Biology MS, Accelerated Master's Degree

The Department of Biology offers an Accelerated MS degree program that allows students to simultaneously earn their BS and their MS in Biology. Students accepted to the Accelerated MS degree program will be permitted to count up to 9 credits toward both degrees.

Students are encouraged to work closely with their Biology undergraduate advisor and the Biology Graduate Program Director to ensure that courses are timed appropriately to maximize their benefits. It is strongly recommended that students meet with the Graduate Director as soon as possible, ideally before their junior year.

Students in the Accelerated MS program will complete the MS through the non-thesis coursework path; the thesis MS and Professional Science MS programs cannot be combined with this program.

Eligibility

Students must have fulfilled the core curriculum requirements for the Bachelor of Science degree prior to applying for the Accelerated MS program.

Course Number	Title	Hours
BIOL 1800	Introduction to the Biology Major	1
BIOL 1821	Introductory Biology: Organisms and the Environment (MOTR BIOL 150LEC)	3
BIOL 1831	Introductory Biology: From Molecules to Organisms	3
BIOL 2012	Genetics	3
BIOL 3302	Evolution	3
BIOL 3622	Cell Biology	3
Total Hours		**16**

Admission Requirements

Provisional Admission

Applicants are considered for provisional admission if they meet the following criteria:

- Earned 60 hours as an undergraduate
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.0 with a B or better in all core courses listed above
- Have approval from both their Biology undergraduate advisor and Biology Graduate Program Director

It is recommended to apply for provisional status as a junior, preferably in the first semester of junior year.

Graduate course options for Provisional students are listed below. Courses completed by undergraduate students who have been provisionally admitted to the Accelerated MS program can count towards both their BS and MS degrees. Courses in this phase will be charged at the undergraduate tuition rate; however, these courses will count toward the master's degree. Courses must be approved before the semester starts. Any 4000-level course taken before admission to the Accelerated MS program will apply to the undergraduate requirements only unless given prior permission from the Graduate School.

Seniors who have earned more than 105 credit hours cannot be considered for the Accelerated MS degree program.

Graduate Admission

Applicants are considered for graduate admission with the following criteria:

- Are in their final semester in undergraduate status
- Have a minimum GPA of 3.0 since being granted provisional status
- Submitted at least one positive recommendation letter from an UMSL Biology faculty member
- Submitted to the Biology Graduate Director a statement of purpose explaining why an advanced degree in Biology is of interest and why the applicant merits consideration
- Have met with the Biology Graduate Director

Based on the above information, the Biology Graduate Committee will determine whether the student can apply for graduate admission. Final decisions concerning graduate admission are made by the Graduate School Director and the Graduate School. Students admitted to the graduate program must take graduate courses until the completion of the MS degree.

Courses for Both BS and MS Credit

The following Biology courses can count toward both the BS and MS degree, up to a maximum of 9 credit hours.

Course Number	Title	Hours
BIOL 4122	Biostatistics	3
BIOL 4402	Ornithology	3
BIOL 4422	Entomology	3
BIOL 4732	Principles of Biochemistry	3
BIOL 4822	Principles of Neuroscience	3
BIOL 4842	Immunology	3
BIOL 5012	Advanced Genetics	3
BIOL 5192	Community Ecology	3
BIOL 5302	Advanced Evolution	3
BIOL 5312	Theory of Systematics	3
BIOL 5436	Advanced Applied Bioinformatics	3
All 6000-level Biology courses (excluding BIOL 6299, BIOL 6699, BIOL 6889, BIOL 6905 and BIOL 6915)		

Other courses may be allowed upon approval of the Graduate Program Director.

Awarding of Degrees

The undergraduate degree will be awarded when the student meets the requirements for the BS degree, including at least 120 total credit hours, completion of the Biology core, elective, and laboratory requirements, and completion of the associated requirements. The student may apply for and receive the bachelor's degree in the semester when all the undergraduate requirements are completed. In their final semester in undergraduate status, the student must apply and be admitted to the graduate program, to begin the following semester. The student will apply to receive the

master’s degree in the semester that the requirements for the graduate degree will be completed, including at least 30 credit hours of coursework at the graduate level.

If the student fails to enroll for more than one year after receiving the bachelor's degree, the student can still earn the master’s degree, but the graduate-level credits earned as an undergraduate cannot be used for the graduate degree.