

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN BIOLOGY: CONCENTRATION IN MARINE BIOLOGY

A student interested in pursuing an advanced degree in any of these programs must meet the general requirements as outlined as well as any additional requirements specified by the major field of study.

For current advising information, including research and funding opportunities, consult the SF State Biology Department website at biology.sfsu.edu.

General Admission Requirements

An applicant must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and the equivalent major coursework for the program area to which application is made. To evaluate an applicant, the biology department requires the following:

1. transcripts of all undergraduate work;
2. Graduate Record Examination scores for the general test;
3. a statement of purpose;
4. two or more letters of recommendation, preferably from science faculty.

When the department receives this information, the completed file is forwarded to the faculty coordinator of the program area chosen by the applicant. The faculty in the program area evaluate the applicant's file and recommend admission or denial based on the following criteria:

- Grade point average in the undergraduate major—minimum required GPA in science courses is 3.0
- Statement of purpose
- GRE scores
- Letters of recommendation

Denial of admission may be based on inadequacy in any of the above criteria, if an applicant's interests are not represented by current faculty, or if faculty in the applicant's area of interest are unable to support additional students.

Written English Proficiency Requirement

The University has a requirement for written English proficiency that is to be assessed at two levels.

Level One

The student must pass a proctored essay test administered by the department at the beginning of the first semester.

Level Two

Prior to filing the Advancement to Candidacy (ATC), the student must prepare a thesis prospectus for approval by the student's thesis committee.

Course Requirements

The general requirements of all students are as follows:

- All courses listed on the Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) (or to satisfy conditional requirements) must be completed with a letter

grade. The culminating experience courses, [BIOL 895](#) and [BIOL 898](#) are the exception and will be graded on a CR/NC basis.

- A minimum of 30 units of upper division and/or graduate credit (may include up to six units of experimental courses in biology).
- A minimum of 21 units of which six units may be from a graduate level paired course.
- A minimum of two department seminars requiring student presentations.
- After initiating a research program, a graduate student must enroll each semester in [BIOL 897](#) – until the research is completed.
- Four units of [BIOL 898](#) or three units of [BIOL 895](#).
- An oral defense of the thesis or research project.

[On-line course descriptions](#) are available. Most upper division courses in biology are acceptable for the master's in biology upon approval of the graduate advisor. Students are reminded to check the individual concentrations for additional requirements.

Concentration in Marine Biology

Programs in this area reflect the fact that marine biology is a meeting place for all the biological sciences and some of the physical sciences. Graduate work may be broad or follow specific program areas as ecology, systematics, functional morphology, molecular biology, physiology, evolution, and behavior.

The marine program and facilities of San Francisco State University are strongly supported by the Estuary and Ocean Science Center (EOS), the marine and estuarine field station of SF State situated on San Francisco Bay in Marin County. EOS's marine/estuarine scientists and oceanographers offer a broad range of courses at both EOS and the main campus. Courses offered by EOS faculty are listed in this Bulletin under Biology, Chemistry, Geography, and Geology. In addition, marine science courses are offered at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, a laboratory on Monterey Bay operated by a consortium of California State University campuses. Courses offered at Moss Landing can be found in this *Bulletin* under [Marine Science](#).

Students in the Master of Science in Biology: Concentration in Marine Biology program follow the requirements of the M.S. in Biology with specific coursework selected upon advisement.

For further information contact the program's graduate coordinator. Applicants must have the equivalent of the Bachelor of Science in Biology at San Francisco State University.