

Ohio University

**Department of
Environmental and
Plant Biology**

Graduate Student Handbook

2019-20

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Getting Started

Checking in for international students. If you are an international student, register at the Office of International Student and Faculty Services (ISFS) in Walter International Education Center at 15 Park Place as soon as you arrive on campus. Graduate international students should be in Athens no later than August 14, 2019, for the 2019-2020 school year. ISFS orientation for international students begins August 15. See the ISFS Web site for more details (www.ohiou.edu/isfs/).

Activating your e-mail account. To activate your University e-mail account, go to <http://www.ohio.edu/oit/services/myaccount.cfm> and follow the instructions. Activating your University e-mail account is critical because the University sends class schedules and grade reports to you via e-mail. Also, the Department requires you to activate and use your University e-mail account. All Department e-mail communications to you will be sent to your University e-mail address.

Obtaining your ID card. University ID cards are available at the Bobcat Depot in Baker Center 112 from Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.; Friday 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday noon-6:00 pm. Hours are different before Fall semester begins; go to <https://www.ohio.edu/oit/id-cards/index.cfm> for more information.

Visiting Parking Services. If you have a car and plan to park on campus, go to Parking Services to purchase a permit (\$135 for the academic year). Before you go, see <https://www.ohio.edu/parking/students/fallspring/commuter.cfm>. This site contains information about documentation you need to take with you in order to request a parking permit. However, if your residence falls within a certain mileage parameter from campus, you will not be issued a permit.

Registering for Classes. Online registration is available at <http://www.ohio.edu/students/> under My OHIO Portal. The University tracks your program progress through the Degree Audit Reporting System, or DARS. You may access your DARS online at the Web page above.

Before registering for the first time, contact your advisor to plan your program of study. In the MS Program, you are required to submit a signed, completed Course Approval Form to the Graduate Chair by the end of your first semester. In the PhD Program, the form is required by the end of the second semester. The form is available on the Department Web site under the "Other" heading here: <https://www.ohio.edu/cas/plantbio/about/forms-policies.cfm>.

To see the most current listing of all courses offered for any given term, go to <https://www.ohio.edu/registrar/>.

Assistantships, Tuition Scholarships, and Fees

If you have been awarded an assistantship, you also qualify for a tuition scholarship. However, each semester you are required to pay the University's General Fee, the College of Arts and Sciences Technology Fee, the Student Information System and Network Fee, and health insurance if you are not covered by another policy. For payment plan information, see the Bursar's Web page at <http://www.ohio.edu/finance/bursar/mpp.cfm>. For academic year 2019-2020 and Summer 2020, the following rates and fees are in effect:

Department Assistantship Rates

	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Summer 2020
PhD	\$8,484	\$8,484	\$6,363
MS	\$6,965	\$6,965	\$5,276

General Fee per semester: \$628*

College of Arts and Sciences Technology Fee per semester: \$97

Student Information System and Network Fee per semester: \$33

Health Insurance per semester: \$1,410 (coverage runs August 16, 2019 to August 15, 2020 but is paid only in fall and spring semesters). Premium amounts are applied to your University account.**

Each semester, if you are receiving an assistantship/tuition scholarship, the Department requires you to register for a minimum of 15 hours of graduate credit.***

If your GPA falls below 3.0, you will be placed on probation and your funding will be reviewed. Please note that a 3.0 is a "B", not a "B-"; i.e., a B- is less than a 3.0 (2.67). Refer to the *Graduate Guidelines* for details. See page 9 in this *Handbook* for a list of points assigned to letter grades.

*For students with assistantships, the department pays \$174 of the semester General Fee. Therefore, the actual cost to you is \$454 per semester.

**See *Resources* in the Appendices of this handbook for information on accessing plan details.

***If you have a fellowship (e.g., NSF, named University, etc.), you must register for 15 hours.

Department Office, Services, and Facilities

The Department Office, located in Porter Hall 315, is open weekdays 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

See the Academic Calendar [at http://www.ohio.edu/registrar/calendar.cfm](http://www.ohio.edu/registrar/calendar.cfm) for holidays observed. The University is closed continuously from December 25, 2019 through January 1, 2020.

Graduate students are expected to meet research/field work obligations and fulfill TA/GA/RA assignments even though the University may be closed. Discuss your responsibilities with your faculty advisor and your TA supervisor.

Facilities

The Department maintains several research and teaching facilities, including a greenhouse (located behind Scott Quad); a land lab at The Ridges; a garden on West State Street; a herbarium (located in Porter Hall 432); the Genomics Facility (located in Porter 510); and the Dysart Woods Laboratory (an old-growth oak forest in Belmont County). Also available in Porter Hall are multiple growth chambers and two walk-in growth rooms. Check with your advisor on who to contact to request space.

Keys

Check with the Department Office for a key that allows access to your advisor's lab, the Department Office mail/copy room, laboratory classrooms, shared research spaces, and exterior doors of Porter Hall. It is imperative to safeguard the Department's resources after normal business hours. You should keep your lab, as well as all common rooms, locked when you are in the Department evenings and weekends.

Mail and Postage

Mail is picked up from and delivered to the Department Office once daily at about 11:00 am. Office staff will distribute mail to your assigned mailbox. DO NOT use your Department address for personal mail such as utility bills or bank statements.

Your mailing address format for receiving professional mail is:

Your name
Department of Environmental and Plant Biology
Ohio University
Porter Hall 315
Athens OH 45701-2979

There is a United States Post Office located on the fourth floor of Baker Center. For hours of operation, see <https://www.ohio.edu/eventservices/baker-center/visit/hours-maps.cfm>

Poster Printer

A large-format (poster) printer is located in Porter 410. Ask the Department Office about use of the printer. Your lab key will open the door to Porter 410.

Photocopying

You will be assigned a personal code that provides access to the copiers in the Department Office suite and on the 4th floor. Graduate students may print and/or copy a total of 800 copies free per calendar year for use associated with your degree program. This allotment is pro-rated if you will not be in the Department for three semesters (e.g., if you graduate at the end of Fall semester, your allotment is 500 [200 Summer; 300 Fall]).

If you need to make copies for a class for which you are a TA, check with the Department Office for the copier code for that class.

Paychecks

Graduate students are paid twice monthly from September 15 to August 15—on the 15th and on the last day of the month. HOWEVER, there are two exceptions: paychecks are issued only on the 15th in August; and paychecks are issued only on the last day of the month in January.

Electronic paycheck receipts are available online at <http://www.ohio.edu/students/>. Under My OHIO, click “My Personal Information”. If you do not have Direct Deposit, your paycheck is mailed to your permanent address.

You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the University’s Direct Deposit program. You can complete a Direct Deposit Authorization Form during orientation, or check with the Department Office.

Department Responsibilities

Chemical Hygiene Training

All graduate students are required to complete a University training course in chemical safety and receive certification of successful completion at the beginning of their first semester. The Department Chemical Hygiene Officer will contact new graduate students about scheduling the training.

Colloquium

During the academic year, as part of its Colloquium Series, the Department hosts visiting scientists who give a research presentation and meet with students and faculty. Colloquium is an excellent opportunity to network and make professional connections. ***Registration for and attendance at colloquium (P BIO 6900) are required of all students.***

Equipment or Facilities Problems

Report equipment or facility problems ***immediately*** to the Department Office (e.g., autoclave door won't work; faucet dripping, ceiling leak, etc.). *If you observe an after-hours emergency (e.g., ceiling leaks), call Facilities Management at 593-2911.*

Teaching Assignments

Each semester, the Graduate Chair will make teaching and Department assignments based upon your schedule and availability. Once assignments are made, it is your responsibility to immediately contact the faculty or staff member you will be assisting. On average, a teaching assistantship requires 15 hours' work per week.

Some classes, but especially BIOL 1010, hold weekly pedagogy sessions that you are required to attend if you are a TA for those classes. Pedagogy sessions prepare you to oversee the lab activities for the coming week. If you are assigned to assist with BIOL 1010, P BIO 1140, or P BIO 1150, you must register for P BIO 6700 for one credit—this accounts for your time in pedagogy.

Where multiple TAs are assigned to a single lab session, often one TA is designated as a "lead" TA. The lead TA oversees the lab sessions, gives quizzes, and maintains grades. In large lecture classes, e.g., BIOL 1010 or P BIO 1030, TA duties may include proctoring and/or grading exams and quizzes.

If you are unable to meet your responsibilities as a teaching assistant for any reason (including illness, emergency, or family obligation), notify the faculty member you are assisting as soon as possible. *You also must arrange for another qualified graduate student in the Department to take your place.*

Check with the Department Office about reserving laptop computers, or vans for class labs and field trips, and for making copies for classes.

Van

The Department owns one 12-passenger van used for class field trips. See Department Office staff for van reservations and keys.

Should you have an accident while driving a Department or University vehicle, no matter how inconsequential the accident may seem, Department policy requires that you call the police and file an accident report.

Funding for Conferences

During each fiscal year (July 1-June 30), graduate students may request limited Department funding for conference expenses. See the table below for maximum amounts available per student. Amounts are reviewed each year.

Degree Program	Amount
PBIO MS & PhD	\$550
MCB MS & PhD	\$150*

*MCB MS and PhD students receive less than PBIO MS and PhD students because they also are eligible for conference assistance from MCB.

The following requirements must be met in order to receive Department funding:

1. You are a first author on a paper or poster.
2. You complete a Travel Authorization Request form (<https://www.ohio.edu/cas/plantbio/about/forms-policies.cfm>). The form asks for travel and conference costs and other funding sources. In addition, graduate students are expected to apply for University and external funding for conference activity.
3. You submit a copy of your abstract, along with a hard copy of the completed Travel Authorization Request form, to the Graduate Chair for approval.

The University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and Graduate Student Senate also provide funding competitively for research and conference attendance. Professional organizations are another resource for financial support. Your advisor may have limited funds to assist with conference attendance and research costs, as well.

To minimize out-of-pocket costs, contact the Department Office about charging abstract submission fees, conference registration, and air fare against your Department funding. The Department Office also can provide guidance on documenting expenses while at a conference and requesting reimbursement upon your return. *Conference expenses are charged against your Department allotment for the fiscal year in which the conference occurs.*

If you receive Department monies to travel and present research at a conference, you are required to acknowledge the "Hiram Roy Wilson Fund in Environmental and Plant Biology" for financial support.

Miscellaneous

Electronic Submission of Theses and Dissertations

The College of Arts and Sciences requires that theses and dissertations be submitted electronically to the Graduate College. The Thesis and Dissertation (TAD) website lists deadlines and contains document templates along with tutorials <https://www.ohio.edu/graduate/etd>.

Evaluations

As a teaching assistant, you will be evaluated each semester by the students whose lab sections you oversee. Once your evaluations are processed, you will receive a quantitative assessment of your teaching performance, as well as written comments by students.

Genomics Facility

The Genomics Facility (<http://www.dna.ohiou.edu/>), located in Porter Hall 510, is a core facility serving both University and external researchers. It provides next generation and Sanger DNA sequencing, metagenomic, microarray, bioanalysis, genetic analysis, quantitative PCR, laser microdissection, and data analysis and training services.

Grades

The grading system at Ohio University is based on the point scale below.

Grade	Points	Grade	Points
A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.67	C-	1.67
B+	3.33	D+	1.33
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.67	D-	0.67
C+	2.33	F	0.00

In addition to letter grades such as those above, you also may see the following on your grade report.

CR = Credit. Given for MS research hours (PBIO 6940).

PR = Progress. Given in courses for which work is not yet complete or that extend over more than one semester. This is the standard grade, until graduation, for PBIO 6950 (thesis) and PBIO 8950 (dissertation).

I = Incomplete. Given when progress has been made but required work has not been completed. An "I" automatically becomes an "F" two weeks into the next semester the student enrolls or two years after the end of the semester in which the I was given, unless the instructor changes the grade before the deadline.

Graduate Student Guidelines

The Department's *Graduate Student Guidelines* outlines program requirements that you need to know as you meet with your advisor and schedule classes. It is important that you carefully review and become familiar with those sections of the *Guidelines* that apply to you. If you have questions, ask your advisor or the Graduate Chair.

In addition, MCB students should be familiar with the *MCB Memorandum of Agreement*.

Greenhouse

The Department maintains a greenhouse and botanical garden, located behind Scott Quad. Space is available in the greenhouse for research projects; to request research space contact the Greenhouse Manager for a Greenhouse Space Request Form. Space is limited and available on a first come, first served basis.

As a TA, you may need to request plant material for class. Consult the greenhouse policies (available from the Greenhouse Manager) for procedures for requesting class materials or class tours of the facility.

A Final Word

As a new graduate student at Ohio University, you are entering a different world than that of an undergraduate. In particular, you most likely will be teaching, taking courses, and conducting research—striking a balance between these demands can be quite challenging. And finding time for your thesis/dissertation research is a must.

It is extremely important that students and advisors work cooperatively to make the graduate experience a positive one. Be proactive about your graduate career. As soon as possible, meet with your advisor to discuss expectations for research, lab duties, working hours, vacations, etc. Communication should always be open. Don't wait to address problems with coursework, research, or other aspects of your academic career.

Although some graduate students in Environmental and Plant Biology are part of interdisciplinary programs, the PBIO Graduate Chair is available for consultation to all students in the department. You may contact the Graduate Chair via e-mail or schedule an appointment.

Appendices

Department Administration and Staff

Department Faculty

Graduate Students

Resources

Department Administration and Staff

Name	Title	E-Mail*	Office	Phone**
Showalter, Allan	Chair	showalte	Porter 504	3 1135
Faik, Ahmed	Graduate Chair	faik	Porter 512	3 1121
Bishop, Martha	Lab Coordinator	bishopm	Porter 302/303	3 4552
Blazier, Harold	Greenhouse Mngr	blazier	BRF 204	3 4547
Broach, William	Director, Gen Fac	broach	Porter 510A	3 1122
Ridenour, Jenny	Admin Sup Spec	ridenour	Porter 317A	3 4170
Vandeman, Mary	Admin Specialist	vandeman	Porter 315A	3 1126
Vargo, Connie	Dept Administrator	vargoc	Porter 315B	3 1125
Yoho, Rachel	Tech Gen Facility	yohor	Porter 510	3 1120

Department Faculty

Name	E-Mail	Office	Phone
Ballard, Harvey	ballardh	Porter 406	3 4659
DeForest, Jared	deforest	Porter 419A	3 0742
Faik, Ahmed	faik	Porter 512A	3 1121
Hua, Zhihua	hua	Porter 500A	3 1123
Matlack, Glenn	matlack	Porter 405A	3 1131
McCarthy, Brian	mccarthy	Porter 416B	3 1615
Rosenthal, David	rosentha	Porter 309A	3 0792
Schenk, John	schenk	Porter 401E	3 0716
Showalter, Allan	showalte	Porter 504B	3 1135
Snell, Rebecca	Snell	Porter 411A	7 1628
Thompson, Kim	thompsk3	Porter 414	3 1127
Trese, Arthur	trese	Porter 423	3 0260
Vis, Morgan	vis-chia	Porter 400A	3 1134
Wyatt, Sarah	wyatts	Porter 508A	3 1133

*Full e-mail syntax is name@ohio.edu.

**Area code for Athens is 740.

Graduate Students

Name	Advisor	Program	E-Mail*
Ajayi, Oyeyemi	Showalter	PhD MCB	oa715216
Bhattacharai, Matrika	Faik	PhD MCB	mb053616
Bryant, Kelsey	Rosenthal	PhD PBIO	kb578415
Burwell, Remington	Ballard	MS PBIO	rb438114
Crowell, Roseanna	Vis	MS PBIO	rc907218
Doroodian, Paymon	Hua	MS PBIO	pd214110
Eyitayo, Damilola	McCarthy	PhD PBIO	de241714
Estep, Emily	Trese	MS PBIO	ee204909
Fredericksen, Brett	Rosenthal	PhD PBIO	bf093616
Gibbs, Delaney	Matlack	MS PBIO	dg022518
Javaid, Tasleem	Faik	PhD PBIO	tj999716
Kaur, Dasmeet	Showalter	PhD MCB	dk782516
Kruse, Colin	Wyatt/Kopchick	PhD MCB	ck178807
Li, Yang	Hua	PhD PBIO	yl668319
Luu, Hoang	Snell	PhD PBIO	hl000018
Lockhart, Samuel	Ballard	PhD PBIO	sl443017
Meyers, Alex	Wyatt	PhD MCB	am920114
Otuya, Rael	DeForest	PhD PBIO	ro111918
Paolucci, Allison	Rosenthal	MS PBIO	ap044518
Rudolph, Aaron	McCarthy	PhD PBIO	ar126519
Sedaghat, Mojde	Faik	PhD PBIO	ms055218
Sparbanie, Taylor	Snell	MS PBIO	ts505819
Sternberger, Anne	Ballard/Wyatt	PhD PBIO	as701914
Tiwari, Sunil	Vis	MS PBIO	st303118
Venkatraghavan, Akshayaa	Faik	PhD PBIO	av420518
Yu, Peifeng	Hua	PhD MCB	py989117
Zhang, Yuan [Susan]	Showalter	PhD MCB	yz192814

*Full e-mail syntax is, e.g., aa123456@ohio.edu

Resources

www.ohio.edu/cas/plantbio/

The Department Web site.

www.ohio.edu/graduate/

The Graduate College Web site has information on electronic theses and dissertations.

www.ohio.edu/gss/

Graduate Student Senate is a good resource for travel and research funds. The GSS Web site also provides information on initiatives and developments of interest to graduate students.

<https://www.ohio.edu/research/orsp/>

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs site is valuable for information on university funding resources for research and travel.

www.ohio.edu

Front door to the University Web site. To find a person, click the magnifying glass at top right and select "People". Enter the name as "John Smith," not last name first (Smith, John). Also, easily access campus and parking maps by clicking "About OHIO".

www.ohio.edu/students/

Click on "My OHIO Portal" for bill-paying, registration, DARS, pay stub access, etc.

www.ohio.edu/isfs/

Excellent resource for international students, the Web site for International Student and Faculty Services includes information on orientation, living in the Athens community, and visas.

www.ohio.edu/hudson/

Resource for services provided by the University's health center.

<https://www.ohio.edu/student-insurance/>

Describes student health insurance coverage and cost

FAQ: <https://www.ohio.edu/student-insurance/faqs.cfm>

Graduate Catalog

Issued only in electronic form at <https://www.ohio.edu/gcatalog/> Updated every two years.

<http://www.dna.ohiou.edu/>

Web site for the University's core Genomics Facility, housed in Porter Hall 510.