

MASTER OF ARTS (MA) DEGREE IN THE FIELD OF ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY

Program Learning Outcomes for the MA Degree in the field of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Upon completing the MA degree in the field of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of current and past research accomplishments and techniques in ecology and evolutionary biology.
2. Synthesize and evaluate critically scientific literature and concepts in ecology and evolutionary biology.
3. Demonstrate technical proficiency in a range of ecology and evolutionary biology research methods.
4. Demonstrate the effective oral and visual communication skills necessary for articulating scientific findings and significance to diverse audiences.
5. Understand pedagogical methods appropriate for teaching undergraduate students in biology.

Requirements for the MA Degree in the field of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Course Requirements

The MA degree is a thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, please see Thesis Master's Degrees (ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-thesis-masters-degrees). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students (ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees). Most of the formal course studies will be completed in the first year of residence to allow the students to begin thesis research at the end of their second semester at Rice. Entering students will meet with a faculty advisor to form a course of study of the first year. Students should have completed coursework in ecology, evolution (or equivalent), mathematics (including calculus), and statistics prior to admission. Deficiencies in these subject areas should be made up during the first year of residence; some may be waived at the discretion of the EEB Graduate Advising Committee and the EEB Graduate Program Director.

The following Rice courses must be taken if students lack coursework in ecology or evolution in their final undergraduate transcript:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
EBIO 325	ECOLOGY	3
EBIO 334 / BIOC 334	EVOLUTION	3

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the MA Degree in the field of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology		30

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Requirements		
EBIO 569	CORE COURSE IN ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY (course repeatable for credit)	3 credit hours or more
<i>Select a minimum of 2 courses from the following (2 semesters of any combination of EBIO "Topics" courses):¹</i>		2 credit hours or more
EBIO 561	TOPICS IN EVOLUTION	
EBIO 562	TOPICS IN BEHAVIORAL BIOLOGY	
EBIO 563	TOPICS IN ECOLOGY	
EBIO 568	TOPICS IN BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	
EBIO 585	GRADUATE SEMINAR IN ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY (required in all years of residency, fall semester)	1 credit hour per year
EBIO 586	GRADUATE SEMINAR/ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY (required in all years of residency, spring semester)	1 credit hour per year
EBIO 591	GRADUATE TEACHING IN ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY (two semesters) ²	3 credit hours per semester
EBIO 801	EEB GRADUATE RESEARCH ³	Variable credit hours

Thesis Requirement

Completion and public defense of a thesis embodying the results of an original investigation

Additional Coursework as Approved by Department

Total Credit Hours	Minimum of 30
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Footnotes and Additional Information

- ¹ At least 2 special topics courses must be completed before candidacy. Students are strongly encouraged to take at least 1 topics course per semester during all years of residency.
- ² Students must complete 2 semesters of EBIO 591 during their first 4 semesters to gain teaching experience; additional teaching experiences are available on an optional basis.
- ³ A minimum of 10 credit hours of EBIO 801 *EEB Graduate Research* is required for a master's degree. EBIO 801 credit hours vary per student, depending on the number of other courses the student is taking in a given semester.

Evaluation of Progress in Graduate Study

Students must maintain a minimum grade average of B (3.00 grade points) in courses taken in the department and satisfactory grades in courses taken outside the department. Students must demonstrate satisfactory progress in their degree program in annual reviews by the

EEB Graduate Advising Committee. The review process requires that each student:

- Presents a public seminar on his/her research at the annual EEB Graduate Student Symposium
- Prepares a written report on his/her progress

First-year students must also participate in an interview with the EEB Graduate Advising Committee.

MA Degree Program

In addition to the general university requirements and those listed above, the MA degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology requires:

- Convening a master's thesis committee. A thesis committee is composed of at least three members. Two, including the committee chair, must be members of the student's department faculty.
- Completing an original investigation and a master's thesis
- Presenting a departmental seminar on the research
- Publicly defending the master's thesis

Policies for the MA Degree in the field of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Ecology and Evolutionary Graduate Program Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: http://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2018_19/Ecology_Evolutionary_Biology_Graduate_Handbook.pdf

Admission

Applicants for graduate study in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) Program must have:

- BA or BS degree or equivalent that provides a strong background in biology
- Strong ability and motivation, as indicated by academic record, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, and recommendations
- Scores from the GRE biology subject exam are optional but can be helpful, particularly for students with nontraditional backgrounds in biology

These requirements do not preclude admission of qualified applicants who have majored in areas other than biology. Although the program offers MA degrees, only on rare occasions are students who do not intend to pursue the PhD admitted to the graduate program. For general university requirements, see Graduate Degrees (ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-opportunities/degrees).

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the BioSciences website: <https://biosciences.rice.edu/>

Opportunities for the MA Degree in the field of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

All full-time Ecology and Evolutionary Biology graduate students receive funding and full tuition waivers as specified in their offer letters. Information about Student Resources, Attendance at Scientific Conferences, Internships, Graduate Students Awards, the Graduate

Student Association, etc. can be found in the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Graduate Program handbook here: http://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2018_19/Ecology_Evolutionary_Biology_Graduate_Handbook.pdf

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