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Biology

What does a biology major study?

Biology is the study of life in all its diverse forms: bacteria, fungi, algae, protozoa, plants and animals. The Department of Biology at Coastal Carolina University gives students opportunities to explore these various life forms at molecular, cellular, organismic and ecological levels. In addition to core curriculum requirements, a biology major includes 38-40 credits in upper division biology courses as well as related courses in chemistry and physics.

Why study biology at Coastal Carolina University?

- Students have access to professors with a broad range of expertise, from the molecular scale to the ecosystem. Faculty have varied research interests that include infectious diseases, circadian rhythms, cellular biology, plant population genetics, ichthyology (the study of fish), herpetology (the study of reptiles and amphibians), sea bird conservation, and stream and wetland ecology.
- Classes take students into both the laboratory and the field. Many laboratories involve outdoor activities and field trips to sites such as Waties Island, wetlands, forests, swamps and Carolina Bays.
- Students have the opportunity to work with faculty on independent research projects. Recent topics have included the landscape ecology of golf courses, ecology of the Carolina bays, freshwater ecology, using DNA to determine bird parentage, fungus on beaches, and investigating prions.
- Internships, employment and/or volunteer opportunities are available at locations such as Myrtle Beach State Park, Huntington Beach State Park, pharmacies, veterinary and medical practices, and Ripley's Aquarium.
- The Pre-Medical Advisory Committee assists students with career goals in the health professions.

What are some career options for biology majors?

- Environmental
- Zoologist
- Pharmacologist
- Biostatistician
- Medical professional
- Biomedical engineer
- Clinical researcher
- Botanist/Plant scientist
- Industrial biologist
- Teacher
- Toxicology researcher
- Food and nutrition

What kind of courses do biology majors take?

The Department of Biology offers three areas of specialization from which majors can choose. Students take two courses targeted toward these areas and then select from an additional 18-20 credits of upper-level biology courses.

- Cellular-molecular biology and genetics
 - Microbiology (BIOL 330)
 - Molecular and Evolutionary Biology (BIOL 450)
- Integrative biology
 - Plant course
 - Animal course
- Ecology, Evolution and Conservation
 - Evolution (BIOL 365)
 - Conservation Ecology (BIOL 484)

Whom can I contact for more information?

- Karen Aguirre, Ph.D., chair of the department, 843-349-4159 or kmaguirr@coastal.edu
- Molly French, administrative assistant, 843-349-2238 or mfrench@coastal.edu
- You can also find more information at www.coastal.edu/biology.