

These are the degree options available to Biology majors:

1. BS in Biology – the general major

The general major is designed for students who would like a broad-based biology curriculum. Within the upper-division electives, students must take 1 course in 3 of 4 Central Menu areas (Molecular, Cell/Developmental, Organismal and Ecology/Evolution).

To declare the general major:

- Fill out the Major Declaration form, have your new Biology faculty advisor sign page 2, and turn in the form to Student Services
- Declare Biology as your major on Axess

2. BSH in Biology - the general major with Honors

Students following the general major requirements have the option to add honors. In order to do honors, students must apply for and complete the requirements for the departmental honors program. For more information about the Honors Program, please see:

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/biology/biohonors/>

To declare the general major with honors:

- Fill out the Major Declaration form, have your new Biosci faculty advisor sign page 2, and turn in the form to Student Services
- Declare Biology as your major on Axess
- **Three** quarters prior to graduation, apply for the Honors Program
- Declare honors on Axess

3. BSH in Biology – a field of study (specialization track) with Honors

For students who wish to concentrate their upper-division electives in a specific area, six specialization tracks are available:

- Biochemistry/Biophysics
- Ecology and Evolution
- Marine Biology
- Microbes and Immunity
- Molecular and Cell Biology
- Neurobiology

In addition to a different set of course requirements, students following a field of study are also required to apply for and complete the departmental honors program. For more information about the Honors Program please see: <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/biology/biohonors/>

To declare a specialization track:

- Fill out the Major Declaration form, have your new Biology faculty advisor sign page 2, and turn in the form to Student Services
- Declare Biology as your major on Axess
- By the end of your **junior** year, fill out the checklist for the track you wish to follow, obtain your faculty advisor's signature, and turn in to Student Services
- Declare your field of study in Axess
- **Three** quarters prior to graduation, apply for the Honors Program
- Declare honors on Axess

Department of Biology – STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Getting the Most out of Interactions with Faculty

Many students are reluctant to talk with faculty because they aren't sure what to say. Here are some tips to help you benefit from meetings with faculty.

Talking With Your Faculty Advisor

Many students forget to introduce themselves when meeting with a faculty member! Remember that faculty may have many advisees, and cannot be expected to remember every one of them. Introduce yourself with your first and last names and your year at Stanford. When you arrange a meeting with your advisor, send her/him a short email describing what is on your mind which will also help to get the conversation flowing. Once you arrive at the office, introduce yourself (even if it's not the first time you are meeting them) and remind them of your email and concerns. They'll tell you when it's no longer necessary to introduce yourself which will happen if you meet with them regularly.

Talking With a Potential Research Advisor

If you are searching for a research position, you'll need to do more than email 15 faculty stating, "I want to join your lab. Do you have any openings?" A generic email is not compelling and you may not even receive a reply. Do your homework by reading what the faculty member's interests are and be ready to ask specific questions. Be prepared to discuss your potential research interests. Faculty have many requests about research projects, so you should demonstrate your genuine interest with thoughtful questions. Take the perspective of the faculty member who has limited time, many requests and specific interests. Remember, politeness and persistence are important.

Requesting a Letter of Recommendation

If you intend to apply for graduate school, medical school or other program/fellowship/job, you will need to ask faculty members for letters of recommendation.

- 1) If you have done research, ask your research advisor even if you have not taken a course with that individual. She or he will know the most about your independent lab work and will also be able to contribute personal comments.
- 2) Think about the courses you have taken, been engaged in and/or know the faculty member. Before approaching that individual for a letter, you should send an email reminding them of who you are (ie, "I was a student in your BIOSCI XXX course during Spring 2007"), and attach your resume/CV as well as a description of the program to which you are applying.
- 3) Be sure when you speak with the faculty member in person to have your materials (resume, transcript, statement etc.) well organized in folders with any required stamped/addressed envelopes, etc.
- 4) You can help faculty write an effective letter about you by asking them to focus on aspects of your academic performance they know well. For example, your research supervisor could focus on your project, a freshman advisor could focus on development of your interests, and a professor who taught you in one class could focus on that course content/your performance and how the skills required for that class/subject area match your future plans. If you were in a large class where your primary interaction was with a teaching assistant, you can request that individual to write a letter with information that could be included in a letter by the faculty member.

By tailoring your request for letters to match the context in which faculty know you best rather than asking that individual to "just write a letter" covering everything in your resume, you will help the faculty member focus on what they know best about you.

Practical Matters: You should have letters of recommendation placed on file with the Stanford Career Center which requires obtaining a form that both you and the faculty member must sign. A letter placed on file can be requested for each application without requiring it to be re-sent by the faculty member.

Department of Biology - STANFORD UNIVERSITY
Undergraduate Major Declaration Form

Name: _____ S.U. I.D#: _____
(Please print clearly)

E-mail Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Instructions for declaring a major in Biology

1. Fill out side 1 of this form
2. Select a department advisor. For assistance in selecting an advisor:
 - a. Consult with the department's BioBridge Undergraduate peer advisors in the Student Services Office
 - b. Read the Department's 'Faculty Research and Publications Guide' or the department's web site:
<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/biology/faculty.html>
 - c. Consider faculty from whom you've already taken courses
3. Make an appointment with your potential advisor
4. If the faculty member agrees to be your advisor, discuss your academic goals with him or her, fill out side 2 of this form & obtain the advisor's signature on side 2
5. Bring this form back to the Student Services Office in Gilbert 108
6. Declare Biology as your major through AXESS. The Student Services Office will approve your major on-line if you have already turned in the signed declaration form. **In the event that you've already declared your major through AXESS before turning in your declaration form, you will only have 30 days in which to turn in your declaration form to Gilbert 108.**

Please complete the following information:

Briefly describe at least two of your educational goals:

Which biology courses have you enjoyed in the past?

What areas of biology interest you? _____

Do you have any plans:

- to take courses at Hopkins Marine Station
- to attend courses through Overseas Studies to conduct research
- to participate in Intercollegiate Athletics (If yes, which sport?) _____

Major Declaration/Advising Meeting

Do you have any scheduling problems with Biology Core or Foundational Breadth courses (Chemistry, Physics, Math, Additional Foundational Breadth)? If so, name the course/s:

Proposed Electives:

Course	Quarter	Course	Quarter
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Other Comments: _____

Are you planning on double majoring? No Yes (If yes which other dept.? _____)

Are you planning on completing a minor? No Yes (If yes, which other dept.? _____)

Are you interested in pursuing Honors? No Yes

*please note: you do NOT need to declare a Field of Study in order to pursue honors.

Are you interested in pursuing a Field of Study (Specialization Track)? No Yes

*please note: you will be required to complete the Department Honors Program if you chose to pursue a Field of Study.

If yes, please indicate which area you are interested in:

Biochemistry and Biophysics

Microbes & Immunity

Ecology & Evolution

Molecular & Cell Biology

Marine Biology

Neurobiology

Advisor's Signature _____

Date _____

Print Advisor's Name _____