

DOCTORAL AND MASTER STUDIES AND ADMISSIONS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PLANT BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM

Updated 8/2009

Thank you for your interest in the Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program. The Program wants to provide prompt answers and replies to all inquiries. We have found that many applicants have the same questions, so we have listed below the answers to those most commonly asked. Of course we will respond to your query with an individual reply if your question is not answered below. We encourage you to visit our Web site at <http://www.cbs.umn.edu/plantbio/gradprog>

FALL ADMISSIONS

QUESTION: How and when do I apply to the program?

Deadline for applications is December 15th.

Two applications (one for the PBS program and one for the University of Minnesota Graduate School) must be completed. They must be submitted separately.

To prepare a competitive application please provide a clear picture of your past scholastic performance, and academic and research potential. The preferred performance level of GRE scores is above the 60th percentile. It is preferred that international applicants should score at least 79 plus 21 on Writing and 19 on Reading.

Plant Biological Sciences Application packet

Application materials required include a Plant Biological Sciences program application, three letters of recommendation, **copy** of GRE scores, a statement of purpose, and **copies** of transcripts from all colleges attended. Foreign students must also submit a **copy** of their TOEFL scores. You can submit this information via email to pbiogp@umn.edu or fax to 612-625-1738 or by US mail.

Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program
University of Minnesota
1445 Gortner Avenue, Room 256 Biological Sciences Center
St. Paul, MN 55108

The University of Minnesota's Graduate School application.

Any student with a U.S. bachelor's degree or a comparable foreign degree from a recognized college or university may apply to the Graduate School for admission.

The Graduate School prefers an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) for admission. Individual programs may prefer a higher GPA. Applicants should consult the program to which they are applying for more specific information about admissions.

The application for admission to the Graduate School must be submitted online and all required supporting materials should be sent to The Graduate School. The fee for U.S. citizens/permanent residents is \$75; and the fee for international applicants is \$95.

Please Note: The application fee cannot be waived or deferred, and is not refundable.

In order to ensure timely processing of your application for admission, we encourage you to send all of your transcripts/credentials in one envelope. You may mail photocopies or fax us a legible copy of your transcript/credentials. If you do fax or send a photocopy, do not send official transcripts/credentials at this time; if you are admitted, the Graduate School will request that official or certified transcripts/credentials be sent from your institution(s) when they send you the admission letter. Transcripts/credentials can be faxed to 612-625-6002 or mailed to:

Graduate School Office of Admissions
University of Minnesota
309 Johnston Hall
101 Pleasant St. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455-0421

For complete information on the Graduate School's application process, as well as other important information please visit <http://www.grad.umn.edu> For their on-line application go to http://www.grad.umn.edu/prospective_students/apply_online.html

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - Please visit the Graduate School web site at http://www.grad.umn.edu/frequently_asked_questions.html

QUESTION: What are the undergraduate requirements for admission?

Incoming graduate students must have a BS, BA, or equivalent undergraduate degree at an accredited institution of higher education. It is desired that applicants have a GPA of 3.0 or better on a 4-point grading scale (or equivalent). Admitted students are expected to have completed coursework in plant and animal biology (general biology), genetics, organic and inorganic chemistry (general chemistry), differential and integral calculus, and physics. For students with demonstrated academic abilities, coursework deficiencies can be filled during the first year of graduate study.

QUESTION: Is the GRE required?

Yes, we require the general GRE test. Complete information about the GRE is located at <http://www.gre.org>. It is best to take your GRE test by the end of October. This way the official scores reach our campus on time. **Have ETS send the official scores to the Graduate School Office of Admissions. Also, it is prudent to email, fax or send by US mail to the PBS program office a copy of the GRE scores that ETS sends to you, in case there is a delay in the official scores being received.** Our mailing address is: Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program, University of Minnesota, 1445 Gortner Avenue, Room 256 Bioscience Center, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108 USA; email pbiogp@umn.edu and fax 612-625-1738.

QUESTION: Where to send the TOEFL score?

Original TOEFL scores should be sent directly to the Graduate School (see address above). **A copy of your TOEFL scores should also be sent to the PBS program office.**

QUESTION: I have submitted application materials for fall semester. Can I find out my application status?

The Admissions Committee will begin reviewing application in the first week of January. The program coordinator will notify applicants with information about application status and what materials are missing from their file. The program holds an open house for domestic applicants in February (by invitation only). All admission decisions will be made by April 15th. For this reason, it is important that you inform us of any changes to your contact information.

QUESTION: I missed the December 15th deadline! Now what?

Generally most students start in the program in the fall. If funding is available students may start in spring semester. Contact the program office at pbiogp@umn.edu to find out if they are still accepting applications for a particular semester.

QUESTION: How are admissions decisions made?

We are looking for bright and motivated students and welcome all such applications. The program considers:

- * GRE scores (60th percentile preferred in all areas).
- * TOEFL score, for foreign students it is preferred that applicants should score at least 79 plus 21 on Writing and 19 on Reading. (test date within the past two years). For more information on the TOEFL go to <http://www.ets.org/toefl/>
- * Transcripts from all undergraduate schools attended (minimum average grade of B, which is a 3.0 on 4.0 grading scale is preferred).
- * Transcripts from all graduate schools attended.

- * Statement of purpose.
- * Three letters of recommendation.
- * Research experience or publications.

QUESTION: What financial support is provided?

The Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program guarantees students who are making adequate progress toward a Ph.D. degree five academic years of graduate assistantship support subject to the availability of funding. Students are paid a stipend plus full tuition and subsidized health insurance including subsidized dependent and dental care. The student is expected to pay a small percent of the insurance premium rate.

Students wishing to seek a Masters degree need to identify a faculty advisor in the graduate program before joining the program. A list of faculty and their research interests are located on our web site at

<http://www.cbs.umn.edu/plantbio/gradprog/faculty/>

Funding sources may come from research assistantships, teaching assistantships, scholarships, and fellowships. While your assistantship will cover your tuition and provide a waiver of the non-resident tuition, it will not cover student fees. You will be responsible to pay the student services fee (approximately \$400-500 per semester), and any course or laboratory fees as required by specific courses. Students are encouraged to apply for individual fellowships as well. These are important career honors to have listed on your resume! Please visit the PBS web site that lists several fellowship and scholarship opportunities.

<http://www.cbs.umn.edu/plantbio/gradprog/prospective/fellowships/>

GRADUATE PROGRAM INFORMATION

QUESTION: What research opportunities are available for doctoral/masters studies?

The Graduate Program in Plant Biological Sciences provides education in the basic plant sciences and opportunity for fundamental research in areas ranging from the molecular to the ecosystem level. This interdepartmental program has participants from the departments of Agronomy and Plant Genetics; Biochemistry; Biology-U of MN-Duluth; Ecology, Evolution and Behavior; Forest Resources; Genetics and Cell Biology; Horticultural Science; Plant Biology; Plant Pathology; Soil, Water and Climate; three colleges (College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Science; College of Biological Sciences; and Natural Resources) as well as the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Experiment Station, the USDA Forest Service/ North Central

Research Station, and the U of MN Lake Itasca Forestry and Biological Station. Visit the following web site for a list of faculty and their research interests.

<http://www.cbs.umn.edu/plantbio/gradprog/faculty/>

QUESTION: Tell me about the doctoral and masters program and the campus.

The Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program is an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental program offering Master of Science (M.S.) and Doctoral (Ph.D.) degrees in a broad range of plant biology research areas with primary emphasis on Ph.D training. The graduate program was established to provide students with:

- I. An excellent educational and research experience.
- II. The opportunity to work with faculty on a broad range of cutting-edge research topics in Plant Biology.
- III. Skills and opportunity to conduct independent research.
- IV. Exposure to the international plant science research community through seminars and colloquia.

Recently, we have grown substantially through recruiting new topnotch faculty, development of state of the art technical support facilities, and the completion of the Microbial and Plant Genomics Building. The PBS program is designed to provide our graduate students with cutting-edge research opportunities to allow them to achieve their career goals.

If you are going to be on campus, please let us know, and we will assist you with setting up an informative and enjoyable day.

The program will host a recruitment weekend generally in late February. You will be notified by email with an invitation. Due to visa issues and costs, only domestic students will be invited to attend the open house.

Contact Information: Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program
University of Minnesota
1445 Gortner Avenue, Room 256 Biosciences Center
St. Paul, MN 55108
Phone: 612-625-4222
Email: pbiogp@umn.edu
Web Site: <http://www.cbs.umn.edu/plantbio/gradprog>

WE HOPE YOU HAVE FOUND THIS INFORMATION HELPFUL. IF YOUR QUESTION WAS NOT ANSWERED ABOVE, PLEASE CONTACT US AND WE WILL SEND YOU AN INDIVIDUAL REPLY.