The Department teaches and conducts research in basic plant biology. Its program, opportunities/cellmolecular.html) and professional training as well as expert-level depth in their areas of specialization.

Graduate Degree Programs

The Department of Plant Biology offers three graduate programs leading to the Master of Science degrees (the traditional thesis option, the non-thesis option), the non-thesis Plant Biotechnology M.S. with Professional Science Master’s (PSM) concentration and a Doctor of Philosophy degree. It also participates in an interdepartmental programs leading to a doctoral degree: the Program in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology (http://sib.illinois.edu/peec). In addition, students can participate, during their degree programs, in several non-degree granting interdepartmental programs and interest groups, such as the Cell and Molecular Biology Training Program (http://neuroscience.illinois.edu/program/opportunities/cellmolecular.html).

The Department teaches and conducts research in basic plant biology. Its focus is integrative:

- biological processes are investigated at multiple levels of organization using molecular
- biochemical
- physiological
- ecological approaches

Areas of specialization within the department include:

- biochemistry
- biodiversity
- bioinformatics
- cell biology
- conservation biology
- development
- ecology
- environmental physiology
- evolution
- genetics
- genomics
- modeling
- molecular biology
- mycology
- paleoecology
- photosynthesis

Financial Aid

Fellowships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships are available for qualified MS and PhD students in Plant Biology. Fellowships in these programs are awarded on a competitive basis.

- Master of Science in Plant Biology (http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/graduate-majors/plant-bio/ms-plant-biol)
Doctor of Philosophy in Plant Biology

Candidates for the Ph.D. are expected to complete a minimum of 96 hours of graduate coursework and research. A formal evaluation (the Two-Year Review) of the student’s academic progress is made prior to the end of the second year of study (end of Stage I). Departmental approval must be obtained at this juncture in order to continue in the graduate program. A Preliminary Examination is taken during the second year (if the student entered with an M.S. degree) or the third year (if the student entered with a B.S. degree) (end of Stage 2). This consists of an oral examination of general knowledge in three of nine broadly-defined areas of plant biology and defense of a written research proposal on the thesis research topic prepared by the student. Experience in teaching is considered a vital part of the graduate program and is required as part of the academic work of all Ph.D. candidates. The final stage (Stage 3) of the program consists of preparing an acceptable thesis based on independent research designed in consultation with a faculty advisor and approved by a graduate faculty thesis committee. A final oral examination, in which the student defends the thesis, a public seminar, and deposit of an approved thesis complete the program. The Ph.D. degree program is expected to be completed within five years. See the Plant Biology Department’s online Graduate Student Handbook (http://www.life.illinois.edu/plantbio/gradhandbook.htm) for a detailed description of the Stages and Requirements of the Ph.D. program.

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

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<th>Hours</th>
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<td>PBIO 599</td>
<td>Thesis Research (no max applied toward degree)</td>
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Total Hours 64

Other Requirements

- Teaching: at least the equivalent of one semester as a half-time teaching assistant
- Masters Degree Required or Admission to PhD?: No, but Masters level requirements (32 hours minimum) must be met in order to enter State 2 of Ph.D. program.
- Preliminary Exam Required: Yes, at the end of State 2, in order to enter Stage 3
- Final Exam/Dissertation Defense Required: Yes, at end of Stage 3
- Dissertation Deposit Required: Yes, at end of Stage 3
- Minimum GPA: 3.0

For additional details and requirements, please refer to the Plant Biology Department’s online Graduate Handbook (http://www.life.illinois.edu/plantbio/gradhandbook.htm) and the University’s Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

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

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<tr>
<td>PBIO 599</td>
<td>Thesis Research (no max applied toward degree)</td>
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Total Hours 96

Other Requirements

- Teaching: at least the equivalent of one semester as a half-time teaching assistant
- Masters Degree Required or Admission to PhD?: No, but Masters level requirements (32 hours minimum) must be met in order to enter State 2 of Ph.D. program.
- Preliminary Exam Required: Yes, at the end of State 2, in order to enter Stage 3
- Final Exam/Dissertation Defense Required: Yes, at end of Stage 3
- Dissertation Deposit Required: Yes, at end of Stage 3
- Minimum GPA: 3.0

For additional details and requirements, please refer to the Plant Biology Department’s online Graduate Handbook (http://www.life.illinois.edu/plantbio/gradhandbook.htm) and the University’s Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook).

Information listed in this catalog is current as of 01/2020