

**GRADUATE STUDENT & FACULTY ADVISOR HANDBOOK**

**M.S. BIOLOGY, M.S. RAPTOR BIOLOGY, & M.A. BIOLOGY  
DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Department of Biological Sciences  
Boise State University

## FOREWARD

This graduate student handbook is intended as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, official university publications such as the *Boise State University Graduate Catalog*, and the *Standards for Preparation of Dissertations, Theses & Projects*. It is the purpose of this handbook to provide students and faculty with information concerning the graduate program policies of the Department of Biological Sciences. While efforts are made to keep this handbook current, it is the student's responsibility to keep informed of changes in the College of Graduate Studies regulations. Careful planning at the outset of your graduate program is important for you to complete degree requirements in a timely manner. We hope that this handbook will be a helpful guide to new and continuing graduate students and to faculty who serve as advisors.

### Additional Resources:

[Quick Guide to Graduate College Policies](#)

[Graduate College Homepage](#)

[Graduate Catalog](#) (download the graduate catalog specific to your enrollment date in graduate program)

[Academic Calendar](#) (download the academic calendar a complete list of deadlines)

## DESCRIPTION OF GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED

### Master of Science (M.S.)

The M.S. is a research based degree. Admission to the M.S. Biology and M.S. Raptor Biology degree programs is based upon the compatibility of the applicant's research interests with those of a prospective major advisor (= major professor), the availability of assistantships, and the applicant's academic preparation and academic promise. Students admitted to the M.S. program are expected to produce a written thesis based on original research carried out by the student. Ideally, the thesis should make a significant contribution to the body of scientific knowledge and be of sufficient quality to warrant publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Following completion of the thesis, the student is required to give an oral defense of the thesis and an exit seminar to present their results to the public.

### Master of Arts (M.A.)

The M.A. is considered to be a terminal degree except for students intending to attend professional school. Students wishing to later pursue a Ph.D. should enroll in the M.S. program. There are two options for the M.A. in Biology: "Project Option" and "Examination Option". The M.A. Project Option is a course work and project-based degree with a culminating oral defense, whereas the M.A. Examination Option is a course work-based degree with a culminating comprehensive examination. Students should discuss these options with their major professor to determine which is most appropriate.

## DEPARTMENT, MAJOR PROFESSOR, AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The department will provide the necessary tools and the environment for the growth and professional development of its graduate students. The major professor serves as advisor of thesis research, chairperson of the advisory committee, and the person who convenes most of the planning and examination committees associated with the degree program. For research degrees (M.S.) the importance of the major professor cannot be over-emphasized. You and your major professor will plan, perform, and publish your thesis research. You should also seek the advice of your supervisory committee in all phases of your research.

**The student**, not the major professor or the department, **is responsible for meeting all deadlines and academic requirements** and for initiating a process of regular communication with the major professor and supervisory committee. The student is responsible for his/her own program. This includes:

- Initiating regular communication and meetings with the major professor.
- Working with the major professor to ensure that all degree requirements are met in a timely manner.
- Meeting with the supervisory committee as early as possible to discuss research and academic goals. Continuing to meet with the supervisory committee on a regular basis (e.g., once per semester) to update them on your activities. At the very least, communicating with committee members regularly.
- Planning adequate and appropriate amounts of time each semester for research activities, course work, and (if applicable) teaching. Full time graduate students should expect to devote a minimum of 40 hours per week on these activities, although in some cases more time may be needed, and on a schedule dictated by the needs of the research.
- Professional development activities such as attending scientific conferences, presenting conferences papers, presenting seminars, and writing scientific papers for publication are highly encouraged and recommended.
- Writing sections of your thesis as soon as possible. Delaying writing is a common problem for graduate students, and often leads to delays in finishing in a timely manner.
- Preparing drafts (proposals, thesis chapters, manuscripts) in consultation with major professor *prior to sending them to committee members*. Drafts should be grammatically correct and free of typographical and spelling errors.

## ADMINISTERING THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS

### Application and Admittance

Students wishing to enter any of the Department of Biological Sciences' graduate degree programs must submit to the Graduate Admissions Office an online application for graduate admission along with a one-time, non-refundable \$55 application fee, and have all official academic transcripts and GRE (Graduate Record Exam) scores sent directly to the Graduate Admissions Office at 1910 University Drive, Boise, ID 83725-1110.

In addition to the materials provided to the Graduate Admissions Office, the Department of Biological Sciences requires three letters of recommendation from individuals qualified to comment on the applicant's potential for graduate work and a professional career. The department also requires graduate applicants to submit a short cover letter/essay (1-2 pages)

explaining their career goals, academic interests, and personal objectives. If a faculty member has agreed to serve as major professor on your M.S. thesis research or M.A. program, please provide this information in your letter. The cover letter and letters of recommendation should be sent directly to the Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Biological Sciences, Boise State University, Boise, ID 83725-1515.

All application materials should be received no later than January 15<sup>th</sup> for fall admission, and October 1<sup>st</sup> for spring admission. International applicants should initiate the application process at least six weeks earlier than the deadlines listed above. For more information about international admissions, please consult the [Admissions Office](#) website or contact Sally Pittman at [INTERNTL@boisestate.edu](mailto:INTERNTL@boisestate.edu)

Applicants must hold a baccalaureate degree (preferably in biology or closely related field) from an accredited university or college. Successful applicant's generally have an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher. Submission of GRE scores (verbal, quantitative, and written assessment) is also required, but under exceptional circumstances may be waived at the discretion of the department's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). GRE scores are used in combination with other application materials as an additional indication of the applicant's potential for success in a graduate program. Successful applicants typically receive GRE scores that average in the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher across the three components of the test. Strong letters of recommendation or progressive grade improvement in the junior and senior years will be given special attention in marginal cases. Provisional enrollment is sometimes granted to otherwise promising applicants who do not meet GPA or GRE requirements or who have undergraduate course work deficiencies. Students enrolled provisionally must fulfill specific conditions before being advanced to regular enrollment. Regular enrollment is required to graduate.

Once the Graduate Admissions Office receives all necessary admission materials (online application, GRE scores, official academic transcripts), the applicant's file is forwarded to the director of graduate studies in biology for initial review. Unless a major advisor has been previously identified, the file is circulated to faculty members in the applicant's area of research interest in an attempt to identify a potential major professor. Acceptance in the biology or raptor biology graduate program is ultimately dependent on identifying a faculty member willing to serve as a student's major professor. Applicants are encouraged to contact faculty in advance regarding thesis research opportunities.

After circulation, the file is reviewed by the GSC for an admission recommendation (either acceptance or denial). Applicants are recommended for acceptance to the biology graduate program only if they appear qualified academically and if a major professor is identified. A graduate student may be accepted with or without funding.

The admission recommendation made by the GSC is then forwarded to the Graduate Admissions Office for review. An admission decision is not official until approved by the College of Graduate Studies.

### Registration

You are required to register each semester (except in summer) while you are in residence, even if you are only doing research. Students in an M.S. degree program should register for thesis research credits (B593) continuously until their degree program is completed, unless the student is not utilizing faculty time or department facilities. A student must be registered in at least one

credit of study during the semester in which they complete their degree and submit archival copies of their thesis to the Graduate College. Students receiving an assistantship must enroll in at least 9, but preferably 12 credits per semester. In the absence of sufficient course work credits to reach full-time enrollment status, M.S. students should enroll in B593 thesis credits. Approval from the director of graduate studies is required for students to enroll in more than 13 credits in a semester. Fees for courses enrolled in during the summer session are not covered by teaching assistantships.

### International Students

International students must comply with and keep abreast of current rules and regulations of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Please refer any questions you have about such rules and regulations to Sally Pittman (International Admissions Coordinator) at [INTERNL@boisestate.edu](mailto:INTERNL@boisestate.edu), or visit the [International Students](#) website.

### New Student Orientation

All new graduate students are required to attend a department orientation meeting held at the beginning of the fall semester. This event provides an opportunity for new students to meet with the director of graduate studies, department chair, and various staff members, and to become familiar with department facilities and procedures. After an introductory meeting about the graduate program, students will pick up their keys and ID proxy cards, receive harassment training, and a representative from Human Resources will help new employees complete necessary paperwork. New teaching assistants will be required to attend additional orientation events to become familiar with their teaching responsibilities.

### Contacting Students via Email

Students are responsible for checking their *Boise State University email account* for messages and announcements regarding the graduate program and teaching assistantships. If you prefer to use an alternative email address (e.g., hotmail, yahoo, etc), please have your Boise State email automatically forwarded to that account. Also make sure that those forwarded messages are not being quarantined as spam by your email server.

### Appointment of Major Professor

The major professor acts as committee chair and the student's main research advisor. A major professor is identified during the review of the student's graduate application and is in place prior to admission. To chair an M.S. or M.A. committee, the major professor must either be a member of the university's graduate faculty, or an adjunct or emeritus member of the graduate faculty with a departmental endorsement to chair thesis committees. Students with an off-campus advisor must have an on-campus co-advisor to assist the student with space needs and academic procedures. Final approval of major professor selection is confirmed by the Graduate College.

## Appointment of Graduate Supervisory Committee

The graduate supervisory committee assumes the responsibility for approving the student's graduate program, advising thesis/project research, and conducting required examinations. The committee will consist of the major professor who serves as chair, plus at least two but no more than four additional members. All members of the supervisory committee must have graduate faculty status as appointed by the Graduate College. A majority of the committee membership must be tenured or tenure-track faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences.

Students should form a supervisory committee during their first semester of enrollment in the graduate program. Composition of the committee should be based on a reasonable match between student and faculty academic interest. Selection of the committee typically begins with the graduate student and major advisor agreeing on appropriate committee membership. The student then contacts and meets with potential members to determine their availability to serve on the committee. Once a committee has been identified, a *Supervisory Committee Appointment* form must be completed and submitted to the director of graduate studies for department approval. The form is then submitted to the dean of the Graduate College for final approval. The graduate dean can either appoint the recommended committee or solicit an alternative recommendation from the department. A change in membership of the committee can be made after its appointment, but only in accordance with departmental policies and the approval of the Graduate College.

## Study Plan and Research Outline

The first meeting of the graduate supervisory committee should take place in the first semester of a student's enrollment. Prior to the meeting the student should, in consultation with the major professor, complete a *Program Development Form* (see links below) listing the courses the student intends to take in order to meet degree requirements, as well as a proposed timeline for completion. M.S. and M.A. "project option" students should also bring an outline of their proposed research/project topic.

The proposed schedule of courses and research outline (if applicable) will be discussed at the first committee meeting and revised if necessary. Once approval for the study plan and research are obtained, the completed *Program Development Form* should be returned to the director of graduate studies for inclusion in the student's file. A copy of the form should also be retained by the committee members and the student.

[Program Development Form for MS students](#)

[Program Development Form for MA students](#)

## Progress Assurance

Each semester students must complete a [Progress Assurance Form](#) which summarizes the courses taken during the previous semester, the grades achieved, and the research accomplishments made over that time period. Students then give the form to their major professor for comment and approval. Once signed by the major professor, the form should be returned to the director of graduate studies. If the major professor indicates that satisfactory progress did not occur, the department's GSC will investigate the matter further. Completed progress assurance forms are retained in the student's graduate file.

## Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy is required by all degree-seeking graduate students and serves as an important intermediate check that reveals overlooked or misinterpreted program requirements. A student who has not been admitted to candidacy cannot schedule or participate in a final oral examination or apply for graduation. A student may be admitted to candidacy if he/she is in regular status and has satisfactorily completed a set of courses sufficient to meet at least one half of the total credit requirements of the program. Students must submit a completed [\*Application for Admission to Candidacy\*](#) form to the director of graduate studies prior to the deadline published in the academic calendar (note that this deadline occurs early in the semester preceding the intended semester of graduation). The completed form requires the student's signature, the major professor's signature, and the final exact list of courses that are to be applied to meet the credit requirements of the student's graduate program. Following department approval, the form will be forwarded to Graduate College for approval. Once the *Application for Admission to Candidacy* receives approval from the Graduate College, students may apply for graduation on Broncweb. Note that an approved *Application for Admission to Candidacy* is a binding agreement between the student and university. Any subsequent changes to coursework requires department and Graduate College approval. Please consult with the director of graduate studies.

## Thesis Defense Procedures

M.S. students are required to present a public pre-defense seminar of their completed thesis research, and to pass an oral defense of their thesis in a conference with the supervisory committee. Note that all M.S. students must be enrolled in at least one credit of B.593 thesis in the semester in which they defend their thesis, and the semester in which they submit archival copies of the thesis to the Graduate College.

Before a thesis defense date can be formally set and announced, the student must submit a [\*Permission to Defend\*](#) form with signatures from all committee members confirming that the thesis has progressed sufficiently to be ready for defense by the proposed date. The form must then be submitted to the admin assistant in the main office. Note that a signed *Permission to Defend* form has no bearing on whether a student passes or fails the oral exam.

Members of the supervisory committee must receive the defense version of the thesis at least two weeks in advance of the defense date unless other arrangements have been made with the committee members. Failure to do so may result in the defense being cancelled and subject to rescheduling.

During the oral exam students are expected to defend the thesis and demonstrate a solid grasp of academic knowledge related to the thesis and subject area. The decision of whether a student passes or fails the oral defense rests with the committee members. A final oral exam that is failed on the first attempt may be repeated once but only if a request to repeat is made by the student and approved by the department. The student's request must be delivered in writing to the department chair within 5 days of the failed first attempt. If the request is approved by the department, the repeat exam must occur within 12 months after the first attempt.

Following successful oral defense of the thesis, the student is responsible for completing to the satisfaction of the committee any thesis revisions required by the committee, and for meeting any

graduation deadlines set by the Registrar's Office. Once a thesis is successfully defended, the major professor will change the student's B593 grade from IP to P (Pass).

The final version of the thesis must be submitted to the Graduate College for approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Before doing so it must conform to the standards of the Graduate College as determined by the thesis editor (Jodi Chilson). Students should refer to the [Standards for Preparation of Dissertations, Theses & Projects](#) manual for instructions on formatting and the type of paper required for official university copies of the thesis.

#### M.A. "Project Option" Defense Procedures

M.A. "Project Option" students are required to give an oral defense of their completed project in a conference with the supervisory committee. The committee, in consultation with the student, is responsible for determining when the project is complete and ready to defend. The department will determine the format and archival method that applies to projects completed in the M.A. program. This flexibility is to acknowledge the diversity of projects and the difficulty of preserving them within a fixed archival method. For text-based projects, students should refer to the [Standards for Preparation of Dissertations, Theses & Projects](#) manual. Once a project is successfully defended, the major professor will change the student's B591 grade from IP to P (Pass). A copy of the final project, preferably in electronic form, must be submitted to the biology department for archiving.

### **ACADEMIC AND SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS**

#### Credit Requirements

Each graduate student follows a study plan based on program requirements and on individual career goals. According to Graduate College policies, at least two thirds of the total credit requirement for the degree program must be earned at Boise State University after admission to the graduate program. Students beginning a graduate program in biology are expected to meet the same department core course requirements (or their equivalents) as for an undergraduate degree. Deficiencies should be made up early in the student's graduate career. Assessment of deficiencies and the actions needed for remedy are made either in the form of provisions at the time of admission to the graduate program, or as recommendations by the student's supervisory committee.

Students engaging in any activity requiring faculty time and consultation, or the use of any BSU facilities, must register for the number of credits appropriate to the degree of activity. Students engaged in any phase of research, such as writing a manuscript or thesis, must register for such work in the amount reflecting the effort required. All students funded by an assistantship must register for a minimum of 9 credits each fall and spring semester. Enrollment during the summer semester is not required unless the student plans on completing his/her program during that session. All students are required to enroll in the appropriate number of credits during the semester in which their degree requirements are completed.

M.S. Biology and M.S. Raptor Biology. A minimum of 30 credits is required for the M.S. degree. Of these at least 18 will be elective credits from 300G, 400G, 500 and 600 level courses. Electives may include a maximum of six credits of Directed Research or Independent Study (B696 or B596, respectively), subject to the approval of the student's thesis supervisory committee, department, and the Graduate College. *Electives may not*

*include workshop, pass/fail, or practicum/internship credits.* An upper division undergraduate course from another discipline may, subject to committee and department approval, be applied to meet the elective credit requirements for a master's degree. M.S. candidates must also complete four credits of Biometry (B501), at least two credits of graduate seminar (B598) or Advanced Topics courses (B561-567), and at least six credits of thesis research (B593).

M.A. Biology "Project Option". The M.A. Project Option is an application-based degree requiring a minimum of 33 credits. Of these credits, at least 23 will be elective credits that may include up to a combined total of six workshop, practicum/internship, and directed research or directed studies credits. A combined total of nine credits may include approved courses taken outside the biological sciences. Workshop, directed studies, directed research, and practicum/internships are limited to a maximum of three credits each. M.A. candidates must also complete two credits of Research in Biological Sciences (B579), at least two credits of graduate seminar (B598) or Advanced Topics courses (B561-567), and at least six "Project" credits (B591). Examples of projects include development of biology-based curricula, compilation and analysis of previously conducted studies, and development of a resource management plan based on relevant studies. Upon completion of the project the candidate will meet with the supervisory committee for an oral review and discussion of the project.

M.A. Biology "Examination Option". The M.A. Examination Option is a course work-based degree requiring a minimum of 33 credits. The allocation of credits is the same as for the project-based M.A. except that the six credits of B591 are replaced by five elective credits plus one credit of B600 Assessment - a comprehensive examination taken in the final semester of the student's program. The examination is tailored by each candidate's committee to emphasize the areas covered by course work. After the candidate has completed the written portion of the examination, the candidate will meet with the committee for an oral review prior to approval or rejection of the written examination.

#### Research Proposal and Proposal Seminar Requirement (M.S. programs only)

M.S. students will need to work closely with their major professor and other members of the supervisory committee to ensure that a well developed written research proposal is prepared by the end of their second semester of enrollment. M.S. students are also required to present their proposed research to the department during their second semester of enrollment.

#### Scholastic Grade Requirements

All students admitted to a graduate program must meet three scholastic grade requirements set by the Graduate College. The first requirement is a minimum GPA of 3.0 each and every semester in which the student is enrolled. If a student fails to meet the semester GPA requirement and the failure is the first occurrence since admission to the program, the student will be placed on academic notice by the college but will be allowed to continue in the program. If a student fails to meet the semester GPA for a second time since admission to the program, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the program by the Graduate College. The withdrawal decision is subject to an appeal process; please discuss your situation with the director of graduate studies.

A second requirement of the Graduate College is that students must achieve a program GPA of 3.0 or higher to be eligible for a graduate degree. If a student fails to achieve a program GPA of

3.0 or better, the student is ineligible for a degree and should consult with the director of graduate studies for advice and possible options.

Thirdly, graduate courses (500 and 600 level) for which a student receives a grade lower than C will not count toward the degree requirements of the program. Undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit, G-level courses, and transfer credits require at least a grade of B to count toward the degree requirements of the program.

A grade of I (*Incomplete*) is assigned only when extenuating circumstances make it impossible for a student to complete a course before the end of the semester, subject to the requirement that the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work up to a time within 3 weeks of the end of the semester. In order to receive an incomplete on a graduate course, the student and instructor must agree to a contract which stipulates the work that is required and the time frame in which it must be completed for the student to receive a grade in the class.

A grade of IP (*In Progress*) is used for B593 thesis credits and B591 Project credits until all aspects of the thesis or project are complete. When the thesis or project is complete, or when the student ceases to work under the faculty member supervising the research, the IP grade is changed either to Pass (P) or Fail (F). Once a final grade for B591 or B593 has been submitted by the major advisor, the Registrar's Office will adjust all IP grades on the student's transcript to reflect the new final grade.

#### Independent Study (B596) and Directed Research (B696)

Subject to the credit restrictions of specific degrees, students may apply B596 Independent Study and B696 Directed Research to their elective credit requirements.

Independent Study (B596) involves the advanced study of a specialized topic. The student works with a high degree of independence to meet well-defined goals under the supervision of a member of the graduate faculty. Credit is variable (1-3) and dependent on the magnitude and scope of the study. Enrolling in B596 requires submission of a completed [Application for Graduate Independent Study](#) form prior to the deadline specified in the academic calendar. Approval from the department and Graduate College is required.

Directed Research (B696) involves research conducted by the student under the supervision of a member of the graduate faculty. The study requires a clear statement of the hypothesis or proposition, a review of relevant literature, analysis and synthesis of data, and the inference of conclusions. Credit is variable (1-3) and dependent on the magnitude and scope of the study. Students may not apply portions of their thesis research toward B696 credit, although projects related to the thesis topic are acceptable. Enrolling in B696 requires submission of a completed [Application for Directed Research](#) form prior to the deadline specified in the academic calendar. Approval from the department and Graduate College is required.

#### Length of Graduate Program

The minimum duration of study for the master's degree (M.A. and M.S.) is one academic year after admission to the program. All requirements for a master's degree, including courses completed at another college or university, must be started and completed within a single continuous interval of no more than seven years.

## **DEPARTMENT FACILITIES**

### Graduate Student Desk Space

Major professors may have desk space for their graduate students. Alternatively, limited desk space is available for graduate students in the Raptor Research Center as well as various locations within the biology department. Please contact Kathy Bledsoe (426-3329) for more information about desk availability in the Raptor Research Center, and your major professor regarding desk space on the second floor of the Science/Nursing Building.

### Computers and Printing

For students needing access to department computing facilities, a computer lab with access to printing is located in SN218. A username and password is required for printing – please see the admin assistant in the main office for details. Note that access to SN218 is limited to times when scheduled classes or events are not in session. SN248 also has a number of computers available for student use, but again, availability is limited to times when classes are not in session.

### Photocopies and FAXES

A photocopier is available for graduate student use in SN219. Photocopies should be limited to activities associated with thesis research, graduate course work, and teaching responsibilities. A PIN number is required for photocopy access – please see the admin assistant in the main office for details. Please do not share your personal PIN number.

A FAX machine is also available in SN219. FAXES should be limited to research-related activities. Personal FAXES are not permitted.

### Mail

Each graduate student has a mail box located in the main office. Students in the MS Raptor Biology program will also have a mailbox in the Raptor Research Center.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

### Assistantship Support

Teaching assistantships are available on a limited basis to M.S. students, and are generally offered at the time of admission to the graduate program. These assistantships include a stipend over the nine month academic year (currently \$12,396), a tuition and fee waiver covering the spring and fall semesters, and student health insurance. Continued assistantship support is contingent on satisfactory progress in teaching, course work, and thesis research, and will not

extend beyond the third year of a student's graduate program (i.e., six semesters counted consecutively from the time of admission). Teaching assistants are required to enroll in B504 "Teaching Assistant Skills and Issues" in their first fall semester in the graduate program. Note that these credits are Pass/Fail and therefore cannot be applied toward elective credit requirements in the program.

Students on teaching assistantships generally help in lower division undergraduate laboratories, and are expected to provide up to 20 h of service per week. Department policy prohibits students on teaching assistantships from accepting additional employment without written approval of the major professor and the department. The permission form can be obtained from the director of graduate studies.

Research assistantships funded by research grants may also be available to students. The terms of such assistantships will depend on the amount of funding available. Please consult your major professor for details about such funding opportunities.

### Financial Aid

Graduate students can apply for loans and work-study through the federal aid programs. Please consult the *Graduate Catalog* for details on application procedures, or visit the [Financial Aid](#) website for more information on these programs.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS, GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

### Biology Research Awards

Each year the biology department offers a limited number of research awards (up to \$500 each) to M.S. Biology students on a competitive basis. An announcement with details about the application process is sent to students each spring, several weeks before the application deadline.

### Raptor Research Awards

Each year the biology department offers a limited number of research awards (up to \$500 each) to M.S. Raptor Biology students on a competitive basis. An announcement with details about the application process is sent to students each spring, several weeks before the application deadline.

### Summer Research Fellowships in Raptor Biology

Each year the raptor biology program offers up to \$1,000 to individual raptor biology students pursuing thesis research during the summer months who otherwise are not receiving salary support through full-time employment, grant funds, fellowships, or other sources. Students can receive these fellowships during either or both of their first two summers in the program. An announcement with details about the application process is sent to students each spring, several weeks before the application deadline.

## Travel Grants

M.S. students in good standing may apply for travel funds to attend and present their thesis research at scientific meetings. To be eligible for travel funds the student must submit details of the conference to the Director of Graduate Studies, including the name, date, and location of the conference, a budget, proof that you are presenting research at the conference, and evidence that you have applied for travel assistance if such assistance is offered by the conference organizers. If everything is in order, the director will ask the department admin assistant to begin processing the travel request paperwork.

Each M.S. Biology student is eligible to apply for a total of up to \$500 for travel, whereas M.S. Raptor students may apply for a total of two travel grants valued at up to \$600 apiece. The awarding of travel grants is contingent on the availability of department funds.

All off campus travel outside of Boise requires permission in the form of an approved Travel Request. Please see the admin assistant in the main office for details on travel procedures.

## **HOUSING**

Many graduate students find off-campus accommodations in the vicinity of Boise State University. For those interested in on-campus accommodations, there are a number of options. For information on-campus housing and application procedures, please refer to the *Graduate Catalog* or visit the [Housing Office](#) website.

A limited number of on-campus accommodation is available through the Graduate Residential Scholars Program (GSRP). Participants in the GRSP receive free housing for one or two years in an on-campus residential community of graduate students representing diverse backgrounds and disciplinary interests. To be eligible for a GRSP position an individual must also secure a graduate assistantship (e.g., teaching assistantship, research assistantship) from his/her graduate program that includes a stipend (at least \$10,000 per academic year) and full waiver of tuition and fees. Stipends from non-departmental sources (e.g., government fellowships) also are suitable. Twenty GRSP positions are available, with approximately 10 new positions opening up each fall. Interested students should submit a completed GRSP Application Form available for download at the [Graduate College](#) website. Questions about the GSRP may be directed to Dr. Alfred Dufty, Associate Dean of the Graduate College, Boise State University, Boise, ID, 83725. Email: [aduffy@boisestate.edu](mailto:aduffy@boisestate.edu), telephone: 208-426-3647. Selection of GRSP award recipients begins on February 1 with notification in late February.

## PERSONAL MATTERS

- *Campus Safety* – [University Security](#), 1001 Lincoln Avenue, 426-1453
- *Complaints About the Behavior of Another Student* – Contact [Student Conduct Officer](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of Lincoln Parking Garage, 426-1527
- *Discrimination* - Contact [Affirmative Action Director](#), Administration Building, Room 215, 426-1979
- *Financial Concerns (explore aid options available or see if extenuating circumstances qualify as “special conditions” for adjusting existing aid)* – [Financial Aid Office](#), Administration Building, Room 113, 426-1664, email FAQuest@boisestate.edu
- *Health or Medical Problems* – Contact [Health & Wellness Center](#), 2103 University Drive, 426-1459
- *Personal, Relationship or Educational Concerns* – Contact [Health & Wellness Counseling Services](#), Taylor Hall, B103, 426-1601
- *Sexual Harassment* – Contact [Affirmative Action Director](#), Administration Building, Room 215, 426-1979 or [Student Conduct Officer](#), 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of Lincoln Parking Garage, 426-1527
- *Support for Women* – [Women’s Center](#), corner of University Drive and Lincoln Ave, 426-4259

## APPENDIX - Suggested Timeline for Graduate Students

*Note: this timeline applies primarily to MS students because of the additional requirements associated with thesis research, preparation, and defense. MA timelines may require modification to what is suggested below.*

### **First Semester:**

- Student develops thesis project in consultation with major advisor
- Form supervisory committee. Major professor completes and submits ***Appointment of Supervisory Committee Form*** to Director of Graduate Studies.
- Convene initial committee meeting. Student brings completed ***Program Development Form*** and an outline of proposed research topic for discussion with committee.

### **Second Semester:**

- Student finalizes written proposal and animal care protocols (if necessary);
- Student presents proposal seminar to department

### **Intervening Period:**

- Thesis research (MS) / Project completion (MA Project Option)
- Student analyzes data; continues research; writes about preliminary results; attends meetings etc.
- Student meets with and updates graduate committee regularly about research progress
- Thesis preparation (it's never too soon to start!)

### **Fifth Semester:**

- Thesis preparation / Project Completion
- Student applies for candidacy in the semester before expected completion (***Application for Admission to Candidacy Form***) – be aware of the deadline!
- Presentations at meeting(s)

### **Sixth Semester:**

- Student completes “Application for Graduate Degree” by going to Broncweb, clicking on the STUDENT heading, then the REGISTRAR heading, then the link to APPLY FOR GRADUATION. The system will check to confirm that the candidacy form has been approved by the Graduate College. If you have not submitted a candidacy form you will receive an error message and will not be able to apply for graduation. The deadline for the Application to Graduate comes early in the semester – check the graduate catalog for details.
- Student completes and defends thesis (be aware of the deadlines for defending and submitting completed thesis to graduate college, and department regulations for scheduling a defense!)
- Student submits required number of copies of thesis to Graduate College. Advisor completes ***Report of Culminating Activity Form*** and ***changes B593 or B591 grade.***