

Welcome to the [Graduate Program](#) in the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Arkansas! Please visit our [website](#), specifically [individual faculty](#) pages to explore their research interests before applying.

To be considered for admission into the program you must have a sponsoring professor in the department to serve initially as an advisor and mentor. Without a sponsoring major professor you will not be considered. Once you have identified a faculty mentor, please notify the Graduate Student Coordinator <jwillson@uark.edu> with your mentor information.

Degrees Conferred:

M.S., Ph.D.

Graduate Application:

To apply to our program you must apply via the GSIE application [portal](#). Required documents include transcripts, three letters of reference, a resume or CV, a statement of purpose, and any applicable standardized test. For admission in the biology graduate program, the minimum required GPA is 3.0. Please make sure you send the official transcripts and the test scores to the graduate school (NOT THE DEPARTMENT)..

Deadlines: The deadline for receiving all application materials for fall semester admission is January 15 and for spring semester admission is October 1.

Transcripts: You may upload unofficial transcripts initially, but official transcripts should be sent directly to the graduate school before you can be admitted.

Letters of Reference: You will be asked to provide the contacts of three people that will submit a reference letter directly into the application system. This information will not be requested until you submit your initial application via the portal.

Resume or CV: This document should detail your education and employment history in addition to providing any other evidence of your ability to excel in research such as contributed presentations or scientific publications. You should upload this in the Program Requirements section of your Application Portal.

Statement of Purpose/Writing Sample: This document should describe your personal relevant background and future goals and a possible research plan or interests at the UA. You should provide the name or names of people you are interested in working with. This should be no more than three, single-spaced pages. You should upload this in the Program

Requirements section of your Application Portal. The Graduate School now calls this a 'Writing Sample', but it should be your statement of purpose.

Standardized tests: The Biology program has waived the GRE requirement, but they are still required for doctoral applicants that want to be nominated for [fellowships](#); unofficial scores that have been sent to the student from the testing service can be uploaded initially but official scores should be sent directly to the graduate school. The graduate school requires evidence of [competency](#) in speaking and writing in English for [international students](#).

For specific questions about graduate application, please check the [GSIE FAQs](#).

Graduate Assistantships:

We have about 100 graduate students in the department that are funded through either Research Assistantships (RA) or Teaching Assistantships (TA).

For a graduate assistantship, international students must demonstrate proficiency in English. Please see [this link](#) and click on “**Tests and Minimum Scores for TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS**” for more information on English Proficiency Tests. Students on a teaching assistantship receive a stipend (\$20,000 per 9-month academic year), a tuition waiver, and 66.6% of student's [health insurance with UHC](#) through fringe benefits. Graduate students are responsible for paying 33.4% of their health insurance and graduate student fees (depends on the number of hours enrolled). There are limited teaching opportunities available in the summer through the department, but your major professor may choose to fund your summer work through research grants. I encourage you to talk to your potential major professor about the summer funding opportunities.

Doctoral applicants may qualify for a [Distinguished Doctoral Fellowship](#) (DDF: \$22,000 per year) or a Doctoral Academy Fellowship (DAF: \$12,000 per year) in addition to the stipend received from the department as a teaching assistant (\$20,000/9 month academic year). The DDFs and DAFs are offered on a competitive basis through the graduate school. Students qualifying for these fellowships will be nominated by the department.

Qualifications for DDF nomination: Students entering with an M.S. require a GPA of 3.8 or greater and a GRE writing score of 4.5 or higher. A GRE score in the 50th percentile or greater on the Verbal and Quantitative are preferred. In addition, strong letters of recommendation and any publication(s) derived from the thesis work are considered a strong positive addition.

Students entering with a B.S. require a GPA of 3.65 or greater and a GRE writing score of 4.5 or higher. A GRE score in the 50th percentile or greater on the Verbal and Quantitative are

preferred. In addition, strong letters of recommendation, research experience, and publication(s) derived from prior research are considered a strong positive addition.

Qualifications for the DAF nomination: Students entering with an M.S. require a GPA of 3.65 or greater and a GRE writing score of 4.0 or higher. A GRE score in the 50th percentile or greater on the Verbal and Quantitative are preferred. In addition, strong letters of recommendation and any publication(s) derived from the thesis work are considered a strong positive addition.

Students entering with a B.S. require a GPA of 3.5 or greater and a GRE writing score of 4.0 or higher. A GRE score in the 50th percentile or greater on the Verbal and Quantitative are preferred. In addition, strong letters of recommendation, research experience, and publication(s) derived from prior research are considered a strong positive addition.

NOTE: While all the attributes are not required to be awarded a DAF or DDF, the GPA and GRE requirements are absolute minimal requirements. **If your GRE score is more than five years old, you will be required to retake the GRE exam.** The department will nominate students qualified for these awards. There is no application process from the student, only the department can nominate.

Again, thank you for your inquiry about our graduate program and if I can address any specific questions, please feel free to email me at jwillson@uark.edu.