Guidelines for Applying to the Master of Science (MS) in Biology Program at Pittsburg State University (Pittsburg, Kansas)

Things you NEED to know first before you apply

Three important features of the MS program in Biology:

1. To earn the MS degree in the Department of Biology, in addition to completing required course work, graduate students are expected to spend 3 to 5 semesters to conduct an independent research project and write a research thesis or problem-solving proposal, or to complete a professional Master’s program with the guidance of your advisor, who will be one of the faculty members in the Department of Biology.

2. Because graduate students need to work closely with the advisor during the Master’s program, it is **essential** for the applicants to: 1) thoroughly look into the research specialties of the faculty in the Department of Biology; and 2) indicate in the PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form which faculty member(s) the applicant would like as his/her research advisor based on shared research interests (see below for details). Only after a faculty member in the department reviews the applicant’s documents and agrees to accept the applicant as a graduate student, will the applicant be accepted into the program. Such an agreement will be sent to the applicants via email by the Department of Biology.

3. The application has two phases: an **initial application** and a **final application**. For the initial application, the applicant must send a letter of intent, PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form, and official transcripts (see below for more details). For the final application, the applicant needs to submit other application documents as required by the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU (see below). The overall procedures of the application is shown below:

Applicants check the research specialties of the faculty in the Department of Biology on the website, send a letter of intent, PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form and official transcripts via email or mail to Department of Biology for the **initial application**. (See page 2 for details)

Department of Biology forwards the initial application to the faculty member(s) who the applicant has chosen as a potential research advisor (as indicated in the PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form) due to shared research interests. The faculty member reviews the application and decides whether he/she would accept the applicant as his/her graduate student. Department sends emails to the applicants regarding the result of initial application.

If approved by the initial application, applicants send other documents (as requested by Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU) and three reference forms (sent by references to Department of Biology) for the **final application**. (See page 2 and 3 for details)

Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU announces the result of the final application via email and mail to the applicants.
Three steps you need to follow to complete your INITIAL application process

Step 1: Visit the two websites listed below to check the research specialties of the faculty in the Department of Biology and the general introduction of the Master’s program in Biology:

http://www.pittstate.edu/department/biology/contacts.dot
http://www.pittstate.edu/department/biology/graduate.dot

Step 2: Complete the PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form which can be found by clicking a link on the webpage at http://www.pittstate.edu/department/biology/graduate.dot (You will need the Acrobat Reader to use this PDF document). To answer question 6 in this form, the applicant needs to clearly indicate which faculty member(s) she/he would like for a research advisor due to the shared research interests based on your findings from step 1. A thoughtful answer to this question will help the department to review the application and benefit the future study due to the reasons mentioned before.

Step 3: Write a formal “letter of intent” to state your area of research interest, scholarly experience, and academic and career goals. The letter should include at least 250 words. This letter is essential and extremely important for the department to process and consider your application. The application will be processed ONLY AFTER this letter is received.

Step 4: Send the following three documents, including letter of intent, PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form, and official transcripts together via email or mail to:

Dr. Xiaolu Wu
Assistant Professor, Graduate coordinator
Department of Biology
Pittsburg State University
1701 S. Broadway
Pittsburg, KS, 66762
xwu@pittstate.edu

Note: Only when all three documents including your letter of intent, PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form, and official transcripts are received, your application will be processed. No exceptions.

Steps you need follow to complete your FINAL application process

After a faculty members from the Department of Biology reviews the initial application and agrees to accept the applicant as a graduate student (pending review of three reference forms, see below for more details), the applicant will be informed by email from Department of Biology at PSU. Then,

Step 1: The applicant needs to visit the homepage of the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU (http://www.pittstate.edu/office/graduate), and fill out the Graduate Studies Application by clicking an “APPLY HERE” link located on this webpage.

Step 2: The applicants need to request three references to complete the PSU Biology Graduate Reference Form and have them mailed to the Biology Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Xiaolu Wu (address as
shown above in the initial application session). The PSU Biology Graduate Reference Form can be found by clicking a link on the webpage at http://www.pittstate.edu/department/biology/graduate.dot

Note:
- Please make sure to submit all the documents as requested for initial application and final application to smooth out the process.
- We value all applications and will notify applicants of the results of the initial and final application in a timely manner based on the time table shown below. As such, applicants are suggested to wait patiently for the results and avoid constantly checking their application status by emails or phone calls because this can lead to an unnecessary decrease in the efficiency of processing applications. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the initial application, applicants send letter of intent, PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form, and official transcripts to the Biology Graduate coordinator (Dr. Xiaolu Wu) by:</td>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>August 15</td>
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<td>Department of Biology sends emails to the applicants regarding the result of initial application by:</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>September 15</td>
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<td>For the final application, applicants submit other documents to Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU, and three references send the PSU Biology Graduate Reference Form to the Biology Graduate coordinator (Dr. Xiaolu Wu) by:</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>October 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU announces the result of final application by emails and mails by:</td>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>November 1</td>
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