



PROGRAM FLOW CHART FOR:

Ph.D. in Biological Education – SBS¹

4 Year Plan to Graduation

YEAR 1 - FALL	YEAR 1 - SPRING
BIO 512 TA Development Seminar 1 credit BIO 594/SCED 694 (take early in program) 2/ 3 credits Establish domicile in CO, if not already a resident ²	BIO 631 (odd years)/ BIO 632 (even years) 3 credits Select your Graduate Committee ³ Prepare your Plan of Study ⁴ Schedule committee meeting to discuss your Plan of Study Complete the Universal Scholarship ⁵ Deliver an oral presentation during Research Day ⁶ Submit application for SBS Summer Funding ⁷ Apply for resident status (if not CO resident upon acceptance) ²
YEAR 2 - FALL	YEAR 2 - SPRING
Submit APR ⁸ reporting on Year 1 Submit report for SBS Summer Funding, if recipient SRM 700 (take early in program, SRM 502/602 prereq) 3 credits	BIO 631 (odd years)/ BIO 632 (even years) 3 credits BIO 797 Doctoral Proposal Research 4 credits Prepare your Research Proposal ⁹ Schedule committee meeting to discuss your Research Proposal Complete the Universal Scholarship Deliver an oral presentation during Research Day Discuss with committee members comp ¹⁰ topics/ expectations Discuss with committee intended course for Supervised Teaching Submit application for SBS Summer Funding
YEAR 3 - FALL	YEAR 3 - SPRING
Submit APR reporting on Year 2 Submit report for SBS Summer Funding, if recipient Schedule and take your written and oral Comprehensive Exams ¹⁰ BIO 792 Doctoral Supervised Teaching ¹¹ (prep) 1 credit	BIO 792 Doctoral Supervised Teaching ¹¹ (spring class) 3 credits Schedule committee meeting to discuss your progress Complete the Universal Scholarship Deliver an oral presentation during Research Day Submit application for SBS Summer Funding Submit a dissertation chapter for publication, if ready
YEAR 4 - FALL	YEAR 4 - SPRING
Submit APR reporting on Year 3 Submit report for SBS Summer Funding, if recipient BIO 792 Doctoral Supervised Teaching ¹¹ (fall class) 3 credits Submit a dissertation chapter for publication, if ready Schedule a date for your defense talk ¹² during Spring Friday seminars BIO 799 Doctoral Dissertation credits 12 credits total	Apply for graduation ¹² (first week of semester) BIO 799 Doctoral Dissertation credits 12 credits total Complete GS "Request to Schedule a Doctoral Exam" form ¹² Prepare and disseminate your dissertation to your committee ¹³ Defend your dissertation ¹⁴ School of Biological Sciences Graduate Exit Survey ¹⁵

*Throughout the above plan, you should take courses identified in your Plan of Study and make progress on your research. Consult with your advisor about appropriate summer responsibilities¹⁶.

This worksheet is a recommended schedule to complete your doctoral degree in **4 years**. Many SBS doctoral students use five years to complete their degree (the mean completion time for SBS PhD programs is 5 years; see the 5-year flow chart), but if your goal is to finish within 8 semesters, the above timeline should be a good guideline. Ultimately, your program is an agreement between you and your advisor to fit the needs of your project and career goals. Consult regularly with your advisor and committee to establish and check in on your progress with this schedule in mind.

Notes – see pages 2-5.

Ph.D. in Biological Education Notes

¹SBS = School of Biological Sciences (our main office is in Ross 2480), GS = Graduate School

²Resident status is a requirement of your admission, noted in your original acceptance letter.

- Students who are not CO residents when admitted into their program will receive non-resident tuition for their first year of enrollment only. For any subsequent years, only in-state tuition assistance will be given and you are responsible for any difference.
- You must be a CO resident for a year before applying; you should establish domicile immediately when you begin your program (see details and required evidence here: <https://www.unco.edu/registrar/residency/residency-requirements.aspx>).
- If you were not a resident when accepted into your Program, your application for CO resident status should be submitted the summer before your third semester of the Program.

³Graduate Committee is a minimum of 4 members, including your advisor, to advise all aspects of your program. At least two members should be SBS faculty and one member should be from outside of SBS.

- Ensure all members have active Graduate Faculty or Doctoral Research Endorsement.
- Use the “Request to Appoint a Doctoral Committee” form on the GS website.
- If during the course of your program you need to change a committee member, use the GS form “Request to Change a Doctoral Committee.”

⁴Plan of Study (i.e. the course plan to earn your degree) should be prepared with input with your advisor and committee. Any deficiencies noted on your acceptance letter should be included here. It should include a minimum of 64 credits and use the SBS template available on SBS website (*not* the GS form).

- Follow the catalog requirements for the academic year when you began your program.
- Consult the SBS Financial Summary Sheet for the financial repercussions of minimum and maximum credits taken each semester (usual = 10 credits/semester).
- Communicate with the Instructors of Record for courses you are considering, to ensure they are offered in future semesters.
- You, all your committee members, the Chair of the SBS Graduate Committee, and the SBS Director should sign a final version.
- You are required to take all courses on your approved Plan of Study to graduate. Minor changes can be made but require a signed, detailed memo from your advisor to the GS.
- You are allowed up to 3 credits per year beyond courses identified on your Plan of Study that will be covered by your Grad Stipend, you are financially responsible for any credits beyond this allowance (see the SBS Financial Summary Sheet).

⁵Universal Scholarship Application is available through your student (Bear email) credentials into URSA. Most SBS graduate students are eligible for the Albert M Winchester Graduate Fellowship and Gerald D Schmidt Memorial Scholarship. These are competitive, internal grants awarded by SBS Graduate Committee.

⁶Research Day is a yearly celebration of UNC research (as part of Academic Excellence Week) sponsored by the Center for Honors, Scholars, and Leadership and SBS. All graduate students will give a brief oral presentation of your research.

- Your first Research Day presentation may summarize relevant literature and ideas you have for your dissertation.
- Subsequent Research Day presentations should present your research, highlighting accomplishments for that year.
- Students can apply for Research Excellent Awards after their first year in their program.

⁷SBS Summer Funding is available on a competitive basis through a SBS application process. The stipend (see the SBS Financial Summary Sheet) covers a minimum of 40 hours per week of your time to work on your research.

- Applicants must be in good standing, have submitted a final report for any past awards, and submit a high quality application to be eligible.
- Recipients must submit a one-page final report summarizing their accomplishments, due the same time as their APRs (see below).

⁸APR (Annual Progress Report) summarizes your progress (academic, teaching, and research) from the past academic year. Submit your final report to your advisor the first Friday in September.

- Use the most recent SBS template available on our website to guide this preparation.
- APRs are evaluated by the SBS Graduate Committee against this 4-yr and the 5-yr flow chart (i.e. your progress is evaluated against these timelines, as a rubric).

⁹Research Proposal is a document that outlines the work you plan to include as part of your dissertation. With your advisor's input, write this proposal. Follow the SBS Proposal guidelines from our webpage.

- Seek example proposal from other PhD candidates in the program whose field aligns with yours.
- With your advisor's permission, distribute a draft to your committee at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting to discuss the document and your research.
- Use the GS signature page to collect signatures of your entire committee after their approval (see the "Dissertation proposal process and title signature page" on the GS dissertation manuals page below).
- Complete the GS "Verification of Research Subject or Participant Compliance" form (regardless of your type of research), and append with a copy of your IRB/IACUC approval letter (if appropriate) when you are ready to submit to the GS.
- Retain this signed copy (yourself, your advisor, or the main office staff) until you have successfully passed your comprehensive exams, THEN submit to the GS. SBS requires that you gain approval of your proposal prior to your comps (even though the GS will not accept it in this order), as it helps guide your examinations and helps initiate your research sooner.

¹⁰Comprehensive exams are the exams that qualify you to transition from a PhD student to a PhD candidate. Discussions with your advisor and committee will determine when you will be ready to take these exams.

- You must have completed 36 credits on your filed Plan of Study, have a 3.0 GPA, have submitted APRs every fall, and be enrolled in at least 1 credit hour the semester during which you will take the exams, to be eligible to schedule these exams.
- ~6 months prior to when you plan to take these exams, discuss individually with your committee members appropriate topics for study and clarify expectations.
- Complete the SBS "Request to Schedule Doctoral Written Comprehensive Exams" form a minimum of a month ahead of your tentative dates, and file with the SBS front office.
- The written portion (scheduled chronologically several weeks prior to the oral portion) can be scheduled during a week-period, so that questions from each committee member are administered on a different day (maximum of 4 hours per exam, i.e. questions from a single member). The outside SBS member (i.e. the Graduate Representative) does not have to contribute questions to this portion.
- The committee will complete a SBS "Report of Doctoral Written Comprehensive Exams" to file with the GS.
- Once you have passed your written exams, identify a time for your oral exam with your advisor and committee (maximum of 3 hrs). Contact the GS for acceptable days/times to hold this exam, as they have notable restrictions. At least 14 calendar days prior to your oral exam, submit the GS "Request to Schedule a Doctoral Examination" form.
- Following your oral exam, the GS will send your advisor a "Report of Oral Comprehensive Exam Results" to obtain the necessary signatures and file with the GS.

- Consult the Graduate Catalog for additional GS policies related to comprehensive exams.

¹¹Supervised Teaching is an experience unique to our program. With input from your advisor, committee, instructor of record, and Associate Director of SBS, you will select a course for which you will be the primary instructor for a given semester. With support from your advisor and the instructor of record you will prepare all materials and content for the lecture portion of the class and be responsible for leading all class sessions and administering all assessments.

- At least a year before the semester you intend to do your supervised teaching, communicate with your advisor, instructor of record, and Associate Director to get this scheduled.
- You are only eligible to do your supervised teaching if you have passed your comprehensive exams, you have taken both BIO 631 and BIO 632, and are in good standing.
- The semester before you are scheduled to teach, you will take one credit of BIO 792 under the instructor of record to begin planning for the course. Work carefully with this faculty member to define their role and expectations the prep and teaching semester.
- During the semester you teach, you will take 3 credits of BIO 792 under the instructor of record.
- You are encouraged to check in regularly with the instructor of record (and any other relevant faculty or colleagues) to discuss successes and challenges.
- You are also encouraged to invite your advisor, the instructor of record (if they are not regularly attending), and your committee members to come watch you teach and provide feedback.

¹²Preparing for graduation is a multi-step process that should involve close communication with your advisor and committee.

- The semester before you plan to graduate, discuss with your advisor and committee possible times for your defense. Pay careful attention to the GS's *last day for a doctoral defense* (roughly a month before the end of the semester)—see their webpage for details. Then speak with the Biology Seminar Coordinator to ensure this time is available and confirm a date.
- Complete the GS “Application for Graduation in a Doctoral Program”. To be eligible to apply ALL benchmarks noted in Degree Works (completed courses in your Program of Study, Proposal, passed Comprehensive exams) should be met, and you must be currently enrolled as a student (or continuous registration will be charged to your account).
- As you prepare your dissertation, seek regular input from your advisor. The GS “Doctoral Dissertation and Doctoral Scholarly Project” Manual is available on the GS webpage. Ensure you strictly adhere to these guidelines.
- At least 2 weeks prior to your defense date, but much earlier is better, complete and submit the GS “Request to Schedule a Doctoral Examination” form.
- Check the GS website for the deadlines for requesting a defense, having a defense, and filing a doctoral dissertation. Many of these are a solid month or more before the end of the semester, so check early!

¹³Prepare your dissertation with regular input from your advisor.

- Discuss with your advisor your preferred publication style (Traditional vs Journal Manuscript format). See SBS “Dissertation Style Guide” for details.
- Consult the GS “Doctoral Dissertation and Doctoral Scholarly Project” format manual to format your dissertation. Follow their guidelines in painstaking detail!!
- At least 2 weeks prior to your defense date, and after your advisor determines it is ready, distribute a final copy of your full dissertation to all members of your committee.

¹⁴Defense of your dissertation includes a ~45 min public presentation (usually scheduled during the regular SBS Friday seminars), a ~10 min open question period by the general audience, a 30-60 min open question period by the SBS faculty, then a closed door question period of just the committee. Your defense, including the presentation, has a 3 hr time limit.

- A “Defense of Dissertation” form will be sent to your advisor by the GS. Once you have passed your defense exam and made requested revisions on your dissertation, your committee members will sign this form and it should be filed with the GS.
- Two signature pages, with original signatures, should be submitted to the GS.
- Schedule an appointment with Thesis and Dissertation Specialist at the GS for a Format Check.
- Submit the GS “Verification of Research Subject Compliance” form (regardless of the type of research you conducted for your dissertation), your IRB or IACUC approval (as appropriate), and GS “Thesis, Scholarly Project or Dissertation Processing” form with an electronic copy of your finalized dissertation to the GS.

¹⁵Graduate Student Exit Survey (available on the SBS website) should be completed prior to your graduation. To maintain confidentiality, seal your completed survey in an envelope and have a SBS staff member sign off that you have completed this survey.

¹⁶Summer responsibilities should be agreed upon between you and your advisor, but may include several research activities (e.g. data collection, analysis, dissemination of your work). GTA-ships do not cover summer coursework, so contact your advisor before considering any summer courses.

Other Notes

1. There are several internal grants (i.e. within UNC) that fund graduate research, for which it may be appropriate for you to apply. Depending on the type of research you do, there may also be other external opportunities (local, national, or international) that may be appropriate to apply to fund your research. Grant writing experience is an important skill, often expected of researchers with a doctorate. Consult with your advisor about sources and timing of funding.
2. Graduate students must maintain a 3.00 grade point average in graduate level courses to be eligible for graduate or teaching assistantships, to take comprehensive exams, or to graduate (see the GS Graduate Student Handbook). Courses for which C-, D+, D, D-, F, U, W, NR or I grades are awarded will not count towards graduate degree program requirements.
3. All teaching assistant-funded grad students need to take at least 3 credit hours in a given semester to retain their GTA-ship. However, carrying a less-than half time course load (i.e. 4 credits hours or less) may make you ineligible for student loan deferment – contact Financial Aid. Also keep in mind that if you are taking 6 or more credits per semester (half-time = 5-8 credits, full time = 9+ credits) you are required to have full coverage health insurance. Students who meet the credit hour criteria will be automatically enrolled in the UNC Student Health Insurance Plan and the cost will be added to your UNC student tuition bill, or you can complete a waiver if you have comparable coverage from another provider.
4. Regularly check Degree Works to ensure hurdles are properly documented for your Program.
5. Maintain regular contact with your advisor and committee. You are responsible for confirming dates and times of all committee meetings, exams, and your defense with your committee.
6. The best points of contact for any questions about your program, in order, should be your advisor, the SBS Chair of the Graduate Committee, the SBS Associate Director, the SBS Director, and the GS staff and Dean.
7. All submitted forms noted here should be copied and retained for your own records, and a copy should be offered to your advisor for their records and to the SBS Office for your file.
 - a. GS forms are available here: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/graduate-school-forms.aspx>
 - b. GS dissertation manuals and other resources are available here: <https://www.unco.edu/graduate-school/student-resources/current-students/thesis-capstone-dissertation-resources.aspx>
 - c. SBS forms are available here: <https://www.unco.edu/nhs/biology/about-us/forms.aspx>