

Biology (Biology and Society), PhD

LABIOSPHD

Be at the intersection of biology and society, where biosciences shape and are shaped by societal values and traditions. Because this program draws from many areas, you develop the skills of a critical, independent, interdisciplinary thinker.

Program description

Degree awarded: PHD Biology (Biology and Society)

In the biology and society concentration of the PhD program in biology, students examine topics with biological and social dimensions that are best understood together rather than in isolation. The concentration provides plans of study tailored to individual needs and interests. It encompasses a solid foundation in life sciences and related sciences and provides a rigorous analytical and interdisciplinary education. Students may further specialize in one of four tracks:

Bioethics, policy and law --- This track focuses on pressing moral, policy and legal issues raised by biosciences and biomedicine, as well as methods to address them.

History and philosophy of science --- This track focuses on the conceptual foundations of science, especially the epistemological and methodological assumptions that shape science and its progress.

Ecology, economics and ethics of the environment --- This track focuses on the theory and empirical methods for understanding, analyzing and shaping policy that steer society toward a more productive, equitable and sustainable ecological future.

Biology education research --- This track focuses on using education research to identify ways to broadly improve undergraduate biology education.

At a glance

- **College/School:** [The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences](#)
- **Location:** [Tempe](#)

Degree requirements

84 credit hours, a written comprehensive exam, an oral comprehensive exam, a prospectus and a dissertation

Required Core (3 or 4 credit hours)

BIO 514 Statistical Models for Biology (4) or

BIO 620 Research Prospectus Writing (3)

Electives (68 or 69 credit hours)

Culminating Experience (12 credit hours)

BIO 799 Dissertation (12)

Additional Curriculum Information

An individual student program is developed in consultation with the student's advisor and committee.

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited institution. Students are expected to have completed the equivalent of core requirements for an undergraduate major in biology or a related discipline, typically evolution, genetics and other courses appropriate to the student's particular interests. Students without an undergraduate-level competency in the sciences may be considered for conditional admission to the biology and society concentration.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. academic record form
4. personal statement
5. curriculum vitae or resume
6. writing sample
7. three letters of recommendation
8. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of [English proficiency](#) regardless of their current residency.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Program learning outcomes

Program learning outcomes identify what a student will learn or be able to do upon completion of their program. This program has the following program outcomes:

- Able to articulate an understanding of current literature on scientific developments and their relevance to society in scholarly writing.
- Able to contribute to original biology and society research in scholarly writing.
- Able to communicate biology and society research results in presentations.

Career opportunities

Those who have earned a doctorate in biology and society are prepared for academic careers at every level, from community colleges to research universities. Their skills and knowledge are also valuable for government careers in federal and state agencies responsible for management and conservation, and for careers in industry and nongovernmental organizations. Graduates often choose careers in higher education, research, administration, policy and science communication.

Career examples include:

- food, agriculture and health care scientists in academic, private and industrial labs
- principal investigators and policymakers in government labs and nonprofit organizations
- professors or instructors in universities and colleges
- science teachers in elementary and high schools
- wildlife, animal and conservation scientists

Contact information

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