

**GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES**

**Department of Biology  
The University of Texas at Tyler**

**Faculty Approval: July 7, 2017**

**Approved by GPC:**

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**Signature**

**Date**

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To all new graduate students:

Congratulations and welcome to The University of Texas at Tyler and the Department of Biology. We are very pleased that you have entrusted us with your future education. All of the faculty and staff in the department are committed to your success. As a department, our goal is to promote excellence in teaching and learning, research, and service in a collaborative and collegial environment. We are excited to welcome you to our family.

The Graduate Student Handbook is a document that is designed to ensure that your graduate experience is smooth and to help you navigate your graduate education. Please read the entire document and ensure that you meet all of the required benchmarks and deadlines. If you have any questions, you should consult your faculty advisor first. There is a mandatory orientation session you will all attend; here your privileges, duties, and responsibilities to the department will be explained. Please consult with your faculty advisor often and actively seek their guidance and mentoring. Also, my door is always open to you if you have any questions or concerns.

We look forward to working with you as you further your education with us. Thank you for choosing The University of Texas at Tyler!

Sincerely,



Lance R. Williams  
Professor and Chair

## ACADEMIC HONESTY AND CONDUCT

All students at The University of Texas at Tyler are bound by the university's code of conduct as detailed in the *A Student Guide to Conduct and Discipline at the University of Texas at Tyler* (<https://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf?>).

As such, Biology graduate students are expected to maintain academic honesty in all of their coursework. In the conduct of their research, students are expected to maintain high standards of ethical behavior. To fulfill these standards, students are expected to develop several traits. These include the use of "searching skepticism" and an open mind when analyzing data; the use of scientific objectivity in developing scientific values; knowing and disclosing conflicts of interest; sharing research materials in a collegial way; and giving credit to others where credit is due. Students are strongly encouraged to read *On Being A Scientist: Responsible Conduct In Research*, published by the U. S. National Academy of Science (<https://www.nap.edu/read/4917/chapter/1>).

## GRADUATE PROGRAM STRUCTURE: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

1. The **Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC)** includes two faculty members and the Graduate Coordinator. Their responsibility is to review applicants for the graduate program in the biology department.
2. The **Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC)** will have overall responsibility for informing the graduate school of GAC decision, coordinating TAs assignments with GTA coordinator, and ensuring that the policies and procedures detailed herein are followed by both faculty and students.
3. The **Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Coordinator** has many responsibilities each semester and every summer session. It is the responsibility for the GTA coordinator to schedule all GTAs to the course they will teach, observe their progress, prepare material for GTAs, answer any and all questions throughout the year, review their quizzes and power points, and final to give them feedback at the end of every semester.

## RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

The major advisor of each graduate student will have the primary and overall responsibility to advise the student on coursework, research, and adherence of the policies described herein. Applications for admission to the M.S. program will be evaluated by the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC), which will consist of faculty members and the graduate teaching assistant (GTA) coordinator. The GAC will make a recommendation to the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) who will then make a final decision and recommendation to the Graduate School for acceptance or denial. The Graduate Program Coordinator will have overall responsibility for informing applicants of GAC decision, coordinating TAs assignments with GTA coordinator, and ensuring that the policies and procedures detailed herein are followed by both faculty and students.

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

To qualify, a student must hold a B.S degree or equivalent in biology or a closely related field from an accredited institution with a GPA 3.0 or better and a satisfactory GRE Score (cumulative score of 295+ and a writing score of 4.0+). TAs will only be supported by the department for 2 years, after this time they will need to find other funding sources. TAs are employed for ~4.5 months (20 hours a week) during regular semesters. Summer TAs are usually employed for at least one session lasting six weeks. TAs must register for 9 hours in the regular semesters. The last semester is an exception where students must enroll for a minimum of three credit hours (unless other coursework is required, additional Thesis II). TAs must also have no incompletes in more than one semester and have all admissions conditions met. Foreign students who speak English as a second language must meet the admissions standards on TOEFFL (or equivalent).

GTAs must be present at **least one week prior to the start of each semester** so that they can attend the appropriate meetings and training events. GTAs are required to submit monthly timesheets, which are usually prepared by the GTA coordinator and given to GTAs in the first meetings of the semesters (typically in the week prior the beginning of each semester). Timesheets are then submitted to the departmental administrative assistant for processing. These time sheets schedule them for a 20-hour workweek and appointments are typically 4.5 months in duration. Each GTA is paid on the first of every month. **The first and last paychecks are prorated based on the number of weeks work in the prior month.**

Summer GTA pay schedule is on a shorter time scale since it is approximately a 6 week appointment. TAs are still required to file timesheets for their work, which is no more than 20hr/week. For summer one session, they are paid 1/3 of the paycheck on the first payday (July 1), and the last 2/3<sup>rd</sup> Mid July. For summer two sessions, they will receive 2/3<sup>rd</sup> pay check Aug. 1 and the last 1/3<sup>rd</sup> mid August.

### **Graduate Research Assistant**

To qualify, a student must hold a B.S. degree or equivalent in biology or a closely related field from an accredited institution, with a GPA of 3.0 or better. A satisfactory GRE Score is also required as mentioned above. RAs are usually employed for 4.5 months (20 hours/week) during regular semesters and typically six or more weeks during the summer. RAs must register for 9 credit hours in regular semesters. The last semester is an exception where students must enroll for a minimum of three credit hours (Thesis II). RAs must also have no incompletes more than one semester, maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA, and have all admission conditions met.

GRAs are required to submit **biweekly timesheets**, and are to not exceed 20hr/week. If a grant is funding the GRAs appointment, timesheets are submitted to the office of sponsored research (OSR) administrative assistant. There are a few exceptions to the location in which timesheets are submitted, but that can be discussed upon your arrival with your Major advisor. Each GRA is paid on a biweekly schedule, unless otherwise stated by the major advisor.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSION PROCESS**

1. Applicants to the graduate program are encouraged to contact potential advisors or the Department of Biology by e-mail ([biology@uttyler.edu](mailto:biology@uttyler.edu)) or via telephone (903-566-7402) for opportunities in the graduate program. The potential advisor will respond and provide further information on the graduate program and application procedures. If the applicant contacts the department rather than a potential advisor, the GPC will forward the e-mail to all graduate faculty for consideration. The applicant can submit an online application ([www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)). Information about the faculty and graduate program opportunities are made available on the department's website ([www.uttyler.edu/biology](http://www.uttyler.edu/biology)).
2. All applicants are automatically considered for graduate teaching or research assistantships, which are available on a competitive basis.
  - a. GPA > 3.0
  - b. Collective GRE score  $\geq$  295
  - c. GRE writing score of 4.0
  - d. Other considerations such as previous work and research experience, extracurricular activities and recommendation letters.
3. Once complete, applications are channeled by the Graduate School to members of the GAC for review and recommendation. The minimum graduate admission requirements can be found at <http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/gradadmissions/admissions.php>.
  - a. The graduate application fee is \$40 for domestic and \$75 for international applications. The application fee is non-refundable and must be paid before your application can be evaluated for admission.
  - b. To be considered for admission, applicants whose primary language is not English (the undergraduate degree is from a foreign institution) must submit results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic). Minimum score requirements are as follows:
    - i. 79 TOEFL iBT (internet-based test)
    - ii. 550 TOEFL PBT (paper-based test)
    - iii. 6.5 overall band score and 6.0 in each subsection IELTS
    - iv. 53 PTE Academic
  - c. Most students come to the United States to enroll in a full-time degree program in F-1 student status. A Form I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for an F-1 student visa) is issued to students by UT Tyler for entry into the U.S.
    - i. Dependents (spouse or children) of an F-1 visa holder can accompany the student on F-2 dependent status.
    - ii. If you reside outside the U.S., the UT Tyler Office of International Programs will send you the I-20 after you have submitted the required evidence of financial support. You must then pay the SEVIS fee. The I-20 must be presented at the U.S. Consulate or Embassy when applying for the F-1 student visa, along with your unexpired passport, evidence of financial support and SEVIS fee receipt.
    - iii. For more information please visit the graduate school webpage to learn

about how to complete your application for the F-1 visa  
([http://www.uttyler.edu/oip/f\\_1\\_students.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/oip/f_1_students.php))

4. The GAC will then direct the reviewed application to the GPC to inform the applicant of the GAC's decision. The GPC will send a written notification of the GAC's decision to the applicant as detailed below.
5. Each applicant's folder containing comments and evaluation from the Graduate Affairs Committee and the GPC is made available to interested faculty willing to serve as an advisor.
6. Acceptance into the department is based upon recommendation of acceptance by the GAC, availability of a faculty member willing to serve as the student's advisor, and admission by the Graduate School. Conditional admission may be recommended if students have one or more deficient areas (e.g., GPA below the minimum, insufficient undergraduate course history, low GRE scores, etc.).
7. If the department elects not to recommend the applicant for admission, the GPC informs the applicant of this decision.
8. Upon admission by the Graduate School, the GPC corresponds with each applicant on the following items:
  - a. name of advisor,
  - b. general area of research (when appropriate),
  - c. funding status, if any,
  - d. expected date of arrival
  - e. other information as deemed appropriate.
9. International students will be provided the documents required (a letter of appointment, I-20, etc.) by the Graduate School to obtain a student visa from an U.S. consulate or embassy. Students are required to provide visa documentation to the Office of Human Resources no later than one week before the start of the semester. If the required documentation is not provided, their appointment will be voided (<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/gradadmissions/h-1b-visa-holders.php>).

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)**

All graduate students are strongly encouraged to read UT Tyler's expectations of graduate studies at <http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/students/beststudent.php>. To achieve the departmental and university goals for graduate education, students seeking a M.S. degree in Biology will be:

#### **Required to demonstrate:**

- Core knowledge of Biology
- The ability to conduct original research, including the analysis and interpretation of data

- In-depth knowledge in area of specialization
- General knowledge of current issues and methods in science and technology and develop lifelong habits for maintaining this currency
- The ability to write scientifically sound research proposals and manuscripts
- The ability to orally present scientific information and research ideas

**Expected to:** (experiences will be provided to achieve these outcomes but they will not be assessed as SLOs)

- Develop critical thinking skills and the ability to apply the scientific method
- Practice ethical and professional behavior and demonstrate social responsibility
- Work collaboratively and with individuals of diverse backgrounds
- Exhibit safe practices in the laboratory and field to protect human and environmental welfare

## **REGISTRATION OF COURSES**

Registration of course each semester is the student's responsibility and is done electronically through their myuttyler account ([https://sis-portal-prod.uttyler.edu/psp/TAPPRD/EMPLOYEE/EMPL/h/?tab=PAPP\\_GUEST](https://sis-portal-prod.uttyler.edu/psp/TAPPRD/EMPLOYEE/EMPL/h/?tab=PAPP_GUEST)). Graduate students (GTAs or GRAs) must register for at least 9 credit hours in the fall and spring semester. The last semester is an exception where students must enroll for a minimum of three credit hours (Thesis II).

International students have very specific instructions to follow to maintain their F-1 visas (<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/intl/intl-admissions/index.php>). Failure to follow these requirements will result in the loss of lawful F-1 student status as well as the eligibility for F-1 benefits such as employment. The requirements are as follows:

- Report to the school listed on your Form I-20. Follow the US Department of Homeland Security and University transfer procedures to attend a new school.
- Do not work without authorization and follow F-1 rules regarding on-campus and off-campus employment.
- Always have a valid, unexpired passport and Form I-20. An unexpired F-1 visa is not required to maintain F-1 status.
- Update your Form I-20 if you change majors or educational level. Notify the University and the ISSFS of each change of local address within 10 days of the move.
- Notify the University by updating your address through your myUTTYler account. Notify ISSFS by sending an email to [issfs@uttyler.edu](mailto:issfs@uttyler.edu).
- **Maintain full-time enrollment every long semester unless approved for a reduced course load by the international student advisor. Summer enrollment is not required unless it is your first semester in a new program.**
- Make steady progress towards completing your degree. If you require more time on your Form I-20, follow extension procedures before the completion date listed on your Form I-20.
- Leave the US when you are finished with your degree or Optional Practical Training, remaining in the US for no longer than 60 days after completion.



## **GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND REQUIREMENTS**

All students must maintain a grade point average of 3.0 on all course work. Only a grade of 'B' or better will be applied towards the degree. A student whose record falls below a 3.0 is automatically placed on probation. If at the end of the next session, in which the student is registered (semester or summer), the cumulative grade point average is not at least a 3.0, then the student will forfeit their graduate status and will be dismissed from the program.

## **TUITION RATES AND FEES**

The approximate price for nine semester hours for Texas residents is approximately \$3,188, while it is approximately \$6,887 for non-Texas residents. For more up to date information for fees you can visit the graduate school webpage for more details (<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/index.php>). Note that tuition and fees are subject to change by legislative or the Board of Regents action and become effective on the date enacted. The Texas Legislature does not set the specific amount for any particular fee. The student fees assessed are authorized by state statute; however, the specific fee amounts and the determination to increase fees are by the university administration and the University of Texas System Board of Regents.

While the institution does not grant tuition waivers to GTAs and GRAs, they will qualify for instate tuition rates. In order to obtain the instate waiver the graduate students must fill out the appropriate paperwork and submit to the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) by the university census date. The Chair of the biology department must also provide a signed statement of the student's job description. The signed statement of the student's job description must be submitted along with the application. These forms are given to each student during the GTA/GRA Fall orientation meeting (meets one week prior the semester). Students may request them earlier, by contacting the GTA Coordinator.

## **CONDUCT OF GRADUATE PROGRAM**

The department of biology offers graduate studies leading to the degree of Master of Science in Biology with a thesis and a non-thesis option. The program is designed to provide graduate education for students who intend to pursue vocations in industry, government, teaching, research, and further graduate education leading to a doctorate. The department offers course work and research in the following general areas: genetics, genomics, bioinformatics, evolutionary biology, phylogenetics, developmental biology, microbiology, insect biology, conservation biology, and ecology. This program is designed for students preparing for careers requiring analytical research and problem solving skills.

### ***General Admission requirements (both thesis and non-thesis options)***

In addition to the general requirements for admission to graduate school, the requirements for admission to the Master of Science in Biology are as follows:

1. Bachelor's degree in science with a major in biology or a closely related field from an accredited college or university with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or equivalent.

2. A satisfactory score on the General Test (verbal, quantitative, and analytical) of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Students who do not have satisfactory scores on the GRE may be admitted under the condition that they obtain a grade of B or higher on a prescribed set of undergraduate and/or graduate course that are approved by the department.
3. A satisfactory grade point average on all prior advanced (junior, senior and graduate) work taken.
4. A satisfactory score on TOEFL or an equivalent test for applicants whose native language is not English.
5. Curriculum Vitae
6. Statement of research interests.
7. Approval by departmental Graduate Affairs Committee and the Graduate Program Coordinator.
8. Consideration may also be given to one or more of the following: the applicant's demonstrated commitment to his or her chosen field of study, socioeconomic background, first generation college graduate, multilingual proficiency, geographic region of residence, and level of responsibility in other matters including extracurricular activities, employment, community service, and family responsibilities.

### ***Graduation requirements for Thesis option***

Each candidate for the M.S. Degree in biology (thesis option) must:

1. Complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit.
  - a. Required Courses
    - i. BIOL 5395 (Thesis I)
    - ii. BIOL 5396 (Thesis II)
    - iii. BIOL 5193 (two 1-hour seminar courses)
2. Complete a research-based thesis.
3. Maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on all course work. Only grades of "B" or better can be applied towards the degree.
4. Must be a full time student (9 credit hours) if student is receiving institutional funds (either a GTA or GRA), with the exception of their final semester, where fewer hours can be taken.
5. Demonstrate satisfactory performance on a final comprehensive oral and/or written examination covering the courses, thesis and other academic or laboratory components of the student's program selected by the graduate advisory committee.

### ***Graduation requirement for non-thesis option***

Each candidate for the M.S. Degree in biology (non-thesis option) must:

1. Complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit.
  - a. Required Courses
    - i. BIOL 5394 (Biological research I)
    - ii. BIOL (Biological research II) currently Independent study can be taken, please discuss with your advisor.
    - iii. BIOL 5193 (two 1-hour seminar classes)
2. Complete a non-research based paper over a topic chosen by the student and faculty mentor.
3. Maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on all course work. Only grades of “B” or better can be applied towards the degree.
4. Demonstrate satisfactory performance on a final comprehensive oral and/or written examination covering the courses, a non-research based professional paper, and other academic or laboratory components of the student’s program selected by the graduate advisory committee.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES IN GRADUATE PROGRAM**

The student’s advisor and the student are responsible for the selection of an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee for M.S. students must have a minimum of three members (with graduate status), including the major advisor. A form with the committee members’ signatures must be submitted to the GPC by the end of the first semester, where final approval at the departmental level is given. Once the GPC has approved the advisory committee, the Graduate School must make a formal appointment of the Advisory Committee. The Graduate School paperwork must be filed (<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/forms/>). **The committee for Master’s candidates is to be formed prior to the completion of the first semester of study.** An approved program of study is to be filed by the end of the first semester of residence. Note that Thesis credit hours cannot be taken without establishing an advisory committee, thus during the first semester Thesis credit hours should not be taken. See below for details on the selection and role of advisory committee.

**Students and major professors are strongly encouraged to consult the Graduate School Guidelines before preparing a Program of Study** (<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/>). It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of, and comply with, all regulations, policies, procedures, and deadlines of the University, the Graduate School, and the Department of Biology.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BOTH THESIS AND NON-THESIS OPTIONS)**

### **A. Selection of Advisory Committee (both non-thesis and thesis options)**

Upon admission to a master's degree program, the student confers with the major advisor to establish an advisory committee consisting of the major advisor, who chairs the committee, and at least two other members of the graduate faculty. All members of a student's supervisory committee participate as peers and have the responsibility for planning the program of study, advising the student, administering the final examination or evaluating the culminating experience, ensuring that University regulations and program requirements are met, and ensuring that the student's masters program is of high quality. The supervisory committee also is responsible for ensuring that no conflicts of interest exist. Conflicts of interest to be avoided include those that may arise from personal or professional relationships between committee members, committee members and the student, with funding sources, and with any other stakeholders.

It is the student's responsibility to submit the appropriate paperwork required for establishing an advisory committee to the department. A departmental form (appendix I) will need to be submitted to the GPC with the names and signatures of their advisory committee. Along with the committee selection form, a written thesis proposal and guideline of students academic plan should be attached (first semester and first advisory meeting). Once the GPC has approved the advisory committee the committee must be formalized officially through the graduate school at UT Tyler ([http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/students/thesis\\_dissertation.php](http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/students/thesis_dissertation.php)).

### **B. Prior to the first Advisory Committee meeting, the student will prepare:**

- a. A summary of his or her academic background
- b. A proposed course of study, in consultation with the major advisor.
- c. A proposed outline for a thesis, report, or dissertation, again in consultation with the major advisor. These materials will be provided to their advisor one week prior to the initial committee meeting and it is then the advisor's responsibility to forward these materials to the other committee members and the Chair of the Department of Biology.

### **C. At the initial Advisory Committee meeting to which the GPC must be invited as an observer, the members will:**

- a. Evaluate the student's academic background.
- b. Inform the student of timelines and procedures.
- c. Approve a program of study. The proposed program of study will then be submitted to the Graduate School in accordance with university regulations.
- d. Review and make recommendations for the thesis proposal.

### **D. At the initial or a subsequent committee meeting, a detailed research proposal will be approved.**

The approved research proposal, with literature review, objectives, and procedures, will be filed in the student's folder in the department office by the end of the second semester of residency.

**E. All M.S. students are required to prepare an oral presentation of their research proposal (research proposal seminar) and present it to the entire department.**

The seminar is open to all members of the department. It is recommended that the student consult the advisory committee during the preparation of the seminar. The seminar must be scheduled during the **second semester** of the student's residence at UT Tyler (i.e., a student admitted in Fall must present the seminar before the end of Spring; if admitted in Spring, seminar is presented in the Fall and so on). Exceptions will be made only under extreme circumstances and at the discretion of the Advisory Committee. A rubric for the presentation of the research proposal to the department can be found in Appendix II.

**F. Annual progress reports**

Annual progress reports from all graduate students are due November 30th or the Monday following Thanksgiving (whichever is later) at the end of their third semester. If students began in a spring semester, then reports will be due by April 30<sup>th</sup> at the end of their third semester. The reports must be reviewed and signed by **the major advisor, the advisory committee, and the GPC** and a copy of the report will be placed in the student's file. **The department of biology's annual report the form (which must include signatures from your advisory committee) must accompany the annual progress report (appendix III).** Annual progress reports serve several purposes.

1. They ensure that the student and advisor are satisfied with the progress that has been made and there is a written record of the same.
2. It is an opportunity for the student and advisor to review the progress and plot a course for the following year.
3. In case of disputes between the student and advisor, there is a record to which all concerned may refer.

## **THESIS AND DEFENSE**

All M.S. students in the thesis/research track are required to complete a thesis, which must be prepared according to <http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/thesis-dissertation/thesis-students.php>. A copy of the thesis (edited and tentatively approved by the advisor) must be provided to the committee and the Chair of the department a **minimum of two weeks before the defense**. Notification of intention to defend must be approved by the committee a **minimum of 4 weeks** prior to the defense date. The final oral examination at the Master's level will be a defense of the candidate's thesis or report, but also may include questions from all aspects of the Life Sciences. In case the Advisory Committee deems the student has failed the examination, a second examination may be scheduled in accordance with university regulations.

The first portion of the examination session will be an oral research review presentation

("seminar") by the student. This review will be open to all faculty members, graduate students, and others who wish to attend. Questions may be asked of the student by persons attending this review. Following the review, the room will be cleared except for members of the student's committee, the Chair, and other graduate faculty wishing to remain, any of whom is entitled to ask further questions. At the conclusion of the examination, the committee members will meet alone to vote on whether to pass the student.

### **EXAMPLE OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT TIMELINE**

**First semester – Selection of committee and presentation of proposal to committee**

**Second semester – Presentation of Proposal to the Department**

**Third semester – Progress report to committee members**

**Final semester – Public Defense of Thesis**

### **DISMISSAL FROM PROGRAM**

A graduate student will be denied continued enrollment at The University of Texas at Tyler for any of the following reasons:

- a. Failure of a student admitted on probation to achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in the first 9 credit hours of graduate coursework, or failure of a student to meet other conditions specified in the admission letter.
- b. Failure of a student placed on probation for deficient grades to achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 within 2 semesters for full-time students and within 12 credit hours for part-time students.
- c. Failure to meet published departmental or University requirements.
- d. Failure to maintain satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.
- e. Failure in the final degree examination(s)/Thesis Defense.
- f. Failure to acquire mastery of the methodology and content in a field sufficient to complete a successful thesis.
- g. Qualifying for placement on probation a second time, except when the first period of probation is a condition of admission or when the second period is a condition of reinstatement.

## **GRADUATION**

Upon successful defense of the thesis, students must complete revisions recommended by the committee by the deadlines established by the Graduate School (<http://www2.uttyler.edu/graduate/calendar.php>). A minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit, including six hours of thesis (BIOL 5395, 5396) are required for graduation. Only grades of 'B' or better can be applied towards the degree. Applications for graduation must be completed by the deadlines established by the Office of the Registrar ([http://www2.uttyler.edu/registrar/graduation/applying\\_for\\_graduation.php](http://www2.uttyler.edu/registrar/graduation/applying_for_graduation.php)).

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The UT Tyler Office of Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) provides students equal access to all educational, social and co-curricular programs through coordination of services and reasonable accommodations, consultation and advocacy. The SARs office works collaboratively with students, faculty and staff to create an inclusive educational environment. For more information of eligibility and the requesting accommodations you can visit the SARs webpage (<http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices/index.php>).

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Students in the Department of Biology are expected to act professionally on and off campus. If a graduate student in the department is accused of one of these offenses (discussed below), the graduate affairs committee will confer on the appropriate action, and if the accusations are supported immediate dismissal from the program may be an option. For more information of the infractions listed below, you can visit the Handbook of Operations Procedures (<http://uttyler.smartcatalogiq.com/en/UTTyler/2015-2016-HOP>).

### *Non-discrimination Policy*

To make sure that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity sponsored or conducted by The University of Texas System or any of its institutions, on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, or disability.

### *Title IX: Sexual Harassment Policy*

The University of Texas at Tyler is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. As stated in the definition, sexual misconduct includes sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence and/or dating violence. Individuals who engage in sexual misconduct and other inappropriate sexual conduct will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN**

In each of the laboratories and classrooms there are Emergency Information booklets. Please follow the instructions in these booklets in case of an emergency and use the following as guide. If there is not a booklet please notify your Department Safety Liaison (DSL).

\*Remember: Staying calm and assessing the situation properly can allow things to go smoothly and quickly to save lives.

Please familiarize yourself with the location of all safety equipment in every classroom you frequent.

Your DSL's

BEP 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor: Alan Lizarraga	x5531	<a href="mailto:alizarraga@uttyler.edu">alizarraga@uttyler.edu</a>
BEP 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor: Debra Ellis	x5764	<a href="mailto:dellis@uttyler.edu">dellis@uttyler.edu</a>
HPR 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor: Teresa Young	x7055	<a href="mailto:teresayoung@uttyler.edu">teresayoung@uttyler.edu</a>
HPR 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor: Patricia Pelletier	x7253	<a href="mailto:ppetletier@uttyler.edu">ppetletier@uttyler.edu</a>

### **Fire**

- If a fire starts in your room call 911 this will go over the dispatch for the UT Tyler Police
- Pull the fire alarm
- When a fire alarm is triggered your DSL will close the double doors that link the General Biology labs and the doors to the bell tower. This is to ensure we don't have classes being split up and people unaccounted for at muster.
- Next you will take all your students to your designated muster area (located on last page) that is more than 200ft from the building, because explosions can send glass shooting away from the building.
- If the fire is behind a closed door, DO NOT OPEN
- Close all doors to reduce the oxygen supply to the fire
- Know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher
- Do not attempt to extinguish a fire without help – EVER
- Only attempt to extinguish a fire after initial notification of UT Tyler Police
- If unsure of the situation – EVACUATE

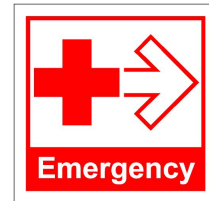




- Once the “all clear” is given by the EH&S staff, return to your rooms and account for the people in your room.

### **Medical Emergency or Injury**

- First there needs to be someone established is who is helping the victim. This person’s goal is to calm them and attempt to stop the bleeding or start the breathing if possible. The AED \*
- \*please don’t use CPR, AED, or first aid if you aren’t qualified
- Next establish someone to call an ambulance. Call 911, give them all the information you possible can about the victim. Then notify your DSL and faculty advisor (graduate students), as our campus dispatch will hear the call either way. This way there isn’t an extra step between the victim and the assistance they need
- After you call 911 have that person or another stand in the closest parking lot to the incident. This will guarantee that emergency services won’t have to look long to find the area and time is saved.
- Once the victim is in professional care please notify your DSL of the incident



### **Gas Leak**

- If you walk into a room and smell gas if possible to ensure all valves are closed.
- If you start to smell gas in a room and all valves are closed please evacuate the room and notify the UT Tyler Police Dispatch
- Pull the fire alarm only after notifying UT Tyler Police Dispatch

### **Chemical Spills**

#### **Minor**

- Alert anyone in the area of the spill
- Close the door to the laboratory to restrict further contamination
- Follow your Emergency Information guide on cleaning spills
- Notify your DSL or EH&S if assistance is needed.



#### **Major**

- If exposed use the appropriate safety measures (i.e. showers, eyewash) to decontaminate all parties exposed, remove effected clothing, and ensure to wash for 15 mins any areas effected

- Close the door to the laboratory to restrict further contamination
- Evacuate if necessary, Call UT Tyler Police Dispatch

### Tornado/Severe Weather



- In case of tornado/severe weather there will be an alarm to sound. When this alarm sounds begin leading others to the designated tornado shelters (on last page).
- Do NOT call 911, respond to university warning/notification systems.
- Avoid areas with windows or doors that join the outside.
- Use restrooms (that do not have windows) for overflow shelter space Once the all clear is given please go back to the class and start getting a head count.

### **Bomb Threat (additional points to general evacuation process guidelines)**

- Leave the building quickly and quietly.
- Do NOT:
  - use cell phones, portable radios, or other electronics,
  - turn on/off any electrical equipment or devices, or
  - close drawers or doors.
- Any static or electricity could detonate the device.
- After evacuating the building, instruct occupants to move to an assembly point that is *upwind* of the building/area the bomb is suspected to be and a distance of **at least 500 feet** (much farther than typical Assembly Point).
- Do NOT call University Police until reaching the 500-foot stand-off distance.
- University Police or other emergency services personnel may direct evacuees to move farther away based on the perceived threat and/or potential size of the explosive.

### Active Shooter

In cases of active shooters the University of Texas at Tyler implements the Run, Hide, Fight method:

#### **RUN-HIDE-FIGHT: (Shooter)**

- **Run** away from the sound of gunfire/shots, if safe to do so.
- **Hide** if running is not a safe choice for you. (Quiet Shelter: Hide, lock immediate area doors if time permits, turn off lights, phones, barricade the door, and keep co-occupants as quiet as possible.)

- ***Fight*** assailant with anything available, preferably as a group. This should be your last option.
- Do not leave the shelter until directed to do so by identifiable university or emergency response official.
- Do not attempt to lock exterior building doors.
- Do not risk your life once you have made an attempt to get others to shelter.
- We use RUN-HIDE-FIGHT because it is simple to remember, in wide-spread use, and leaves room for individuals to make the best choice for them in an active shooter scenario.

### **Unsafe Conditions**

If there are conditions that jeopardizes you or others in your charge please say something. If you must confront please do so in an informative matter. If you don't feel comfortable with confrontation email [safety@uttyler.edu](mailto:safety@uttyler.edu) and report the issue with as much detail as possible.

Don't worry it is all **anonymous**.

### *Evacuation Procedures for Mobility-Impaired Individuals*

Identifying individuals who will need some assistance in the event of a fire or other emergency requiring evacuation is essential. A mobility-impaired staff member should inform his/her supervisor of any special needs that he/she may have whether at the time of hire or following a subsequent injury. The supervisor and Department Safety Liaison (DSL) shall discuss special needs with the staff member in relation to the specific job to include what special needs he/she may have during an emergency evacuation. The DSL will ensure that persons with physical impairments are assisted, if necessary, to a safe location during an emergency. The Department Safety Liaison will also maintain a system of accountability for those individuals during an emergency evacuation.

Evacuation of disabled persons who are otherwise ambulatory, such as vision or hearing impaired, should take place normally with other building occupants. They can benefit from an escort and should be provided with one from within their work area.

When considering special needs, individuals using wheelchairs or that have other obvious mobility impairments, immediately comes to mind. However, there are many individuals who may not appear to have a disability that will also require special assistance. Permanent conditions such as arthritis, or temporary conditions, such as a sprained ankle or a broken leg can limit one's ability to evacuate quickly and safely. Heart disease, emphysema, asthma, or pregnancy can reduce stamina to the point of needing assistance when moving down many flights of stairs.

The UT Tyler campus is equipped with evacuation chairs in specified buildings. The evacuation chair is a lightweight, compact and easy to use device designed to assist mobility-impaired individuals down a stairwell. The open sides of the evacuation chair are designed so that most

people with limited mobility can transfer from their wheelchair to the evacuation chair without assistance. Once positioned, the Velcro straps are wrapped securely around the torso and lower legs. The individual is then wheeled to the stairway for descent.

The evacuation chair is completely stable and self-supporting on flat surfaces and during descent. It is equipped with a speed governor and braking system that allows a small attendant to easily evacuate a larger person securely and allows full control of the speed of descent. The durable rubber tracks firmly grip the stairs and the safety brake can stop the unit on the stairs. Most importantly, it provides those with limited mobility an equal opportunity for escape in an emergency.

The evacuation chairs are conveniently stored in steel cabinets and are ready for immediate use in an emergency. The one located in this building is Hudnall-Pirtle-Roosth 2<sup>nd</sup> floor across from Room 254

**Muster Areas**

**P8 Parking lot in front of RBN**

- BEP 115
- BEP 116
- BEP 117
- BEP 118
- BEP 120
- BEP 121
- BEP 122
- BEP 124
- BEP 125
- BEP 126
- BEP 127

- BEP 145
- BEP 146

**Tornado Shelter Areas**

- BEP 139
- BEP 140
- Stairwell near HPR 102 between BEP and HPR
- Stairwell next to BEP 124
- Stairwell next to BEP 114

**P5 Parking lot in front of bell tower**

- BEP 103
- BEP 104
- BEP 105
- BEP 108
- BEP 134
- BEP 136
- BEP 137
- BEP 138
- BEP 139
- BEP 140
- BEP 128
- BEP 129
- BEP 130
- BEP 132
- BEP 142
- BEP 143

## STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The department of biology encourages, but does not require, our graduate students to be active in student organizations and other service activities on campus. Here are a few examples of areas that you can be active on campus.

### *Biologists of Tyler Texas (BOTT)*

The purpose of this organization is to create a community for biologists at the University of Texas at Tyler; to provide students with a forum to share their concerns and ideas with the Biology department; and to create unity through a common interest in advanced biology education, enabling students to share their passion with the entire campus community.

Email: [biologist.of.tyler.texas@gmail.com](mailto:biologist.of.tyler.texas@gmail.com)

Faculty advisor: Ms. Jessica Coleman

### *Tri-Beta Honor Society – National Organization*

Beta Beta Beta (TriBeta) is an honor society for students, particularly undergraduates, dedicated to improving the understanding and appreciation of biological study and extending boundaries of human knowledge through scientific research. Since its founding in 1922, more than 200,000 persons have been accepted into lifetime membership, and more than 670 chapters have been established throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

Email: [TriBeta.uttyler@gmail.com](mailto:TriBeta.uttyler@gmail.com)

Website: <https://www.tribeta.org/>

Faculty advisor:

### *Student Government Association (SGA)*

We, the Students of The University of Texas at Tyler, hereby recognize the Student Government Association (SGA) as the forum of student opinion. The SGA shall operate within the laws of the state of Texas and the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas at Tyler. The SGA shall assist the University with identifying the interests, programs, and goals of the majority of students; communicate to the University community those interests, programs, and goals of students, and assist the University in providing students with programs to meet students' needs.

Email: [sga@patriots.uttyler.edu](mailto:sga@patriots.uttyler.edu)

Website: [www.uttyler.edu/sga/](http://www.uttyler.edu/sga/)

### *Departmental or University Committees*

Students may be asked to partake in various service activities within the department, which may include but is not limited to, 1) serving on a biology department committee (e.g. seminar or curriculum committee) or 2) serving as a biology department representative at various events (e.g. new student preview day).

## GRADUATE AWARDS

Every spring semester there are two awards that are usually awarded to the graduate students in the department of biology 1) Graduate Award for Outstanding Teaching and 2) Graduate Award for Outstanding Service.

Nominations for the first award (**Graduate Award for Outstanding Teaching**) are obtained from the undergraduates who have had them as their instructors. Notices will be sent via email midway through each semester to the students requesting nominations. Student will send their nominations the GTA Coordinator. The Graduate Award for Outstanding Teaching will always be award to a student who has an excellent teaching record and has the support of undergraduate students.

Nominations for the second award (**Graduate Award for Outstanding Service**) are obtained from the faculty and staff in the biology department. This Service award is **NOT for research**, but instead the service they have done for the department or university. This may include but not limited to: 1) have they helped out by giving guest lectures, 2) have help support in random ways (e.g. running errand across campus), 3) have done community outreach for our department, or 4) served on an number of department or university committees. This award is designed for those that make efforts to help, when it is not required of them to do so. In some cases, even if they are not getting paid to help.

# Appendix I. Biology Department Advisory Committee Form.

## Appointment of Thesis Committee

### Student Information

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Entered: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Entered: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic of Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

### Committee Information

Appropriately qualified faculty may serve on a committee at the request of the student and the graduate program. The minimum requirement for a thesis committee is three members, including the major advisor serving as the chair. The other two committee members must have graduate faculty status and a member of the biology department.

	Name	Signature (to be signed after proposal meeting)
Chair		
Member		
Member		
Member		

### Tentative Academic Plan

Please provide a short statement on the tentative courses your students will take while at UT Tyler and show the number of hours per semester. All GTA's and GRA's must take a minimum of 9 hours every semester with the exception of their final semester.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Thesis Proposal

Please provide a hard copy of the Thesis proposal submitted to the committee at the first meeting. By the end of the first committee meeting, you should have a tentative academic plan and full thesis proposal to submit to the department to put in your Graduate students folder.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Note that major advisor and committee members sign above (in table) to denote that the proposal has been approved.

**Master of Science – Biology 2017-2018**  
**College of Arts & Sciences**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Personal e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ UTT e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_ (H)/(W) \_\_\_\_\_

CORE – 8 HRS				
COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER	ENROLL PLAN	COMMENTS/COURSE EQUIVALENT	SEMESTER COMPLETED	GRADE
BIOL 5395 Thesis I				
BIOL 5396 Thesis II				
BIOL 5193 Graduate Seminar				
BIOL 5193 Graduate Seminar				

ELECTIVES – 22 HRS				
COURSE TITLE AND NUMBER	ENROLL PLAN	COMMENTS/COURSE EQUIVALENT	SEMESTER COMPLETED	GRADE

MILESTONES		
	DATE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED	DATE COMPLETED
Annual progress report - Year 1	Nov. 30 _____	
Proposal submitted to advisory committee		
First advisory committee meeting		
Departmental presentation of proposal		
Annual progress report - Year 2	Nov. 30 _____	
Submit graduation application		
Submission of thesis to advisory committee		
Thesis defense		
Submission of thesis to Dean		
Submission of thesis to Graduate School		

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix II. Proposal Presentation Rubric

### UT Tyler Biology Rubric for Graduate Student Thesis Proposal Presentations

Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Guidelines:

- 15-20 minute presentation (~5 additional minutes for questions)
- outline introduction (background and motivation/significance), methods, and expected results for thesis research

Criteria	Proficient	Competent	Needs work
<b>Visual display of information</b>	Slides are well-designed with readable text and graphics that reinforce message	Slides are generally clear, but may have some text that is too small or graphics that are hard to interpret	General approach to slide design and use of text/graphics could be improved
<b>Oral presentation</b>	Verbal presentation is well-paced and shows forethought in composition; body language displays professionalism; questions are answered concisely and clearly	Verbal presentation is generally clear but may have pacing issues; body language is generally professional; answers to questions may not be completely clear or concise	More practice would improve pacing, body language, and clarity of speech, both during presentation and questioning
<b>Knowledge base</b>	Presentation displays clear understanding of subject matter and thorough review of relevant literature; citations reflect appropriate use of literature	Presentation covers most relevant topics related to research topic and some literature is cited; citations are suboptimal or not referenced appropriately	Presentation has clear gaps in relevant topics and little reference to primary literature; citations are not included
<b>Research methods</b>	Research question is well-defined, experimental design is appropriate, statistical/analytical methods are suitable and expected outcomes are outlined	Research question is included but not completely aligned with research proposed, experimental design and/or analytical methods are lacking detail, expected outcomes are not completely explained	Research question absent, experimental and analytical methods proposed are inappropriate or not described, no expected outcomes are included
<b>Organization</b>	Presentation outlines a well-organized, cohesive narrative in logical sequence with smooth transitions and logical conclusion	Presentation generally follows organized narrative; sequence of presentation may be slightly confusing and lack transitions and/or adequate conclusion	Sequence of topics difficult to follow and lacks organization; transitions are not smooth; conclusion unsatisfying

Please circle the most appropriate description for each criterion. Feel free to include other questions or comments on the back of this sheet.

## Appendix III. Biology Dept. Annual Report Form. (Third semester)

*Department of Biology*

*biology@uttyler.edu · BEP 129A – 903-566-7402*

### Graduate Student Annual Progress Report

#### Student Information

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Entered: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Entered: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic of Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Committee Information

Appropriately qualified faculty may serve on a committee at the request of the student and the graduate program. The minimum requirement for a thesis committee is three members, including the major advisor serving as the chair. The other two committee members must have graduate faculty status and a member of the biology department.

	Name	Signature	Rating (exceeds, meets or does not meet expectations)
Chair			
Member			
Member			
Member			

#### Degree Progress

Proposal meeting Date (1<sup>st</sup> semester): \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal Presentation Date (2<sup>nd</sup> semester): \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Report Date (3<sup>rd</sup> semester): \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Thesis Defense (4<sup>th</sup> semester): \_\_\_\_\_

#### Courses Taken

List each course completed in the previous year long with the grade received.

\*Grades of B or better in all courses and the maintenance of a 3.0 GPA required.

---

## Professional Development Progress

### Research Activities and Findings

Provide a short narrative of 250 words or less.

### Publications

List complete citations for all papers published and manuscripts in press or in preparation.

### Presentations

List title, format (talk or poster), date, location, and nature (e.g. regional meeting, national meeting, departmental seminar) of all presentations except if including in Outreach section below. Include co-authored talks for which you were not the presenter.

### Meetings Attended

List all regional, national, and international meetings attended without authorship on a presentation.

### Teaching

List all course taught (course number, semester, year, name of instructor).

### Service

List any service activities (e.g. on departmental or university committees), including a brief description of each activity and your role in it.

### Outreach

List any outreach activities, including a brief description of the activity, your role in it, date(s) involved and the number or participants.

### Awards

List any awards for research, teaching or service, including the source.

### Plans for the next academic semester

Provide a narrative of 250 words or less.

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_