv) Design of each segment of the research.
 - v) Specific methods to be employed.
 - vi) Discussion of pitfalls in experimental design.
 - vii) Methods of data analysis.
- c) Members of the examination committee will then question you to ascertain whether:
- i) The scope of this research is appropriate for a Ph.D. degree.
 - ii) The research is properly designed.
 - iii) You understand the methods to be employed:
 - This should be stressed, as it is important for you and your advisory committee to be fully aware of the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of all methods being used.
 - Are other methods more appropriate?
- d) The examination committee members will vote regarding your preparation and suitability of the research plan.
- e) A two-thirds majority of affirmative votes constitutes a pass.
- i) The results of the examination will be reported to the Biological Sciences office by the major professor on the departmental "Report of Pre-Thesis/Dissertation Examination" form, which will then be kept on file.
 - ii) A written critique will be provided to those who do not pass, and this critique will also be kept on file.
 - iii) The examination may not be rescheduled before a minimum of three weeks or later than one month into the following semester.
 - iv) You may not take the examination more than twice.
- f) In the event that your proposed research must be modified after the examination, such changes will not necessitate retaking this examination if it has been passed.

Preliminary Examination

Preliminary examinations are to be conducted as outlined in the General Catalog.

The procedure is as follows:

- 1) This examination is to be taken prior to the end of the fifth semester.
- 2) The examination will consist of written and oral segments, with the written portion of the examination to be administered first.
- 3) Each segment of the preliminary examination may be repeated only once. The interval before the repeat examination may not be less than three months or longer than one year after the initial attempt.
- 4) The purpose of this examination will be:
 - a) To test your reasoning ability.
 - b) To test the depth of your advanced knowledge within predetermined areas of biology.
 - c) To test the breadth of your knowledge.

- 5) You will be held responsible for a high proficiency in your discipline and advanced knowledge in two other major areas of biology, or one major area of biology and one outside supporting field. These will be determined through discussions that you have with your advisory committee.
- 6) Your advisory committee will list (in writing) specific subdivisions of the major and minor areas for which you will be held responsible.
- 7) The examination segments:
 - a) Written Examination
 - i) Your major professor will solicit (by memorandum) questions from the faculty and student's advisory committee.
 - ii) Your advisory committee will then select those questions that they collectively deem most appropriate.
 - iii) The length of the examination is at the discretion of your advisory committee; however, normally the examination is completed in a 3 – 5 day period.
 - iv) The faculty member who posed a question will grade your answer. Copies of the questions, keys and student's answers to the written preliminary examination will be available for perusal by faculty at least one week before the scheduled oral examination.
 - b) Oral Examination
 - i) Normally, the oral examination is scheduled approximately two weeks after completion of the written examination. It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all advisory committee members are available. When advisory committee members are queried to determine their availability, the department chair should also be consulted and his/her schedule should be accommodated if possible.
 - ii) The chair retains the right to oversee any examination; in his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.
 - iii) A memorandum announcing this examination must be sent to department faculty and posted within the department by main office staff at least one week prior to the date of the examination. You are responsible for making arrangements for this to be done, and for completing an "Oral Preliminary Examination Announcement" form that can be obtained from the main office.
 - iv) Members of the your advisory committee will be allowed to question you first, after which any faculty member in attendance will be permitted to ask questions.
 - v) After the questioning has been completed, you will be asked to leave the room during the deliberations and voting on your performance.
 - vi) Members of the advisory committee and other faculty members of the department in attendance will participate in the discussion and evaluation.
 - vii) Only members of your advisory committee are permitted to vote.
 - A two-thirds majority vote in the affirmative will constitute a pass.
 - viii) The results of the preliminary examination are reported to the College of Graduate Studies by your major professor on the form entitled "Report of Preliminary Examination and Advancement to Candidacy".

Defense of Thesis (Oral Examination)

It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all advisory committee members are available. When advisory committee members are queried to determine their availability, the department chair should also be consulted and his/her schedule should be accommodated if possible. The chair retains the right to oversee any examination. In his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.

1) Arrangements for the examination:

- a) After you have completed the dissertation and your advisory committee has approved the draft, you may schedule a date and time for the dissertation defense.
- b) A memorandum announcing this examination must be sent to department faculty and posted in the department by main office staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. You are responsible for making arrangements for this to be done.
- c) Two weeks prior to the defense, a copy of the dissertation must be in the main office for faculty review.
- d) You must obtain a "Request to Proceed with Final Defense" form from the College of Graduate Studies web site, have it completed, and submit it to the College of Graduate Studies at least 10 working days prior to the date of your defense.
- e) All members of the graduate student's advisory committee must be in attendance at the examination. In addition, the Department Chair or a tenure track faculty member appointed by the Department Chair must be present and will chair the examination.
- f) All other faculty members and graduate students are urged to attend graduate student public seminars.

2) The examination:

- a) The thesis defense will consist of a 40-50 minute public seminar that is followed by questions from the audience. After the public presentation, your advisory committee will hold a closed-door session in which the advisory committee members, and any other faculty in attendance, will examine you.
- b) The questions from the advisory committee members will be of two basic types:
 - i) Those that require you to defend the methods, results, conclusions or other pertinent points of the dissertation.
 - ii) Those that test general knowledge related to your area of research.
- c) All faculty members in attendance may participate along with the your advisory committee in assessing the your performance on this examination.
- d) The person chairing the examination will have the option to rule a question out of order if he or she believes it is not in keeping with stated limitations of the examination (see above).
- e) You will be asked to leave the room during deliberations and voting on the your performance.
- f) A two-thirds majority of the members of your advisory committee must agree that you have passed this examination.
- g) If this examination is failed, it may be repeated once. The interval before the second attempt may not be less than three months or longer than one year.

MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.) DEGREE

The following departmental examinations will be required of all graduate students matriculating for Master's Degrees requiring a thesis.

Pre-Thesis Defense of Student's Research Proposal

It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all advisory committee members are available. When advisory committee members are queried to determine their availability, the department chair should also be consulted and his/her schedule and this should accommodate if possible. The chair retains the right to oversee any examination. In his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.

1) Arrangements for the examination:

- a) The examination must be scheduled to occur prior to the eighth week of the second semester in residence. However, you are urged to schedule this examination as early as possible.
- b) The proposed research plan (objectives, hypotheses to be tested, and experimental protocol) must first be reviewed by your advisory committee. All corrections, additions and/or changes to the plan must be made before it is submitted to the Department Chair and a copy put in the main office. This should be done two weeks before the oral defense.
- c) A memorandum announcing this examination must be sent to department faculty and posted within the department by main office staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. You are responsible for making arrangements for this to be done, and for completing a "Pre-Thesis Defense Announcement" form that can be obtained from the main office.
- d) The chair retains the right to oversee any examination; in his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.

2) The examination:

- a) The examination committee will consist of members of your advisory committee and any other faculty members as deemed appropriate.
- b) You will give a 20 minute oral presentation of the research protocol, with emphasis to be given to the following:
 - i) Background material to include a review of previous work by others that led to the proposed research project. This should familiarize the advisory committee with what has and has not been done in this area.
 - ii) Rationale for conducting each objective of research.
 - iii) Hypotheses to be tested should be clearly and concisely stated.
 - iv) Design of each segment of the research.
 - v) Specific methods to be employed.
 - vi) Discussion of possible pitfalls in research design.
 - vii) Methods of data analysis.
- c) Members of the examination committee will then question you to ascertain whether:
 - i) The scope of this research is appropriate for a master's degree.
 - ii) The research is properly designed.

- iii) You understand the methods to be employed.
 - This should be stressed, as it is important for you and your advisory committee to be fully aware of the strengths, weaknesses and limitations of all methods being used.
 - Are other methods more appropriate?
- d) The examination committee members will vote regarding your preparation and the suitability of the research plan.
- e) A majority of affirmative votes constitutes a “pass”.
 - i) The results of the examination will be reported to the Biological Sciences Office by the major professor on the departmental “Report of Pre-Thesis/Dissertation Examination” form and it will be kept on file.
 - ii) If you do not pass the examination you will receive a written critique listing the major strengths and inadequacies of your responses to the questions.
 - iii) You may not reschedule the examination before a minimum of three (3) weeks or later than one month into the following semester.
 - iv) You may not take this examination more than twice.
- f) In the event that your proposed research must be modified after passing the examination, these modifications will not necessitate retaking this examination.

Defense of Thesis (Oral Examination)

It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all advisory committee members are available. When advisory committee members are queried to determine their availability, the department chair should also be consulted and his/her schedule and this should accommodate if possible. The chair retains the right to oversee any examination. In his/her absence, a tenure track faculty member, usually from the Graduate Student Affairs Committee, will be appointed by the department chair to serve as an alternate.

- 1) Arrangements for the examination:
 - a) After your advisory committee has approved a draft of the thesis, you may schedule a date and time for the defense of the thesis.
 - b) A memorandum announcing this examination must be sent to department faculty and posted in the department by main office staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for this to be done.
 - c) A copy of the thesis, including modifications addressing the concerns of advisory committee members, must be in the main office for review two weeks prior to the defense.
 - d) A “Request to Proceed with Final Defense” form must be completed and submitted to the College of Graduate Studies.
 - e) All members of your advisory committee must be in attendance at the examination. In addition, the Department Chair or a tenure track faculty member appointed by the Department Chair must be present and will chair the examination.
 - f) All departmental faculty members and graduate students are urged to attend graduate student public seminars.
- 1) The examination:

- a) The defense will consist of a 40-50 minute public seminar that is followed by questions from the audience. After the public seminar, your advisory committee will hold a closed-door session in which the advisory committee members and any other faculty in attendance will examine you.
- b) The questions from the advisory committee members will be of two basic types:
 - i) Those that require you to defend the methods, results, conclusions or other pertinent points of the dissertation.
 - ii) Those that test general knowledge related to your area of research.
- c) All faculty members in attendance may actively participate along with your advisory committee in assessing your performance on this examination.
- d) The person chairing the examination will have the option to rule a question out of order if he or she believes it is not in keeping with stated limitations of the examination (see above).
- e) You will be asked to leave the room during deliberations and voting on your performance.
- f) A majority of the members of your advisory committee must agree that you have passed this examination.
- g) If this examination is failed, it may be repeated once. The interval before the second attempt may not be less than three months or longer than one year.

MASTER OF NATURAL SCIENCE (M.N.S.) DEGREE

Each M.N.S. student must select a major professor who has agreed to serve in this capacity and have the appointment of major professor form filed at the Graduate School by the end of his/her first semester. The major professor, in consultation with the M.N.S. student, shall discuss your goals and career objectives and select the advisory committee. This committee should be structured as outlined in the General Catalog.

The major professor, in consultation with the M.N.S. student, and in accordance with the appropriate regulations in the General Catalog, will prepare your course program. The program must include a minimum of 10 credits of 500 level courses. Students may, in addition to these 10 credits, take BIOL 599 Research for a maximum of 3 credits for working on and completing the major paper. The proposed course program must be submitted to the Graduate School.

You must also write a major paper. The major paper should constitute a critical evaluation of an area to be determined in consultation with a student's major professor, and approved by a majority of the members of the advisory committee. The major paper must be completed no later than 2 weeks prior to the end of the last semester of residence.

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination will cover general knowledge in biology and the subject area of the major paper.

- 1) Arrangements for the examination:
 - a) Your advisory committee must approve a draft of the major paper before a date and time for the examination can be scheduled.
 - b) It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all advisory committee members are available. When advisory committee members are queried to determine their availability, the department chair should also be consulted and his/her schedule accommodated if possible.

- c) A memorandum announcing this examination must be sent to department faculty and posted in the department by main office staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for this to be done.
 - d) A copy of the major paper, including modifications addressing the concerns of advisory committee members, must be in the main office for review two weeks prior to the examination.
 - e) All members of the graduate student's advisory committee must be in attendance at the examination. In addition, the Department Chair or a tenure track faculty member appointed by the Department Chair must be present and will chair the examination.
- 2) Examination procedure
- a) The Examination Committee will consist of members of your advisory committee.
 - b) The Department Chair retains the right to oversee any examination. In his/her absence the department chair will appoint a tenure track faculty member from the department to serve as an alternate. Usually this person will be a member of the Graduate Student Affairs Committee.
 - c) The Advisory committee will examine you on general knowledge of biology and the subject of the major paper.
 - d) Other faculty members in attendance will be given an opportunity to question you and may contribute to assessing your performance.
 - e) A two-thirds majority of the members of your advisory committee must agree for a pass.
 - f) The results of this examination are reported to the College of Graduate Studies by your major professor on the "Non-thesis Requirement Report Form."

DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS POLICIES

Audio-Visual Aids Policy

Projectors for Power Point presentations may be checked out through the main office. Use of these projectors is restricted to course and research related presentations and oral examinations.

Biology Stores

Biology Stores is supplied with basic glassware and chemical supplies. Always check with Biology Stores personnel when purchasing or checking items out for class or research.

Keys, Building Access and Security

Graduate students can check out keys to their offices and the appropriate research and teaching labs from the Biological Sciences administrative assistant. Attendance at a two-hour radiation safety orientation offered by the UI Office of Environmental Health and Safety is required for access to areas where radioactive materials are used. You will also be given Vandal card access to the outside doors to Gibb Hall and Life Sciences South that are specially equipped with Vandal card readers. University keys may not be duplicated. After hours entry to the building is via Vandal Card (university ID) access only. The west entry to Life Sciences South and the northeast entry to Gibb Hall are equipped with Vandal Card readers. Graduate students must turn in keys at the end of their degree program or at the end of their employment as DFs or RAs if the assistantship extends beyond the completion of the degree. Please note that students who leave Moscow to take up permanent residence elsewhere prior to completion of the degree must turn in keys before departing Moscow. DFs, RAs, irregular help, and staff members who fail to return keys during their last week of work may have their pay withheld. Never loan your keys. All members of the department share responsibility for the security of our facilities. Once you have entered a secured part of a building or other university facility, you are responsible for re-locking or otherwise re-securing it. Offices and labs should generally be locked any time they are unoccupied. You should never allow any unauthorized person access to a university facility. If you see someone in the building who should not be there or who is behaving suspiciously, you should contact the Moscow Police Department (Campus Office phone: 885-7074).

Office Space

Office space is assigned by the main office on the basis of need and availability. If space is assigned to you, you are responsible for its security and for exercising good safety practices. Neither firearms nor liquor are permitted in departmental offices. Offices must be maintained in a neat and orderly fashion.

Office Supplies and Secretarial Assistance

Office supplies and secretarial assistance are available only insofar as they are necessary in the performance of teaching duties. Do not use departmental resources for your own course work or degree requirements. **Lead-time required for class handouts and exams should be at least 2 working days.** Adequate lead-time will ensure that your materials are prepared on time. All materials to be typed or photocopied are to be accompanied by specific written instructions.

University Stationery

Use of University stationery is restricted to official correspondence and representation of the institution.

Purchasing

- 1) Teaching materials and supplies:
 - a) Consult the Biology Stores personnel concerning availability.
 - b) If the item is unavailable, provide a complete description including catalog numbers and source. State clearly any special specifications. In case of expensive purchases, a justification of need and endorsement by the professor in charge of the course must be submitted for approval by the department executive.
- 2) Research materials and supplies:
 - a) Your major professor is responsible for the purchase and receipt of materials and supplies to support your research program. No orders will be processed from graduate students without the signature of the major professor.

Leave

Graduate student appointees are not eligible to accrue paid sick and annual leave. For short-term illness, DFs should arrange for another DF to teach their laboratory section and notify the course instructor. In case of long-term illness, contact the course instructor directly. All assistants should contact their major professor in advance to request approval for personal time off.