

Policies and Procedures for the Masters of Arts (M.A.) Degree

Effective for students entering program January 2011

Department of Molecular Biology
University of Wyoming

Students pursuing the M.A. degree in Molecular Biology are expected to complete their program in 2 semesters plus 1 summer, on average.

1. Application Process and Choice of Thesis Project Adviser

A person interested in pursuing an M.A. degree in Molecular Biology is expected to directly contact molecular biology faculty members in order to identify a sponsor/ adviser of their study. Once an adviser is identified, a complete application package for the graduate study should be submitted to the Molecular Biology Graduate Program Chairperson via e-mail. The application package consists of Letter of interest, current CV, copy of Academic Records, and copy of GRE and TOEFL (B.S. graduates of University of Wyoming may submit their transcript(s) including their GPA for consideration as a substitute for the requirement for GRE scores). The GRE and TOEFL scores and GPA must meet University of Wyoming graduate admission standards. The applicant is expected to arrange for at least two Letters of Recommendation and a Letter of Commitment and proposed Program of Study from the adviser to be sent directly to the Graduate Program Chairperson via e-mail or regular mail. The Molecular Biology Graduate Committee will make the preliminary admission decision based on the application package and letters. If the preliminary decision is positive, the applicant is expected to arrange for original academic transcripts and GRE and TOEFL (if applicable) results to be sent to the Office of Admissions. Following review and authentication of records, a formal letter of admission will be sent to the applicant.

2. Program of Study

The Program of Study must include a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit at the 4000-level or above from UW or equivalent levels from another approved university (see transfer credit below). 15 of the 30 hours must be completed as specified below:

Requirements for fulfilling the 15 specified hours of the 30-hour requirement:

- 6 hours total of General Biochemistry MOLB 5600 and MOLB 5610 with grades of B or better. (If a student has already taken the MOLB 4600/4610 sequence as an undergraduate or MOLB 5600/5610 as a graduate student and received grades of B or better in each course, the General Biochemistry requirement will have been fulfilled and thus only 9 of the 30 hour-requirement will be specified. Also, if a student passes out of the Biochemistry requirement by taking an exam at the beginning of the first semester, only 9 hours of the 30 hour-requirement will be specified.)
- 1 cr of MOLB 5050 must be taken.

- 2 cr of MOLB 5051 or 5052 must be taken.
- 6 hours of the advanced molecular biology core courses (5000 level courses).
- Please note that credits earned in ENGL 5910 **cannot** be included in the Program of Study even if a student is required to take this course. MOLB 5900 **can** be included in the Program of Study.

The program of study must be approved in advance by the Department Chair and the Dean of the College of Agriculture.

3. Transfer Credit

No more than 12 semester hours may be transferred as described in the online graduate bulletin. All transfer credits must carry a grade of B or better and are subject to the approval of the advisor.

4. M.A. Committee

The student's major adviser will serve as chairperson of the student's committee. The remaining committee members (at least two) will be recommended jointly by the major adviser and the student involved. At least one committee member must be a member of the graduate faculty from another department at U.W. An additional member (making a total of four) may be added to the committee (see Graduate School Bulletin). An additional member does not necessarily have to be a faculty member from this university. The committee must be approved by the Department Chair and the Dean of the College of Agriculture.

5. Continuing enrollment

Once a student has completed 90% of their course work and has a program of study filed, the student may register for only 1 credit hour per semester instead of being a full-time student. A student may wish also to enroll in 1 credit of MOLB 5960 in order to have a record of enrolling in research credits, however this is not a requirement.

A student has an option of enrolling as a part-time student after having completed 90% of their coursework or for other reasons. This needs an approval of the adviser for each semester. In the case of part-time student status, the student should arrange to receive the optional fee package by filing a "Petition for the optional student fee package,". (To complete this form, a student will need the date on which the Program of Study was filed). The optional fee package will enable the student to have the same benefits as a full-time student (access to student health, etc.) If the optional fee package is to be purchased, it must be done by the last day to add a course each semester (see the Graduate Catalog and the Class schedule.) Registration for only 1 credit hour plus the optional fee package will allow a substantial savings in tuition and fees' cost.

A student who elects to enroll as a part-time graduate student is still eligible for the full graduate stipend. If a student has a loan such as a Stafford federal loan, they may be required to enroll for at least 4.5 credit hours in order to retain eligibility for the loan.

6. Support

Financial support is at the discretion of the advisor. The following conditions may result in termination of financial support: cumulative GPA below 3.0, unsatisfactory progress as determined by the committee, termination of candidacy for the M.A. degree, or completion of two years of support unless the advisor approves a written request by the student for an extension of the grant-supported position.

7. Teaching Duties

Master's students are encouraged to serve as teaching assistants if it fits their career goals. If students choose to teach, then the department chair should be consulted on course assignments.

8. Final Thesis Preparation and Defense

A thesis should then be presented in typed form to the student's committee at least three weeks prior to the scheduled defense. Faculty members will have 10 days from the date of receipt of the manuscript to suggest major changes in content and register any other significant objections. The student will then present a public oral defense of the thesis followed by a closed oral exam of the student by the committee members.

Masters candidates must have completed course requirements as specified earlier.