

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

## **Description of Program:**

There are three options available to students interested in obtaining a MS in Biology from PSU (see below). Typically, MS degrees are obtained within two years of matriculation. Individual master's programs are developed by the student in consultation with her or his faculty advisor and a graduate committee. Areas of study depend on the research interests of individual faculty. A limited number of graduate teaching assistantships become available each year in the Department. These provide a small stipend and valuable teaching experience. Assignments are usually made into the laboratory sections of undergraduate courses. If accepted as a graduate student, you will receive an application for an assistantship with your admission packet of information.

- **Option I - Thesis** A minimum of 30 credit hours including the requirements below.
  - BIOL 800 Seminar (minimum of one hour)
  - BIOL 801 Introduction to Research
  - BIOL 890 Research and Thesis (4-6 hours)With the approval of the advisor and chairperson, up to nine hours may be taken outside the Department of Biology. All full-time graduate students are required to attend graduate seminar when offered.
- **Option II - Problem** A minimum of 32 credit hours including the requirements below.
  - BIOL 800 Seminar (minimum of one hour)
  - BIOL 801 Introduction to Research
  - BIOL 891 Research Problems (3-6 hours)With the approval of the advisor and chairperson, up to nine hours may be taken outside the Department of Biology. All full-time graduate students are required to attend graduate seminar when offered.
- **Option III - Professional Masters** A minimum of 36 credit hours including the requirements below.
  - BIOL 800 Seminar (one hour)
  - BIOL 801 Introduction to Research (3 hours - with a grade of B or higher)
  - BIOL 803 Biometry (3 hours)
  - BIOL 892 Professional Experience (3 hours)This option is intended for science professionals (e.g. in-service teachers and individuals in environmental, ecological, or biotechnological careers) who need more experience and focused preparation in areas of biological science.

## **Admission Requirements:**

Students must have completed a BS in Biology with at least 25 hours of acceptable undergraduate courses in biology. These should include fundamental courses in botany, ecology, zoology, genetics, microbiology, and physiology. A cumulative total of 13 hours of chemistry, including organic chemistry is required. However, a student may count certain senior-graduate or graduate level chemistry on the degree requirements upon the recommendation of the advisor.

## **How to Apply:**

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) to [biol-graduate@pittstate.edu](mailto:biol-graduate@pittstate.edu). For the final

application, the applicant needs to submit other documents as required by the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU (see below). The overall procedures of the application is shown below.

### **Initial Application Procedure:**

**Step 1:** Complete the **PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form** which can be found below. Be sure to indicate which faculty member(s) you would be interested in working with.

**Step 2:** 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 3:** Send the **letter of intent**, **PSU Biology Graduate Admission Application Form**, and **official transcripts** together via email or mail to:

Graduate Coordinator  
Department of Biology  
Pittsburg State University  
1701 S. Broadway  
Pittsburg, KS, 66762  
[biol-graduate@pittstate.edu](mailto:biol-graduate@pittstate.edu)

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

### **Final Application Procedure:**

**This should only be completed after being informed by the Department of Biology that your application is complete and that a faculty member has agreed to serve as your advisor/mentor.**

**Step 1:** Visit the homepage of the Office of Graduate and Continuing Studies at PSU (<https://www.pittstate.edu/graduate/index.html>) and fill out the Graduate Studies Application by clicking an “APPLY” link located on this webpage.

**Step 2:** Distribute three PSU Biology Graduate Reference Forms (available on the webpage at [https://biology.pittstate.edu/\\_files/documents/graduate-program/reference-form-10-11-16.pdf](https://biology.pittstate.edu/_files/documents/graduate-program/reference-form-10-11-16.pdf)) to your references and ask them to submit them in a timely manner to the address shown above in the initial application instructions (submission by email of scanned copy is fine).

# APPLICATION FORM FOR BIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDIES

*PRINT PLEASE*

- (1) Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Day/Year
- (2) Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First M
- (3) Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box Number of Apt Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip (Postal Code): \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) When do you plan to begin attendance? Fall: \_\_\_\_ Spring: \_\_\_\_ YEAR: \_\_\_\_
- (5) CHECK THE AREA OF YOUR INTEREST FOR GRADUATE STUDIES:  
**Cell/Molecular/Biomedical Biology**  
Cell Biology ( )  
Genetics ( )  
Immunology ( )  
Microbiology ( )  
Molecular Diagnostics ( )  
Vector-borne Disease ( )  
Food Safety ( )  
Molecular Biology ( )  
Plant Microbe Interact. ( )  
Synthetic Biology ( )  
Virology ( )  
**Education**  
Biology Education ( )  
**Systematics/Natural History**  
Museum Management ( )  
Natural History ( )  
Systematics ( )  
**Field and Environmental Biology**  
Aquatic Biology ( )  
Botany ( )  
Conservation ( )  
Ecology ( )  
Entomology ( )  
Environmental Biology ( )  
Fisheries Management ( )  
Ichthyology ( )  
Limnology ( )  
Wildlife Management ( )  
Zoology ( )

(6) Please circle the name(s) of the Biology Department faculty member(s) who you would like as your research advisor based on shared research interests (maximally three faculty members can be chosen).

- **Peter Chung**, Associate Professor of Microbiology.  
Specialties: microbiology, molecular biology (nucleic acid manipulation and protein expression systems in microbes and coccidia), tissue culture
- **Christine C. Brodsky**, Assistant Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: urban ecology, environmental education
- **Andrew D. George**, Assistant Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: ornithology, herpetology, ecology, wildlife management
- **Anu Ghosh**, Assistant Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: molecular and environmental microbiology, ecology of ticks
- **Phillip Harries**, Associate Professor of Molecular Biology.  
Specialties: synthetic biology, plant viruses, cellular and molecular biology of plants
- **Hermann Nonnenmacher**, Assistant Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: plant ecology, entomology
- **Mandy Peak**, Associate Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: molecular and cellular biology, biochemistry
- **Neal Schmidt**, Instructor.  
Specialties: anatomy and physiology; Pharmacology
- **Neil Snow**, Assistant Professor of Botany and Director, T. M. Sperry Herbarium.  
Specialties: plant systematics, plant identification, herbarium management
- **James E. Whitney**, Assistant Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: ichthyology, fisheries management, ecology
- **Daniel Zurek**, Professor of Biology.  
Specialties: cellular and molecular biology, biotechnology, and plant molecular physiology.

(7) How did you become aware of our Biology Graduate Program?

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(8) What are your plans or goals after completing graduate studies at Pittsburg State University?

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(9) List all degrees held, granting institutions and year (most recent first)

(1)

(2)

(3)

(10) Undergraduate GPA (based on 4.0) Overall: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

(11) Undergraduate Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Undergraduate Minor: \_\_\_\_\_

(12) List all graduate courses you have taken at other institutions and the name of the institution.

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(13) What is the number of graduate hours you have taken at Pittsburg State University, if any? \_\_\_\_\_

(14) List undergraduate honors, scholarships, society affiliations, etc.

(1)

(2)

(3)

(15) List the names and addresses of three individuals you have asked to write letters of recommendation for graduate study

(1)

(2)

(3)

(16) Have you ever held a fellowship or assistantship? If so, please give names and the institutions where held.

(17) Are you interested in a graduate teaching assistantship in the Biology Department? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

(18) If yes, then list any employment you have had that would be relevant to an assistantship.

(1)

(2)

*NOTE: Graduate assistantships are awarded only to students who are pursuing masters or education specialist degree programs. Letters and complete official transcripts of all courses taken and degrees previously received must be sent directly to: PSU Office of Graduate Studies; 1701 S. Broadway; Pittsburg, KS 66762, from the appropriate registrar(s) in support of this application. Assistantships are awarded to those whose records are substantially above average. This application and documents will not be returned to the applicant.*

*Pittsburg State University is committed to a policy of educational equity. Accordingly, the University admits students, grants financial aid and scholarships, conducts all the education programs, activities, and employment practices without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, ancestry, or disabilities.*

*The immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires PSU to verify the identity and employment eligibility and complete an I-9 form for every employee (including Graduate Assistants) hired after November 6, 1986. Visit the PSU Human Resources web site (<http://pittstate.edu/office/hr/>) for more information. You will not be allowed to start work without providing appropriate documentation.*

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE DEPARTMENTAL CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO GRADUATE STUDIES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY AT PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY AND CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IS ACCURATE.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Email completed and signed form to:

[biol-graduate@pittstate.edu](mailto:biol-graduate@pittstate.edu)

**Please use Subject line: Masters applicant**