Biological Sciences

369A Shelby Center
Telephone: 256.824.6260
Email: biology.admin@uah.edu

Chair: Dr. Paul Wolf, Professor (https://www.uah.edu/science/departments/biology/faculty-staff/paul-wolf/)

The Biological Sciences department offers the following undergraduate degrees:

- Biological Sciences, BS (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Biochemistry Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-biochemistry-concentration/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Pre-Professional Health Careers Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-preprofessional-health-careers-concentration/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Ecology and Evolution Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-ecology-evolution-concentration/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Microbiology Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-microbiology-concentration/)

Program Objectives

The UAH Department of Biological Sciences prepares students for jobs in an evolving marketplace. Our graduates comprise the next generation of highly skilled environmental, clinical, data scientists, and other fields related to biological sciences. Our comprehensive curricula include instruction through lecture, field, and laboratory experience for our undergraduates, and meet the highest national standards.

Learning Outcomes

The UAH Department of Biology program fosters an advanced understanding of biology through phenomenon-based learning and research. Throughout the biology program, students engage in the scientific process, allowing them to understand the applications of biology to real-life scenarios.

Majors in Biological Sciences

- Biological Sciences, BS (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Biochemistry Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-biochemistry-concentration/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Pre-Professional Health Careers Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-preprofessional-health-careers-concentration/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Ecology and Evolution Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-ecology-evolution-concentration/)
- Biological Sciences, BS - Microbiology Concentration (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/colleges-departments/science/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-bs-ba-microbiology-concentration/)

For more information about the department of biology, visit uah.edu/biology (http://www.uah.edu/science/departments/biology/).

Minor in Biological Sciences


UAH’s Joint Undergraduate Master’s Program (JUMP) allows undergraduate students to study at the graduate level. By completing graduate courses in your senior year you may reduce the time taken to earn a graduate (MS) degree. Please visit the JUMP (http://catalog.uah.edu/undergrad/academic-information/jump/) page for general information.

Requirements For Admissions

1. Cumulative Overall GPA of 3.3 +
2. Major GPA of 3.5 +
3. Student shall complete BYS 120, BYS 219, BYS 300, BYS 361 + BYS 362, CH 121 + CH 125, CH 123 + CH 126, CH 331 + CH 335, CH 332 + CH 336 by Junior year.

Additional Information

- Maximum of 12 credit hours count toward both degrees.

Designated Faculty Contact/Advisor

Dr. Matthew Niemiller
matthew.niemiller@uah.edu
256.824.3077

BYS 100 - INTRO HEALTH PROFESSIONS
Semester Hour: 1
Career options for undergraduate students interested in health professions. Basics of health-care delivery systems and terminology of health care. No BYS major or minor credit. Primarily for freshman and sophomores.

BYS 109 - FUNDAMENTALS OF BIOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4
This course emphasizes an understanding of the living world through discussion of biological concepts and how they relate to social sciences and humanities. Biological concepts covered include the nature of science, cellular biology, biochemistry, heredity, evolution, biological diversity, ecology, anatomy, and physiology. Not intended for biology majors. Co-requisite: BYS 109L.

BYS 109L - LABORATORY
Semester Hours: 0
Laboratory Online Students will experience laboratory activities via interactive online software. Topics include experimental design, biology of a cell, genetics, diversity, evolution, and ecology. Co-requisite: BYS 109.

BYS 119 - PRINCIPLES OF BIOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4
Lecture/Lab/Recitation. Introduction to biological principles of cell structure, function, metabolism and reproduction. One two hour lab and a one hour recitation per week.

BYS 119L - LABORATORY
Semester Hours: 0
Laboratory exercised to introduce students to accurate measurement techniques, observation, and the development of relevant hypotheses. Several formal lab reports are required as an introduction to scientific writing.

BYS 119R - RECITATION
Semester Hours: 0
Homework turned in and discussed; exams discussed and further assistance with course material available.

BYS 120 - ORGANISMAL BIOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4
Lecture/Lab/Recitation. Discussion of biological function with special emphasis on contrasting strategies employed by organisms in meeting similar biological needs. One two-hour lab and a one hour recitation per week.

BYS 120L - ORGANISMAL BIOLOGY LAB
Semester Hours: 0
Introduction to the basic concepts of natural selection, population biology, and the biodiversity of animals and plants. Several formal lab reports are required as a further introduction to scientific writing, along with a lab practical on the biodiversity of animals and plants.

BYS 120R - RECITATION
Semester Hours: 0
Homework turned in and discussed; exams discussed and further assistance with course material available.

BYS 200 - DINOSAUR BIOLOGY
Semester Hours: 2
Introduction to the major areas of scientific interest in dinosaur biology: origin of the dinosaurs, their size, thermal biology, behavior and functional anatomy, relationships, and extinction. Lecture, discussion, and laboratory. Field trips may be required.
BYS 202 - HUMAN ANAT & PHYS II/CALHOUN  
Semester Hours: 4

BYS 205 - CODING ALGORITHMS FOR BIOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 3
Prerequisites: BYS 119, BYS 120, MA 112.

BYS 214 - INFECTION & IMMUNITY  
Semester Hours: 4

Lecture/Lab. Two 2-hour labs a week. Principles of microbiology with emphasis on infectious disease of humans; epidemiological and immunological aspects. No credit for students who have credit for BYS 321 or advanced microbiology courses. Recommended for students in the College of Nursing. 
Prerequisites: BYS 119 and either CH 101 or CH 121 or CH 151.

BYS 214L - LABORATORY  
Semester Hours: 0

BYS 215 - HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY I  
Semester Hours: 4

BYS 215 (l) and laboratory (one 3-hour lab per week), is designed primarily for the Nursing and Kinesiology majors. Course and laboratory material focus on the use of anatomical terminology, major tissues of the body and in-depth study of skeletal, muscular and nervous system physiology. Basic pathology is also presented to prepare students for clinicals. Laboratory material reinforces the lecture content with detailed identification of bones, joints, surface markings and human musculature. Prerequisites: BYS 119, CH 101 and CH 105.

BYS 215L - HA&P I LABORATORY  
Semester Hours: 0

An introduction to anatomical terminology; basic histology of normal tissues versus common pathologies. Focus on the human skeletal and muscular systems. Students are engaged in recognition of individual bones, surface markings and major muscles through dissection and use of muscular models.

BYS 216 - HUMAN ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY II  
Semester Hours: 4

BYS 216 (II) and laboratory (one 3-hour lab per week) is designed as a continuum for the Nursing and Kinesiology majors. Course and laboratory material focus on the structures and organization of the central and peripheral nervous system, neurotransmitters, cardiovascular, renal, respiratory, digestive and detailed study of the endocrine systems. Basic pathology is also presented to prepare students for clinicals. Laboratory material reinforces the lecture content with dissections of key organs, study of blood flow, identification of major blood vessels and nerves and explanations of various diagnostic tests (EKG/ECG). Prerequisite: BYS 215.

BYS 216L - HA&P II LABORATORY  
Semester Hours: 0

Study of the anatomy of the nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, renal and digestive systems. Dissections of eye, brain, heart, lung and kidney. Basic EKG/ECG reading and a study of factors affecting blood pressure. Enzymatic action of the digestive system; basic urinalysis determinations.

BYS 219 - GENETICS AND EVOLUTION  
Semester Hours: 4

Lecture/Lab/Recitation. Two labs and one recitation per week. Hereditary basis of organisms; genes as the discrete units of inheritance and genes in organisms and populations. Mendelian principles and evolutionary processes. Replication, transcription and translation of DNA, RNA, and proteins. Prerequisites: BYS 120 and (CH 101 or CH 121) and (MA 107 or 112).

BYS 219L - LABORATORY  
Semester Hours: 0

Laboratory activities include experiments to further students understanding in Mendelian genetics, molecular biology and Human genetic diseases. Counted as part of the overall grade for BYS 219.

BYS 219R - RECITATION  
Semester Hours: 0

Homework turned in and discussed; exams discussed and further assistance with course material available.
BYS 292 - INTRO TO BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
Semester Hours: 3

Introduction to the principles and practices of biological research. Covers experimental design, statistical analysis, critical review of journal articles, responsible conduct of research, and writing for the biological sciences. Recommended for students planning to do undergraduate research. Prerequisites: BYS 119, MA 112, EH 101.

BYS 300 - CELL & DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4

Lecture/Lab. One lab per week. Introduces the student to topics in cell and developmental biology. Subjects include cell structure, organelles, cytoskeleton, secretory pathway, cell division, cell cycle, cell interaction and control of differentiation. Prerequisites: BYS 219 (C- or better) and either CH 123 or 201.

BYS 300L - CELL & DEVELOPMENT BIO LAB
Semester Hours: 0

BYS 301 - ELEMENTARY BIOCHEMISTRY
Semester Hours: 3

Biochemistry and energetics of living cells, metabolism, structure and function of carbohydrates, lipids, proteins and nucleic acid. Enzymes, coenzymes, vitamins, blood, endocrine glands, DNA synthesis and gene expression. Same as CH 301. Prerequisites: BYS 119, BYS 120 and (CH 201 or CH 331).

BYS 302 - PEOPLE, PLANTS & ENVIRONMENT
Semester Hours: 3

This course is designed to introduce students from multiple departments to the vital roles that plants have in our ecosystems through the study of basic plant and soil science. Special attention is placed on the impact that plants have on our technology-based society.

BYS 311 - INTRO MOLECULAR UNDST BIO SYST
Semester Hours: 3

Introduction to a molecular understanding of genes, gene expression and genetic engineering in selected procaryotic and eucaryotic systems. Includes examples of biotechnology applications. Prerequisite: CH 331.

BYS 312 - PRINCIPLES OF ECOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4

Lecture/Lab. One lab a week. Population structure and growth, competition, predation, symbiosis, biogeochemical cycling and energy flow, disturbance and community dynamics, biodiversity and conservation. Field trips required. Prerequisites: BYS 120, and BYS 219.

BYS 313 - ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY I
Semester Hours: 4

Lecture/Lab. One lab a week. Structure and function of the human body. Anatomy of the skeletal and muscular systems, physiology of membranes, cellular and epithelial transport and nervous system function. Appropriate preparation for professional schools/graduate study in biological sciences. Prerequisite: BYS 119. Prerequisites with concurrency: BYS 300, and either CH 201 or 331.

BYS 313L - LABORATORY
Semester Hours: 0

Laboratory activities on the basic concept of system physiology including a rat dissection. Focuses on membrane transport and histology, and include gross anatomy and a study of the muscles and bones of the human body. Capstone student research project on electromyography of muscles.

BYS 314 - ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY II
Semester Hours: 4

Lecture and one lab a week. Continuation of BYS 313 stressing structural and functional relationships of major organ systems, focusing on heart, brain, lungs, kidney and the gastrointestinal tract. Appropriate for students preparing for professional schools or graduate study in biological sciences. Prerequisite: BYS 313 (C- or better).

BYS 314L - ANATOMY/PHYSIOLOGY II LAB
Semester Hours: 0

Research-intensive system based laboratory course. Includes brain dissection and student EEG project and a heart dissection and a cardiovascular physiology project. This is followed by a pulmonary function lab and a renal function lab where students calculate their own glomerular filtration rate.
BYS 315 - ICHTHYLOGY  
Semester Hours: 4

Classification, anatomy, physiology, and ecology of freshwater and marine fishes. Emphasis fishes of north Alabama. Laboratory and field trips required. Prerequisites: BYS 120 and BYS 219. Prerequisite with concurrency: BYS 300.

BYS 317 - VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 5

Lecture/Lab. Two three-hour labs a week. Morphology of vertebrate animals. Relationship of organs and systems and their phylogenetic significance. Prerequisites: BYS 120 and BYS 219. Prerequisite with concurrency: BYS 300.

BYS 318 - VERTEBRATE REPRODUCTION  
Semester Hours: 3

General treatment of the major concepts and controversial areas of comparative vertebrate reproduction: ecological and evolutionary aspects, development of reproductive functions and sexual behavior, seasonal breeding and other topics of current interest. Prerequisites: BYS 120 and BYS 219. Prerequisite with concurrency: BYS 300.

BYS 320 - MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 3

The meaning, spelling, etymology and pronunciation of major medical terms related to anatomy, pathology, medical professions, procedures and pharmaceuticals; body systems, their associated diseases and disorders. Correct usage of terms and interpretation of documents containing these terms. Hybrid course with online and in-class portions. Prerequisites: BYS 300 or BYS 215 and BYS 216.

BYS 321 - GENERAL MICROBIOLOGY I  
Semester Hours: 4

Structure, biochemistry, and genetics of microorganisms, control of microbial growth, and microorganisms as pathogens. Lab covers basic and diagnostic methods in microbiology, environmental factors controlling microbial growth and survival, and characteristics of medically important microorganisms. Prerequisites: BYS 120, BYS 219. Prerequisite with concurrency: BYS 300.

BYS 321L - LABORATORY  
Semester Hours: 0

BYS 322 - GENERAL MICROBIOLOGY II  
Semester Hours: 4

Emphasizes diversity of microorganisms with respect to ecology, physiology, and phylogeny. Prerequisite: BYS 321.

BYS 322L - GENERAL MICROBIOLOGY II LAB  
Semester Hours: 0

BYS 347 - BIOPHYSICAL CHEMISTRY I  
Semester Hours: 3


BYS 348 - BIOPHYSICAL CHEMISTRY II  
Semester Hours: 3


BYS 361 - GENERAL BIOCHEMISTRY  
Semester Hours: 3

Biochemical structure and function of amino acids, proteins, carbohydrates, lipids, and nucleic acids; Enzyme catalysis and kinetics; major catabolic pathways, their integration and control mechanisms: Glycolysis, Citric Acid Cycle, Fatty Acid Oxidation and Oxidative Phosphorylation. Same as CH 361 Prerequisites: (BYS 119, BYS 120, CH 332 and CH 335) or (BYS 311, CH 332 and CH 335).

BYS 362 - GENERAL BIOCHEMISTRY LAB  
Semester Hour: 1

One 3-hour lab a week. Practical experience in isolation, qualitative identification, and quantitative estimation of biomolecules. Same as CH 362. Prerequisites: CH 335 and CH 336. Prerequisite with concurrency: CH 361.
BYS 363 - GEN BIOCHEMISTRY II  
Semester Hours: 3  
A continuation of BYS 361 to include amino acid oxidation, biosynthesis of biomolecules, integration of metabolism, DNA and RNA metabolism, protein biosynthesis, and gene structure. Same as CH 363. Prerequisites: BYS 361 (C- or better).

BYS 364 - BIOGEOGRAPHY  
Semester Hours: 3  

BYS 365 - GEN BIOCHEMISTRY LAB II  
Semester Hour: 1  
Experimental course illustrating the topics in BYS 363. Prerequisites: BYS 361 and BYS 362. Prerequisite with concurrency: BYS 363.

BYS 403 - ADV EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 4  
Lecture/Lab. One lab per week. Human physiology, addressing the effects of environmental variables such as altitude, thermal stress and terrain on the major physiological systems of the body; in-depth analysis of resistance training, aerobic and anaerobic training; integration of multiple systems. Prerequisites: BYS 401, and (BYS 301 or CH 301) or (BYS 361 or CH 361).

BYS 405 - PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 3  
Introduction to drug classification and action with emphasis on physiological and psychological interactions.

BYS 417 - PRINCIPLES OF PLANT PHYSIOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 4  
The objectives in the development of this course is to provide students with an opportunity to: (1) study the principles of plant physiology (2) to gain an understanding of the complexity of plant genetics and stress response pathways (hormones) as well as (3) to appreciate how dependent we are on plants from those in our forests and environment to those in agricultural production and beyond. Laboratory experiments will provide an additional opportunity for students to take the lecture material and gain actual experience in the growth, nutritional requirements and maintenance of a wide variety of plants through the semester via work on campus as well as in the UAH Greenhouse. Prerequisites: BYS 120 and BYS 219.

BYS 419 - MICROBIAL GENETICS  
Semester Hours: 3  
Transmission, expression, and evolution of genes in microorganisms. Studies of chromosomes, plasmids, transposons, bacteriophages, and other genetic elements. Prerequisites: BYS 219, BYS 300 and BYS 321.

BYS 430 - IMMUNOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 4  
Lecture/Lab. One 3-hour lab per week. Innate, humoral and cell-mediated immunity. Immune deficiencies and hypersensitivities. Autoimmunity, transplantation, and tumor immunology. Prerequisites: BYS 219, BYS 300 and BYS 321. Prerequisite with concurrency: CH 361.

BYS 431 - BIOLOGICAL DATA SKILLS  
Semester Hours: 3  
This course covers a range of computational skills needed specifically for biologists who do not have any training in computer science. The course focuses on command line tools, basic programming in Python, and various aspects of data handling including, data curation, organization, storage, querying, and archiving. The course will include a project that ties together skills that are useful for individual students.

BYS 433 - RESEARCH SEMINAR ATTENDANCE  
Semester Hour: 1  
This course gives upper level biology majors a chance to gain exposure to research in biology. Students will attend seminars and learn about how research projects are planned, and interpreted. Additionally they will learn how scientists present their research. Prerequisite: BYS 300.

BYS 436 - BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 3  
Functional analysis of neural and endocrine systems underlying behavior. Same as PY 436. Prerequisites: (either a or b): (a) 15 hours of PY or approval of instructor; (b) BYS 120 or BYS 313, and 6 hours of PY.
BYS 437 - PSYCHOBIOLOGY STRESS & ILLNESS
Semester Hours: 3
Overview of psychological stress responses and their influence on health, behavior and illness. Same as PY 437. Prerequisites: approval of instructor.

BYS 461 - HERPETOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4
Classification, diversity, anatomy function, ecology, behavior, and evolution of amphibians and reptiles. Laboratory and field trips devoted to anatomy and identification, with an emphasis on Alabama and southeastern U.S. species. Prerequisites: BYS 120 and BYS 219.

BYS 464 - EVOLUTION
Semester Hours: 3

BYS 465 - MOLECULAR MTHDS ECLGY & EVOLU
Semester Hours: 4
This lecture and laboratory course is intended as an intense introduction to modern molecular methods in biological research. Topics include: genetic variation, evolutionary genetics, ecological genetics, genomics, gene expression, phylogenetics, and bioinformatics. Prerequisites: BYS 464.

BYS 490 - SENIOR CAPSTONE
Semester Hours: 2
Discussions, readings, and presentations of topical biological subjects using scientific literature. Capstone course emphasizing refinement of oral and written communication skills and critical thinking. All students will take ETS Major Field Test in Biology as part of the course grade. Prerequisites: BYS 119, 120, 219, and 300. Senior standing.

BYS 491 - SP TOPICS BIOLOGICAL SCI
Semester Hours: 1-4
Directed readings and/or written reports on topics of interest to individual students carried out under supervision of an instructor. Prerequisites: Permission of instructor required before registration.

BYS 492 - UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
Semester Hours: 2-4
For advanced-level biological sciences students with biological sciences GPA of 3.5 or above. Individual investigations into biological problems under direct supervision of instructor. May also be taken at the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium, Dauphin Island, Alabama. Prerequisites: Permission of instructor required before registration.

BYS 499 - UNGRAD HONORS RES & THESIS
Semester Hours: 2-4
Individual investigations into biological problems under direct supervision of instructor. For honors students majoring in the biological sciences. Prerequisites: Approval of instructor, chair, and director of honors program; Senior Standing.

Marine Sciences
Select courses in marine sciences, available through the Marine Sciences Consortium at The Dauphin Island Sea Lab (http://www.disl.org/), may be taken for credit at UAH toward a biological sciences major or minor, a minor in marine sciences, or a Master of Science degree in biological sciences. Marine sciences coursework must be approved by the Marine Sciences Consortium UAH liaison officer in the Biological Sciences Department prior to enrollment in the courses.

MS 202 - MARINE BIOLOGY
Semester Hours: 4
Survey of invertebrates, vertebrates, and marine plants as communities with local examples. Examination of marshland, estuarine, beach, dune, inlet and neritic habitats, and niches. Lecture/Lab/field work. Offered only at the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium Sea Lab at Dauphin Island, AL. Prerequisites: BYS 119 and BYS 120.

MS 204 - COM MARINE FISHERIES/ALA
Semester Hours: 2
Biology, harvesting technology, and processing of commercially valuable fish and shellfish species of Alabama. Offered only at the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium Sea Lab at Dauphin Island, Alabama. No credit for biological sciences major or minor; can be used for marine science minor.
MS 301 - MARINE TECH METHODS I  
Semester Hours: 2  
Marine science research equipment, methods, and techniques. Operation and field maintenance of major sampling gear. Only at the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium Sea Lab at Dauphin Island, Alabama. No credit for biological sciences major or minor; can be used for a marine science minor. Prerequisites: BYS 119 and BYS 120.

MS 303 - COASTAL CLIMATOLOGY  
Semester Hours: 2  
Physical factors resulting in climatic conditions in and near coastal region. Emphasis on northern Gulf of Mexico. Only at the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium Sea Lab Dauphin Island, Alabama. No credit toward a biological sciences major or minor; can be used for a marine science minor.

MS 304 - COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT  
Semester Hours: 2  
Examination of ecological features and physical management policies design for coastal communities and a review of the federal and state programs that impinge upon coastal ecological communities. Only at the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium Sea Lab at Dauphin Island, Alabama.

MS 491 - SPECIAL TOPICS IN MARINE SCIEN  
Semester Hours: 1-4