ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY, MS

The Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology offers the Master of Science degree in both a Thesis and Non-Thesis model (see degree requirements for detail.) The curriculum is designed to encourage maximum student choice and independence while maintaining a close student-advisor relationship. Students are encouraged to adopt a broad, integrative view of science and biological research. Course offerings cover such areas as animal and plant physiology, plant ecology, plant-animal interactions, population biology, structural and evolutionary biology, systematic biology, environmental toxicology, marine/estuarine ecology, and the biology of diverse groups of plants and animals. Students participate in an active departmental seminar program and informal research discussion groups.

Requirements

Thesis Model

Faculty Advisor

The student will consult his/her advisor in order to develop a course of study and to gain the advisor’s approval for course registration. The faculty advisor must be a regular (full time) member of the department.

The potential applicant should contact the professor who is desired as advisor prior to making application to the Graduate Studies Program in the School of Science and Engineering. Admission to the EEB graduate program depends upon a faculty member committing to supervise the student’s graduate program, including the thesis research and composition. Thus, each applicant must have contacted the potential advisor prior to the decision on her/his application for admission.

Entrance Interview

During the first semester of enrollment, each entering student interviews with the faculty advisor (Graduate Studies Committee Chair substitutes if an advisor has not been arranged) and two other regular faculty members. The purpose of the interview is to review prior courses taken by the student, discuss research interests and degree goals, and ensure that the student understands departmental graduate study procedures. Recommendations for coursework to address deficiencies or to enhance the student’s program may be made during the interview. Download Entrance Interview Form (http://www2.tulane.edu/sse/eebio/academics/graduate/upload/entrance_interview_form.pdf).

Course Requirements

Twenty-four semester hours of approved and graded graduate course work are required in addition to the production of an acceptable Masters of Science thesis. In general, up to 12 semester hours of transfer credit will be accepted toward the Masters of Science degree. Guidelines for acceptability of transfer credit can be found in the Graduate Catalog of the School of Science and Engineering. The Chair of the Department must approve all transfer credits. Courses taken at Tulane are usually taken in the EEB Department, but as many as nine graduate credits from other departments or divisions may be counted toward the course requirement.

Thesis

A student’s faculty advisor will also be the director of his/her thesis research. A thesis committee must approve the completed thesis. The thesis committee will consist of at least three faculty members including the student’s thesis advisor. EEB faculty must comprise a majority of the thesis committee. Each student must request approval for the composition of the thesis committee by letter addressed to the Chair of the Department. The thesis research must be presented to the Department in a public forum and defended at an oral examination conducted by the thesis committee. Specific instructions for thesis preparation are given in the Graduate Catalog of the School of Science and Engineering.

Non-Thesis Model (Terminal)

In order to earn this degree, students must have been admitted to the EEB graduate program through the regular Tulane University admissions process. Students admitted to the program must have completed the requirements for a baccalaureate degree in any discipline that includes course work in Chemistry (General Chemistry, and either Organic Chemistry or Biochemistry) and Biology (Genetics, Ecology, and Evolution). Additional coursework may be required to make up deficiencies. Students will meet with the graduate advisor prior to the beginning of his/her first semester to discuss appropriate course work for this degree.

All students seeking this degree must complete 30 credit hours of approved, graduate level coursework in EEB or other relevant departments. A maximum of 6 credits at the graduate level may be transferred to this degree program, at the discretion of the Chair of the Department. Following completion of coursework, students must take and pass the Comprehensive Examination, generally given at the end of the spring semester.