

BROOKLYN COLLEGE  
OF  
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
FACULTY COUNCIL  
Meeting of 13 March 2018

The Committee on Graduate Curriculum and Degree Requirements herewith submits its recommendations in Curriculum Document 244.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Members of Faculty Council with any questions are urged to contact Jocelyn Wills at [jwills@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:jwills@brooklyn.cuny.edu) prior to the meeting.

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## SECTION A-III: CHANGES IN DEGREE PROGRAMS

### Department of Biology

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#### M.A. degree program in Biology

HEGIS code: 0401; SED program code: 01987 (30 credits)

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This Master of Arts program offers advanced instruction and research in many areas of biology. The degree program includes lectures, colloquia, seminars, and may include laboratory work, and fieldwork. Thesis research is may be conducted in one of the department's many laboratories, where faculty and students study cell, molecular, developmental, and behavioral biology. This degree prepares students to work in laboratories in academia as well as in biotechnology, pharmaceutical companies, and government laboratories within agencies such as the EPA or FDA. It also provides master's-level training for biology teachers. Students receiving the research-based degree are well prepared to go on to earn their doctorate.

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The CUNY Ph.D. prepares students to teach at the college level and perform independent research in academia as well as in industrial and governmental labs.

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#### Matriculation requirements

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Applicants must offer adequate preparation in the following, with a grade point average of 3.00 or higher: a minimum of 8 credits of introductory biology; an appropriate general physics course; two terms of organic chemistry; and a minimum of two advanced courses selected from the following areas of study: botany, zoology, microbiology, biochemistry, cell biology, anatomy, ecology, evolution, general physiology, or genetics.

The Biology Department's graduate admission committee selects candidates to be admitted to the program. An interview may be required of applicants. Candidates must submit 2 letters of recommendation and a personal statement. ~~and submit grades from the GRE.~~

General matriculation and admission requirements of the Division of Graduate Studies are in the section "Admission."

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#### Degree requirements

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Thirty credits are required for the degree. Students must complete 21 credits in courses in the Biology Department.

Students may fulfill requirements for the MA through either of the following plans. Student's applications must indicate whether they are applying to the research or library thesis based program. A switch in plan A to plan B or vice-versa is only granted in extenuating *circumstances by the Graduate Deputy*. Both plan A and B are under the same MA, Biology Program.

Plan A: A research-based thesis degree

This degree is designed to prepare students for a research career and prepare students to move on to the Ph.D. or to prepare students for a research-based technical career.

The following courses are required: BIOL 7991G, BIOL 7100, BIOL 7150, ~~BIOL 7080~~ and a minimum of 3 courses from the following list: BIOL 7005, BIOL 7141, BIOL 7503, BIOL 7007 or additional courses approved by the graduate deputy. Students must submit a research thesis and presentation acceptable to the department. No more than 2 credits in Biology 7910G may be counted toward the degree. Only one research course (advanced study or thesis research) may be taken each semester.

With permission of the deputy chairperson, the remaining credits required for the degree may be in courses in another science department.

Plan B: A library thesis based degree for students with education or pre-professional career plans. This option is designed to prepare students for non-research-based careers.

The following courses are required: BIOL 7991G, BIOL 7100, ~~BIOL 7080~~ and a minimum of 2 courses from the following list: BIOL 7005, BIOL 7141, BIOL 7503, BIOL 7007 or additional courses approved by the graduate deputy. Students must take a comprehensive exam and submit a library thesis acceptable to the department.

No more than 2 credits of BIOL 7910G may be counted toward the degree. Students are however, encouraged to take BIOL 7080 when offered instead of taking 7910G twice. Students should ~~may not use~~ take BIOL 7922 ~~towards the degree~~. Only one research course (advanced study or thesis research) may be taken each semester.

With permission of the deputy chairperson, the remaining credits required for the degree may be in courses in another science department.

Information about requirements for the thesis is in the section "Academic Regulations and Procedures."

### **Rationale:**

The current requirement for Graduate Record Examination scores inhibits many prospective students with good academic records to apply who fear obtaining low scores on the GRE. Enrollment in the MA program has declined concomitant with several recent changes in our degree program and curriculum. While we find the separation between Plan A and Plan B to be useful, we would like to remove the constraint of the GRE requirement. A recent report suggests that the GRE is only a weak to moderate predictor of student grades in the first semester and does not correlate to success in graduate (Ph.D.) programs (doi:10.1126/science.caredit.a1700046). For these reasons, we would like to remove the requirement of GRE scores for admission to the Biology MA program.

The requirement for BIOL7080G is removed; this course will be an additional elective. Low student enrollments result in cancelation of BIOL 7080G, Journal Club. An equivalent BIOL7910, Colloquium course serves for similar learning goals. Students will be able to complete the degree requirements efficiently during the period of low student enrollment when BIOL 7080G is not offered.

We have included a comprehensive exam for Plan B students to provide an exit exam that will show they have mastered the important concepts taught in the program. In lieu of a thesis data

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presentation as required for students pursuing the MA degree under Plan A, students pursuing the MA degree under Plan B will take a comprehensive exam at the end of their studies. This exam will be used to evaluate competency and mastery of the following skills: clarity of writing, analysis and interpretation of scientific data, and application of quantitative skills. Students pursuing Plan A are questioned on all aspects of their thesis research during the oral data presentation. Thus, they are evaluated on quantitative and qualitative reasoning skills and on data analysis and interpretation during the data presentation. We are instituting these changes to the program to ensure that all students are evaluated by equivalent measures.

A change in Plan A to B or vice-versa should not be considered as a change in program and this change does not require permission from CGAS. In cases of extenuating *circumstances*, the Graduate Deputy may grant this change on a case-by-case basis.

Program Assessment schedule:

2015/2016 – We are assessing goal 2: “Students must demonstrate competency in reading and understanding primary literature and then must use these skills to integrate broad concepts in the biological sciences”

2016/2017 – We will assess goal 1: “Students must become proficient in the theory and application of molecular biology and develop competency in two or more specialized areas of study (cell biology, developmental biology, genetics and evolution) within the biological sciences.”

2017/2018 – We will assess goal 3: “Students must develop and complete a research-based or library-based thesis.”

**Date of departmental or program committee approval:** 13 February 2018

**Effective Date of the Change or addition of a program:** Fall 2018

**SECTION A-V: CHANGES IN EXISTING COURSES**

**Department of Kinesiology**

Change in title, content

**FROM:**

**KINS 7154X ~~Sport and Exercise Psychology and Behavior Change~~**

45 hours; 3 credits

~~The influence of psychological factors on an athlete's sport performance or a person's exercise performance are presented. Factors influencing the relationship of sport to personality; personality theories; the coach-player relationship; minority groups in sport; aggression; personality characteristics of athletes competing in various sports etc. are explored.~~

**TO:**

**KINS 7154X Exercise Psychology and Behavior Change**

45 hours; 3 credits

This course provides an overview of the theoretical foundations for understanding exercise psychology and behavior including: social cognitive theory; trans theoretical model; and social ecological models. Physical activity behavior will be explored including: barriers to engagement in physical activity, cognitive and behavioral strategies for increasing physical activity, and theoretical strategies and approaches to increase exercise adoption and adherence.

**Rationale:** Changes to KINS 7154 involve a change in title and content that reflect changes in the organization of the exercise science and rehabilitation MS degree in order for our program to meet accreditation standards for the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM).

Date of departmental approval: 13 February 2018

Effective Date of Change: Fall 2019