BIOLOGY | CALS

The biology major combines the faculty and resources of two UF colleges to prepare undergraduates for careers in the biological sciences, advanced study in professional or graduate schools, productive citizenship and leadership, and lifelong learning. The program is comprehensive and flexible, emphasizing the diverse forms, processes and systems of life. Students in the program complete required and elective courses that promote critical thinking through the investigation and understanding of principles and unifying themes that govern living systems. The biology major offers a broader approach to biology than is available through a major in animal sciences, botany, microbiology, plant science, zoology or other specialized biological sciences.

About this Program

- **College:** Agricultural and Life Sciences
- **Degree:** Bachelor of Science
- **Credits for Degree:** 120
- **Specializations:** Applied Biology | Biotechnology | Natural Science | Preprofessional
- **Additional Information**
- **Related Biology Programs**

To graduate with this major, students must complete all university, college, and major requirements.

The biology major develops fundamental knowledge of animals, plants and microorganisms. The four specializations offered by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences are tailored to meet the needs of preprofessional students, those preparing for graduate studies in biology or specialized areas such as bioinformatics, ecology, genetics and molecular biology and those seeking a career in biotechnology, education, natural resource management and environmental or biotechnology law.

Coursework for the Major

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) students in the biology major choose one of four specializations: applied biology, biotechnology, natural science or preprofessional biology. These specializations require significant introductory coursework and credits in general biology, calculus and/or statistics, general chemistry, organic chemistry and physics. Students who are uncertain about which specialization to choose should consult a biology advisor for information and guidance on curriculum planning. Students can individualize their curriculum through approved specialization electives in the life sciences.

**Applied Biology** is for students interested in learning how fundamental biology is applied to solving problems. This specialization provides exposure to the major issues facing sustainability of human populations and natural resources.

**Biotechnology** prepares students for careers where knowledge of molecular biology and genetic engineering are important. Students will have the opportunity to learn various techniques and scientific procedures in molecular biology, virology, bioengineering, cell and tissue culture and bioinformatics.

**Natural Science** is for students interested in descriptive and interpretive biology, with an emphasis on field biology. The specialization provides exposure to the major forms of flora and fauna, and integrates some of the major elements that influence flora and fauna, namely soil/water relations and human activities.

**Preprofessional** is for students preparing for admission to medical, dental, optometry, veterinary or other professional schools.

Relevant Minors and/or Certificates

**UFTeach Program**

More Info

There is a severe shortage of qualified secondary school biology teachers in Florida and nationwide. Students interested in becoming part of this high-demand profession should see a biology advisor or the UFTeach advisor. UFTeach students complete the UFTeach minor in science teaching with their B.S. in biology and have the coursework and preparation for professional teacher certification in Florida when they graduate.

**Bioinformatics**

Bioinformatics skills are valuable for students who may seek careers which will necessitate the analysis of genomic data. This minor provides students the opportunity to learn programming skills, mine genomic data, and participate in independent research.

Research

More Info

All biology majors are encouraged to participate in research. Research experience is valuable on many levels: It diversifies the college experience; teaches how scientists apply the knowledge gained in the classroom to real world questions; provides the opportunity to work with and get to know researchers who are the best in their field; enables participation in cutting edge scientific questions and techniques; enhances the student’s resume/CV when applying to graduate or professional school; and finally, it is essential to help the student determine if science is an appropriate career choice.

CALS biology majors may participate in research for course credit as a scholar (e.g., University Scholar, HHMI Science for Life Scholar), as a volunteer, or, in rare cases, as a paid research assistant.

Related Biology Programs

- Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Biology, CLAS
- Bachelor of Arts in Biology, UF Online

Biology is the study of the many diverse forms, processes and systems of life. These studies range across all levels of the biological hierarchy, from the simplest to the most complex life forms, across all environments on the earth and across recent and evolutionary time that interconnects ancestors to their descendants.

To understand this vast diversity, the field of biology correspondingly relies on integrative and comparative approaches for the resolution of the general processes, principles and unifying themes that govern living systems. Biology is therefore very interdisciplinary and biologists rely on knowledge from the physical sciences and mathematics, as well as from across the disciplines and subdisciplines of biology for advances and breakthroughs.

The biology major is administered jointly by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
Before Graduating Students Must

- Achieve a passing score for all content subsections of the Major Field Test for Biology. Content subscore areas are molecular biology and genetics, organismal biology, evolution, ecology and population biology.
- Achieve a passing score on the analytical skills assessment indicator of the Major Field Test for Biology.
- Achieve a passing score on the bioethics module quiz in BSC 4936. The content of the module and quiz are reviewed and approved by a faculty committee.
- Complete requirements for the baccalaureate degree, as determined by faculty.

Students in the Major Will Learn to

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Content
1. Identify, describe and explain the basic terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within the biological sciences.

Critical Thinking
2. Analyze biological information and develop reasoned solutions to problems using the processes and applications of scientific inquiry.
3. Discriminate ethical behavior from unethical behavior in scientific research.

Communication
4. Communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the biological sciences.

Curriculum Map for All Specializations except CALS

Biotechnology

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Assessment Types

- Major field test for biology
- Bioethics module
- Scientific literacy paper

Curriculum Map for CALS Biotechnology

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