PLANT BIOLOGY, PHD

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Plant Biology

head of the department: Andrew Leakey
overview of grad college admissions & requirements: https://grad.illinois.edu/admissions/apply
overview of program admissions requirements: program website: http://sib.illinois.edu/plantbio/
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Graduate Degree Programs in Plant Biology

The Department of Plant Biology offers two graduate degrees, the Master of Science and the Doctor of Philosophy. The department also participates in the interdepartmental graduate program: the Program in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology (http://sib.illinois.edu/peec/).

The Department teaches and conducts foundational research in plant biology. Its focus is integrative. Biological processes are investigated at multiple levels of organization using molecular, biochemical, physiological, morphological, and 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
- paleobotany
- paleoecology
- photosynthesis
- phytochemistry
- population biology
- biotechnology

Information listed in this catalog is current as of 05/2022
Graduate students receive broad biological and professional training and acquire expertise in their areas of specialization.

The Plant Biology Departmental website (http://www.life.illinois.edu/plantbio/) provides additional information about the department, its admissions procedures, degree requirements, facilities, and the research interests of its faculty.

**Admission**

Prospective students are encouraged to identify faculty member(s) whose research specialty(ies) most closely coincide(s) with their interests and to correspond directly with them. Acceptance to the Doctor of Philosophy graduate program is based on the applicant’s academic achievement and research potential. While departmental requirements do not specify particular courses as prerequisites for admission, applicants should have had undergraduate coursework in biology or related sciences. Admission to the graduate program requires an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 (A = 4.0). Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (or approved equivalent) are not required but may be submitted to strengthen application package; however no minimum scores are specified for admission. International students should have a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 600 or above on the paper-based test, or 102 or above on the internet-based test (iBT). The IELTS exam is also accepted, and applicants should have a score of 7.0 or higher.

**Facilities and Resources**

The Plant Biology Department’s diverse state-of-the-art research laboratories are located in Morrill Hall, Edward R. Madigan Laboratory, and the Institute for Genomic Biology. In addition, the department maintains extensive plant growth-chamber facilities, environmentally controlled greenhouses, a conservatory with live teaching and research collections, herbaria, a center for paleobotanical collections, and diverse local and remote field sites including SoyFACE (http://soyface.illinois.edu/). The University also offers exceptional research support services including the Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center (http://www.biotech.illinois.edu/), service laboratories in the Institute for Genomic Biology (http://www.igb.illinois.edu/facilities-services/), the Beckman Institute (http://www.beckman.illinois.edu/), and the University Library (http://www.library.illinois.edu/), one of the world’s largest.

**Financial Aid**

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