

Neurobiology and Behavior, Graduate Program

The Department of Neurobiology and Behavior offers the Ph.D. in Biological Sciences. Graduate students must complete a sequence of core courses (lectures and laboratories) during their first year, and maintain an overall GPA of 3.3 or better.

Ideally, applicants for this program should have taken undergraduate courses in biology (one introductory year plus some advanced work), and/or psychology (experimental, physiological), chemistry through biochemistry, introductory physics, calculus, and statistics. Because graduate training emphasizes research, preference is given to applicants having laboratory research experience. Applicants with substantial outside commitments that would curtail laboratory research or prolong the time to degree are not accepted. The deadline for application is December 2.

Graduate Program

The Department of Neurobiology and Behavior offers the Ph.D. in Biological Sciences. Graduate students must complete a sequence of core courses (lectures and laboratories) during their first year, and maintain an overall GPA of 3.3 or better.

Ideally, applicants for this program should have taken undergraduate courses in biology (one introductory year plus some advanced work), and/or psychology (experimental, physiological), chemistry through biochemistry, introductory physics, calculus, and statistics. They also must submit GRE Aptitude test scores. Because graduate training emphasizes research, preference is given to applicants having laboratory research experience. Applicants with substantial outside commitments that would curtail laboratory research or prolong the time to degree are not accepted. The deadline for application is December 2.

Course Work

Most students will spend their first year at UCI in the INP gateway program, and transfer to the Neurobiology and Behavior graduate program at the end of that year. Entry into the Neurobiology and Behavior program requires satisfactory completion of each part of the core curriculum, performing at a higher standard than satisfactory level in at least some courses.

Core Curriculum

A. Complete:

NEURBIO 206	Molecular Neuroscience
NEURBIO 207	Cellular Neuroscience
NEURBIO 207L	Cellular Neuroscience Laboratory
NEURBIO 208	Systems Neuroscience
NEURBIO 209	Behavioral Neuroscience

Students in the INP gateway program who envisage transferring to the Neurobiology and Behavior graduate program are thus strongly advised to take the above courses in fulfilling the Molecular, Cellular, and Systems requirements of the INP program. If NEURBIO 209 is not taken during the first year, it must be taken during the second year, after entering the program.

In their second year, students are required to take NEURBIO 257. For those students who already have a strong grounding in statistics this may be substituted by a more advanced class offered by another department with the approval of the graduate advisor.

Students who enter through other gateway programs are similarly required to satisfy all requirements of that program and will generally be required to take all of the core courses during their second year; although an exception may be granted by the graduate advisor to substitute one or more core courses taken in that program.

Students are encouraged to satisfactorily complete at least two advanced graduate courses, of which NEURBIO 257 (or a substituted class in statistics and experimental design) counts as one, before advancing to candidacy and are required to complete at least four before the dissertation defense. These courses must be taken for a letter grade, not on an S/U basis, to count toward the required minimum of four advanced classes. With the consent of the graduate advisor, graduate courses from other departments may satisfy part of this requirement if they are not primarily introductory or technically-oriented.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students will advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. at the end of their third year by means of a written critical review of the literature in the area in which they plan to do their dissertation, a research proposal, and an oral examination. Graduation depends on successful preparation and oral defense of a dissertation based on the student's research. The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. is five years, and the maximum time permitted is seven years.