

EXECUTIVE ACTION REQUEST

TO: Dean Hendrickson, Graduate School
FROM: Gary A. Bulla, Chair, Biological Sciences
DATE: 5-10-21

REQUEST: To make the GRE admission requirement optional for the graduate program in Biological Sciences thesis option

Rationale for change:

The GRE requirement has been removed from the application requirements of the majority of biology graduate programs in the US. It provides only a weak correlation with success in graduate school, adds a sometimes prohibitive cost burden onto student applicants, and places our department at a disadvantage when potential students are comparing graduate programs to which to apply.

Effective Year/Term: Spring 2021

Current Catalog copy:

Program Mission: The Master of Science in Biological Sciences offers students the opportunity to pursue advanced training in many areas of modern biology. The size of the program facilitates close contact between the student and graduate faculty from the Department of Biological Sciences. Experiences provided by the graduate faculty in formal courses, research laboratories, and in diverse field situations are the basis not only for degree requirements but also for continuation of their postgraduate education and placement in a career in the biological sciences.

Admission Requirements: To be eligible for degree candidacy, applicants must meet all of the requirements for admission to the Graduate School (see “[Admission to Graduate Degree and Certificate Programs](#)”). In addition, applicants must file the following with the Biological Sciences Graduate Program Committee: a Biological Sciences Program Application, a statement of personal goals, and three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant’s academic ability. Applicants must have an undergraduate degree in the biological sciences or a related field, at least a 2.75 GPA during the last two years of undergraduate study, and one year of inorganic chemistry. At least one course each in calculus, organic chemistry, physics, and statistics is strongly recommended. A minimum score of 1000 on the verbal and quantitative part of the GRE (General) is recommended for admission. Undergraduate course work will be used by the Biological Sciences Graduate Program Committee to diagnose academic deficiencies. Students may be required to remedy undergraduate deficiencies by taking courses which do not count toward the graduate degree.

Proposed Catalog Revision:

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