



COLLEGE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT OF INTEGRATIVE BIOLOGY

To: new graduate students in the Integrative Biology MSc program

As Graduate Coordinator and Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee I welcome you to the Department of Integrative Biology. Although your graduate education should be as enjoyable a learning experience as we can provide, several administrative milestones must be kept in mind.

- 1.** When you first arrive on campus, you should pick up your ID card at the **Student ID Card Centre**, Enrolment Services, University Centre Level 3. From there you should report to the **Integrative Biology Administrative Assistant**. Her office is room **2482 in the Science Complex**. She will provide you with information about GTAs, payroll, office assignments, keys and so on. Questions about your graduate program can be directed to the **Integrative Biology Graduate Program Assistant** <cbsibgrad@uoguelph.ca>, whose office is room **2483 in the Science Complex**.
- 2.** For each semester that you will be registered, **you must choose one** of the following:

UNIV*7510*01 Active Full-time Registration **or**
UNIV*7520*01 Active Part-time Registration
Registering for one of these courses serves only to activate your registration.

In addition to this basic selection, you must be registered in at least one other course:
UNIV*7500*01 Research/Writing **or** any real course for which an active section exists.
Failure to do this will result in the term simply not appearing on any official transcript of record.
- 3. You must select an Advisory Committee.** The minimum committee must be your advisor and one other faculty member, but you are strongly encouraged to include a third faculty member. Your Advisor will be sent a copy of the Advisory Committee form before the end of your first semester, which must be filled out, signed by you and your Advisor, and returned to the **Graduate Program Assistant at least one week before course selection begins in your second semester**. Your registration for semester 3 will be blocked if you fail to submit the Advisory Committee form before course selection starts. All members of the Advisory Committee who are not regular graduate faculty at the University of Guelph must hold Special Graduate Faculty status. If they do not, they must be nominated by your Advisor and approved by the Departmental Graduate Studies Committee and the University Board of Graduate Studies.
Note: Part time students are also required to submit the Advisory Committee form during their second registered semester (class level 0.6).
- 4. You must choose 1.5 credits of graduate coursework.** MSc students in Integrative Biology are required to take **IBIO*6630, Scientific Communication**, in their first or second semester. To satisfy the other 1.0 credits, you may choose graduate courses from any department on campus,

in consultation with your Advisor and Advisory Committee. Your Advisor will be sent a copy of the Graduate Program form before the end of your first semester, which must be filled out, signed by you and your Advisor, and returned to the **Graduate Program Assistant by the 10th week of your second semester.**

5. **You must write a thesis proposal** and have it approved by your Advisory Committee **by the end of the second semester.** You must have the members of your Advisory Committee sign an approval form, which must be submitted to the **Graduate Program Assistant.**
6. **You must have at least one meeting with your Advisory Committee per year.** The first meeting will occur at the end of semester 2, when you defend your thesis proposal (see above). Subsequent meetings must occur in semesters 5, and if necessary, semester 8. You must have the members of your Advisory Committee sign an Advisory Committee Meeting Report form, which must be submitted to the **Graduate Program Assistant.**

Please submit all forms to the **Graduate Program Assistant in SCIE 2483**, who will then forward them to the Graduate Coordinator for the required signature.

PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT FORMS DIRECTLY TO THE GRADUATE COORDINATOR OR THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES.

7. **Lab Safety Training:** You must take the following safety courses:
 - (a) The Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Lab Safety Course, which is now offered online.
 - (b) The 3 CBS on-line safety modules.Please contact the Department Administrative Assistant, Debbie Bailey (dbailey@uoguelph.ca) to register for these modules.

NOTE: the CBS WHMIS module can be used in place of the EHS WHMIS training requirement.

8. **Animal Care Instruction:** If you will utilize vertebrate animals in your research and/or will be working as a teaching assistant in a course involving vertebrate animals, you must complete the requirements stipulated in the Animal User Training Program. The program includes online modules and hands-on workshops. The online course is mandatory for all. Additional species-specific workshops may be required depending on the field of research and type of animal use. The training must be completed prior to commencement of your animal-based work. The online modules are offered at regular intervals throughout the year and registration is accepted online at the Animal Care Services (ACS).
9. **Graduate Teaching Assistantship:** In most cases, your minimum stipend includes one full unit (140 hours) of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) per year. This will be indicated in your offer of admission. With the exception of your first semester, you are required to submit an application for GTA assignments. This allows the department to determine your interests and suitability for particular courses. Please keep in mind that there are many students in the department applying for GTAs each semester and it may not be possible to assign you your first (or only) choice. Thus, you are strongly encouraged to indicate several courses on your application. A document describing how the Department assigns GTAs to graduate students each semester is appended to this letter.

The majority of the GTA units offered by the Department are available in the Fall and Winter semesters, with more in Fall than Winter. There are very few available in the summer. Thus,

you are strongly advised to apply for a GTA unit in the first semester of each year in which you are entitled to one. Moreover, if you are not able to accept a GTA in Fall or Winter due to special circumstances (e.g. field work off campus), you must advise the Integrative Biology Administrative Assistant as soon as possible so that she can factor this into GTA planning.

In addition, if you will be on campus and are offered a GTA assignment for which you are qualified, the Department has met its obligation to provide you with GTA support in a particular year **even if you decline the offer**. Thus, if there are insufficient GTA units available for all applicants in the following semester (excluding summer), you may not receive one that year. **In that case, compensation for the shortfall in your annual stipend for that year will be at your advisor's discretion.**

10. Maximum Duration of Program: Graduate students in the MSc program are expected to complete their degree program in 6 semesters of full-time study. However, the program may be extended to 9 semesters with approval from the Office of Graduate Studies. If you have not completed your program by the 40th class day of semester 7, your registration for semester 8 will be blocked until you submit a Plan of Completion to the Graduate Program Assistant who will obtain the Graduate Coordinator's signature and forward the form to the Office of Graduate Studies. ~~By the Office of Graduate Studies~~ If approved, you may remain in the program until the end of semester 9. If you fail to complete your program by the end of semester 9, you will be required to withdraw for failure to complete.

Finally, here are a few words of advice. Faculty are very busy and may forget your specific deadlines. It is best if you take personal responsibility for administrative matters regarding your graduate program. I encourage you to become familiar with the regulations regarding your program by reading the relevant sections of the Graduate Calendar. In addition, become familiar with the relevant pages of the websites provided by the Office of Graduate Studies, the Department and the College of Biological Sciences. A list of websites, which also include links to all of the **academic forms** that you may require throughout your program, is provided on the following page.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or the Graduate Program Assistant for further assistance.

Sincerely,



Karl Cottenie
Professor and Graduate Coordinator

Websites providing information on Graduate Programs and Requirements

Graduate Calendar

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/>

Office of Graduate Studies - Current Students

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/graduatestudies/index.cfm?records>

Forms and Documents

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/graduatestudies/index.cfm?forms>

College of Biological Sciences Graduate Program Information

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/adr-cbs/current/programs.shtml>

Forms including those specific to Integrative Biology graduate programs

http://www.uoguelph.ca/ib/grad/grad_forms.shtml

Department of Integrative Biology

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/ib/>

College of Biological Sciences Health and Safety

<http://www.cbs.uoguelph.ca/safety/>

Environmental Health and Safety On-line Safety Training

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/ehs/training/computer-based-training/>

Animal Care Services

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/acs/>

Animal User Training Program

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/acs/teaching/teaching.shtml>

Computing and Communications Services

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs>