

Flow chart for progress through the Master's degree in Biology (Non-Thesis)

KEY to forms: SBS = School of Biological Sciences form (available in the Biology Office – Ross 2480 or online at the Biology website: www.unco.edu/nhs/biology)
GS = Graduate School form (available online at: www.unco.edu/grad).

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Have you taken the subject GRE? If not, it must be taken during the *first semester* you attend UNC. Arrange for the scores to be sent to UNC. Currently, the GRE subject tests are given in April, November and December, and the registration deadline is almost 2 months before the exam, so plan ahead!

ADVISOR AND PLAN OF STUDY

1. In your *first semester*, select your major professor (advisor), fill out a "Graduate Advisor Assignment" form (SBS), have it signed by the school director, file a copy of the form with the Graduate School, file a copy with the biology office, and keep copies for yourself and your advisor. [You will also use this form if you have to change your advisor.]
2. *No later than the end of your second semester, with input from your advisor*, prepare your plan of study (the courses you will take to earn your degree). Any deficiencies that were noted on your acceptance letter should be addressed in your plan of study. Course requirements for the degree are modified from time to time. Use the requirements listed in the catalog that was in effect when you began your degree.

Complete and sign a "Plan of Study Non-Thesis Master's" form (SBS) and have the completed form signed by your advisor. Do not complete the Plan of the Study form available of the Graduate School Website. The Plan of Study will be reviewed by the Biology Graduate Committee and the form will be signed by the Chair of the Graduate Committee and the Director of the School.

File the form with the biology office and the Graduate School, and keep copies for yourself and your advisor. Please note: when you apply for graduation, the Graduate School will hold you to all curriculum listed on your approved and filed Plan of Study. If you have not filed a Plan of Study with the Graduate School you will not be eligible to apply for graduation.

Any changes to the Plan of Study will require documentation to be filed in the biology office and sent to the Graduate School with signatures from your Faculty Advisor, the Chair of Biology Graduate Committee and the Director of the School of Biology.

3. When you have completed the courses on your plan of study, fill in the semester/year and the grades received for each course on the form and your overall GPA. Before graduation,

give a copy of your completed plan of study to your advisor and file a copy in the biology office.

NON-THESIS PROJECT

1. With your advisor's input, develop a project appropriate for your career goals.
2. Complete your project. There are several sources of funding (grants) inside and outside of UNC that you can and should apply for. Even if your project has funding, it is a good idea to get practice in obtaining research funds yourself. Consult your advisor for sources of funding appropriate to your field.
3. When you have completed your project, give a final version to your advisor and make any suggested modifications.
4. Check the Graduate School website for deadlines associated with **applying for graduation**. (<http://www.unco.edu/grad/pdf/deadlines.pdf>). No extension of this deadline will be allowed, so do not miss it! NOTE: You must apply for graduation the term before you intend to graduate. The Application for Graduation in a Master's Program form (GS6001) is available at the Graduate School website: (<http://www.unco.edu/grad/forms/msapplicationforgraduation.pdf>).
5. Once you have produced a final version of your project, have your advisor sign a "Defense of Thesis or Project in lieu of written comprehensive exam" form (SBS). File this form with the Graduate School, file a copy in the biology office, and keep copies for yourself and your advisor.
6. You must complete a Graduate Student Exit Survey before you graduate. To maintain the confidentiality of the survey, place the completed survey in a sealed envelope and turn it in to a biology office administrative staff member. Have this staff member sign a "Completion of Graduate Student Exit Survey" form (SBS) to verify completion of the survey.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. In January of each academic year you must complete the Annual Progress Report (SBS) by the date listed on the form and turn the completed APR into your advisor for their input. Email a copy of the APR once approved by your advisor to the chair of the graduate committee.
2. Fill out the UNC Universal Scholarship Application (go to the Financial Aid link under the Student Tab in URSA) by **MARCH 1**. The School of Biological Sciences, the College of Natural and Health Sciences, the Graduate School, and the UNC Foundation have several graduate scholarships available each year that students can compete for. If you have not filled out the

Universal Scholarship Application by the deadline you will NOT be considered for any of them. Do not throw away your chance for free money!!!

3. Each spring, typically during the first week of April, all graduate students will give a brief oral presentation during Academic Excellence Week. Your presentation should encompass a relevant literature review and ideas you have for your project if you are just getting started, or updates on your accomplishments for the year if the project is underway. This presentation will be open to the public and all biology faculty will be in attendance.

4. Fill out the Free Application Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form by March 1 at the latest. You must fill out this form to be eligible to receive some fellowships, scholarships, work study, loans, grants, etc. Instructions and a link to the FAFSA website are available on the UNC Financial Aid Office website (www.unco.edu/ofa).

5. Fill out a Summer Financial Aid Application form if you wish to receive aid for the summer (i.e. loans). This form is posted to the financial aid website in early March of each year but there is no strict deadline (www.unco.edu/ofa). To receive summer assistance you will need to have the FAFSA from the previous year (e.g. for summer 2007 you need a FAFSA from 2006/2007) on file.

6. Fill out a separate Summer Work Study Application form if you wish to receive work study in the summer. Work study during the summer is full-time (36-40 hrs/week). This form is posted on the financial aid office's website in early February and is due by March 1. Note: you cannot apply for both a summer application for aid and summer work study, just one or the other. To receive summer assistance you will need to have the FAFSA for the following year (e.g. for summer 2007 you need a FAFSA from 2007/2008) on file (see # 5 above). Note that both these forms have a March 1 deadline.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS

Make 2 extra copies of all the forms you fill out. One should be given to your advisor and you should keep one in your permanent records.

The UNC Graduate School no longer publishes a Graduate Student Handbook. All information that was contained in the handbook is either in the UNC catalog or available in the student handbook published by the Dean of Students (www.unco.edu/dos).

QUICK CHECKLIST FOR YOUR OWN RECORDKEEPING

ONE TIME DEADLINES

DATE COMPLETED

ITEM

- | | |
|-------|--|
| _____ | Subject GRE taken, scores reported to Biology |
| _____ | Fill out/file Graduate Advisor Assignment Form |
| _____ | Fill out/file Non-Thesis Master's Plan of Study form |
| _____ | Applied for graduation with Graduate School |
| _____ | Give completed project to advisor for review |
| _____ | Graduate Student Exit Survey completed |

EVERY YEAR DEADLINES

DATES COMPLETED

ITEM

- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | Annual Progress Report (APR) completed |
| _____ | Universal Scholarship Application completed (Mar. 1) |
| _____ | Oral presentation given during Academic Excellence |
| Week | |
| _____ | FASFA form completed (Mar. 1) |
| _____ | Summer funding application (aid/work study) completed |