

BIOLOGY

About Biology

The M.Sc. and Ph.D. graduate training programs in the Department of Biology are focused on excellence in research across all scales of the biological world, from molecules to cells, from cells to organisms, and from organisms to ecosystems. Our research is highly interdisciplinary, and so are our trainees and faculty members. Our programs offer graduate trainees the opportunity to do cutting-edge research and develop their professional skills, including writing and communication, which are essential for careers inside and outside of academia. McGill Biology graduate students enjoy a rigorous training program with the goal of becoming successful research scientists. A graduate degree in Biology prepares students for a wide range of careers. Alumni have gone on to pursue careers in academia and beyond, including researchers in industry, and work as wildlife biologists, forensic technologists, and science policy advisors, to name a few.

Graduate students choose a project in one of the department's three main research focus areas:

- Conservation, Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour
- Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology
- Neurobiology and Behaviour

In addition to the regular M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs, the Biology Department offers specialized program options in Environment and Neotropical Environment (NEO) (see below).

Both the M.Sc. and Ph.D. are research-intensive degrees, and the emphasis in both programs is on developing the intellectual and technical skills necessary for independent research. The main component of both degrees is a thesis presenting the results of this work in the form of a student's original contribution to scientific knowledge. Formal coursework includes a two-course sequence on research and professional skills, and one to two topical courses, usually in the form of literature-based seminars. To complement their classroom and research training, students regularly attend seminar series and journal clubs, and present their own work annually in a formal seminar.

The Department of Biology is embedded in an outstanding and collaborative research environment with access to state-of-the-art infrastructure in the Stewart Biology Building and the Bellini Life Science Complex, as well as excellent field facilities in Canada and abroad. Affiliated centres and field stations include:

- McGill University Phytotron
- Redpath Museum
- Integrated Quantitative Biology Initiative (IQBI)
- Advanced BioImaging Facility (ABIF)
- Gault Nature Reserve at Mont St. Hilaire (Quebec)
- Penfield Nature Conservancy on Lake Memphrémagog (Quebec)
- McGill Subarctic Research Station at Schefferville (Quebec)
- Bellairs Research Institute (Barbados)
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) (Panama)

The Department of Biology offers financial support to both Canadian and international students. Funding packages include a stipend to offset living expenses and a tuition and fees subsidy. For more

information on graduate student funding in Biology, please visit the Department's Graduate Funding page.

Biology Admission Requirements and Application Procedures

Admission Requirements

Admission is based on evaluation by the Graduate Training Committee and acceptance by a faculty member within the department who agrees to supervise and fund the applicant. Before applying to Graduate Studies in Biology, students should contact faculty members with whom they wish to study to see if they are accepting new students (see Faculty Member Profiles).

Prospective Biology graduate students will have a strong background in the biological sciences, often with specific strengths in their proposed area of study. To encourage interdisciplinary work, the program may also accept students with high scholastic standing in fields other than biology (medicine, engineering, chemistry, physics, etc.).

The minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is 3.0/4.0, or a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.2/4.0 in the last two years of full-time studies. B.Sc. students who wish to apply directly to Ph.D.1 must have a minimum CGPA of 3.5/4.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required of applicants to graduate studies whose mother tongue is not English, and who have not completed an undergraduate or graduate degree from a recognized foreign institution where English is the language of instruction or from a recognized Canadian institution (anglophone or francophone). A score of 86 on the TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT) with each component score not less than 20, or 6.5 on IELTS is the minimum standard for admission.

Application Procedures

McGill's online application form for graduate program candidates is available at mcgill.ca/gradapplicants/apply. All applicants should consult the How to Apply page of the Biology Department's website before completing the application form for departmental information on the application process, required documents, summaries of faculty research areas, and contact information.

See the Application Procedures for detailed information.

Application Dates and Deadlines

Application opening dates are set by Enrolment Services in consultation with Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS), while application deadlines are set by the Biology Department and may be revised at any time. Applicants must verify all deadlines and documentation requirements well in advance on the appropriate McGill departmental website; please consult the list at mcgill.ca/gps/contact/graduate-program.

Information on application deadlines is available at mcgill.ca/gradapplicants/how-apply/application-steps/application-deadlines.

Admission to graduate studies is competitive; accordingly, late and/or incomplete applications are considered only as time and space permit. All inquiries pertaining to admission procedures should be directed to the Graduate Admissions Coordinator, Ancil Gittens (ancil.gittens@mcgill.ca).

Note: Applications for Summer term admission will not be considered.

Available Programs

- Biology (Ph.D.)
- Biology (Thesis) (M.Sc.) (45 credits)
- Biology (Thesis): Environment (M.Sc.) (45 credits)
- Biology (Thesis): Neotropical Environment (M.Sc.) (45 credits)
- Biology: Environment (Ph.D.)
- Biology: Neotropical Environment (Ph.D.)

Location

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