

PROGRAM IN ECOLOGY, EVOLUTION AND CONSERVATION BIOLOGY

<http://sib.illinois.edu/peec/>

See School of Integrative Biology (<http://sib.illinois.edu>)

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Major: Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology
Degrees Offered: M.S., Ph.D.

Graduate Degree Programs

The Program in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology (PEEC) is an interdepartmental program designed to provide individualized training in preparation for careers in these disciplines. Because of the breadth of fields covered by this program, there will be no fixed course requirements other than attendance at the program's seminar series and annual graduate student symposium. Courses taken by a student and the student's Advisory Committee generally will come from multiple departments. The goal of the program's regulations is to allow maximum flexibility while providing close supervision, with the outcome of producing scientists who are broadly educated and technically competent in ecology, evolutionary biology and associated disciplines. The program offers M.S. and Ph.D. degrees.

Admission

Prospective candidates must meet the requirements for admission set by the Graduate College of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Only applicants who have graduated from an accredited college or university and who hold or will be granted a baccalaureate degree (or its equivalent) comparable in content and completed credit hours to that granted by the University of Illinois will be considered. Applicants must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 (A = 4.0) computed from the last two years of undergraduate (and any graduate) work completed. The program will give preference to candidates who hold a degree in biology or a closely related discipline and show promise of excellence in research and teaching. Typically, only students with strong letters of recommendation, high scores on the Graduate Record Examinations and a GPA well above the minimum stated above will be admitted. Demonstration of academic excellence by other means (e.g., extensive field or laboratory research experience) will also be considered. The Admissions Committee will make decisions concerning admission. For students whose native language is not English, the Program requires a minimum paper-based TOEFL score of 613 (257 on the computer-based test or 103-104 on the web-based test).

Financial Aid

Students admitted to the Program are typically offered two years of support for the M.S. degree and five years of support for the Ph.D. Support consists of fellowships, teaching assistantships or research assistantships. Such support typically comes with waiver of tuition,

service fees, or both. Continued offers of assistantships or fellowships each academic year will depend on an evaluation of satisfactory progress by the Director of the Program. Students who require more than two years to complete the M.S. degree or five years to complete the Ph.D. degree must submit a written petition to the Director of the Program, supported by their Advisor, to be considered for an additional year of support.

Master of Science in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation

All students must register for and attend the weekly PEEC seminar series (IB 546A) each semester in residence. An orientation seminar (IB 546B) must be taken the first fall semester in residence. Excuses because of conflicts must be approved by the Director of the Program. Graduation requires the completion of a thesis. Student research will be guided and approved by an Advisory Committee of three faculty from at least two departments, including the Major Advisor who will serve as chair. The director of the program must approve membership of the Masters Advisory Committee.

Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
IB 546	Topics in Ecology & Evolution (Sections A & B, A to be taken each semester of enrollment)	1-10
Thesis Hours Required (min/max applied toward degree) (credit in rubrics other than BIOL, NRES, PBIO or ENT must be petitioned to apply):		8-12
Total Hours		32

Other Requirements¹

Other requirements may overlap

Course work in three core areas with grades no lower than B or S.

Minimum 500-level Hours Required 12

Overall:

Minimum GPA: 3.0

¹ For additional details and requirements refer to the Program's graduate handbook (<http://sib.illinois.edu/peec/current/handbook>) and the Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook>).

Doctor of Philosophy in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation

All students must register for and attend the weekly PEEC seminar series (IB 546A) each semester in residence. The Director of the Program must approve excuses because of conflicts. An orientation seminar (IB 546B) must be taken the first fall semester in residence.

No later than their second semester in the program, the student in consultation with their Major Advisor will select members of the student's Doctoral Committee, which will meet annually with the student to plan coursework and research and to review and facilitate progress toward the degree. Students will prepare a short written report of their activities during the previous year for consideration by the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee will thoroughly consider all aspects of the student's activities, after which the Major Advisor will provide a written report of progress to the Director of the Program.

The faculty constituting a student's Doctoral Committee must come from two or more departments, comprise a minimum of four members (including the Major Advisor), be familiar with the student's area of research interest, and be approved by the Director of the Program. The chair of the Doctoral Committee is typically the Major Advisor, provided that the advisor is both a member of the University's Graduate Faculty and the Program in Ecology, Evolutionary and Conservation Biology. If this is not the case, the Director of the Program will appoint a chairperson who fulfills these requirements from among the committee membership.

The Doctoral Committee will be responsible for administering the necessary examinations. No later than their sixth semester in the program, and preferably in their fifth semester before the deadline for submission of a proposal for an NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant (typically, the third Friday in November), doctoral students must take a Preliminary Examination. For this exam, a member of the Doctoral Committee other than the major advisor will be appointed chair by the Director of the Program. The first part of the three-hour oral exam will be general and cover the student's three core areas of emphasis. The second part of the exam will be a defense of the research proposal. Two weeks prior to the exam, the student must present to the Doctoral Committee a proposal prepared in the format of a proposal for an NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant. It should describe the objectives of the research project, the experimental plan and rationale, the results of pilot studies, a budget, and a tentative timetable for its completion. The student will present evidence of feasibility and significance of the proposal, but the main research for the dissertation shall not have been performed prior to the Preliminary Examination. A detailed report of the exam and a copy of the research proposal shall be submitted to the Director of the Program. A passing grade qualifies the student as a Ph.D. candidate. A failing grade will require the student to take a second preliminary examination no later than the following semester. A second failure will result in dismissal from the program.

Upon completion of a dissertation and the other requirements of the program, the student shall be subject to a Final Examination, which shall consist of a defense of the dissertation. Copies of the completed dissertation, approved by the Major Advisor, should be submitted to the Doctoral Committee at least two weeks prior to the Final Examination. The thesis will be judged in relation to published scholarly work in the field, and students will be encouraged to begin publishing their results before taking their Final Examination. Passing this exam and presentation of the dissertation by the student at a public seminar sponsored by the program qualify the student for the Ph.D. degree. Failure will require the student to conduct additional research and to repeat the Final Examination.

Entering with approved M.S./M.A. degree

Code	Title	Hours
IB 546	Topics in Ecology & Evolution (Section A to be taken each semester of enrollment. Section B if not taken in MS program)	1-10
Thesis Hours Required (8 min applied toward degree) (Credit in rubrics other than BIOL, NRES, PBIO or ENT must be petitioned to apply.):		8
Total Hours		64

Other Requirements ¹

Other requirements may overlap
All students must complete at least two semesters of favorably evaluated teaching

Course work in three core areas with grades no lower than B or S.

Qualifying Exam Required:	No
Preliminary Exam Required:	Yes
Final Exam/Dissertation Defense Required:	Yes
Dissertation Deposit Required:	Yes
Minimum GPA:	3.0

¹ For additional details and requirements refer to the Program's graduate handbook (<http://sib.illinois.edu/peec/current>) and the Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook>).

Entering with B.S./B.A. degree

Code	Title	Hours
IB 546	Topics in Ecology & Evolution (Sections A & B. Section A to be taken each semester of enrollment.)	1-10
Thesis Hours Required (8 min applied toward degree)(Credit in rubrics other than BIOL, NRES, PBIO or ENT must be petitioned to apply.):		8
Total Hours		96

Other Requirements ¹

Other requirements may overlap
All students must complete at least two semesters of favorably evaluated teaching

Course work in three core areas with grades no lower than B or S.

Masters Degree Required for Admission to PhD?	No, but Masters level requirements must be met (32 hours min)
Qualifying Exam Required:	No
Preliminary Exam Required:	Yes
Final Exam/Dissertation Defense Required:	Yes
Dissertation Deposit Required:	Yes
Minimum GPA:	3.0

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