

UC Davis
Population Biology Graduate Group

Admissions Frequently Asked Questions...

What is a graduate group?

At UC Davis, some graduate degrees are offered by interdepartmental "graduate groups," which unite faculty with common research interests from across the campus. The Population Biology Graduate Group was formed in 1992 by faculty committed to the study and teaching of population biology as a broad discipline that blends ecology, evolution, population genetics, and systematics into a unified field.

Can I apply to more than one graduate program at UC Davis?

Yes. The online admission application will allow you to identify the various programs you wish to apply to. Follow the instructions accordingly. Remember that you will be required to pay an application fee for each program selected. Example: if you are applying to our program and to the Plant Biology Graduate Group, you will be required to pay an application fee for each application.

What happens to my application after the deadline?

Complete applications only will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee and relevant faculty. All components of the application must be complete for consideration. From the applicant pool, a short-list will be created. In mid to late January, the students on the short-list will receive an invitation to visit UC Davis for a recruitment weekend with the program.

What if my GRE scores, transcripts, or letters of reference don't get to your office by the application deadline?

Applications will not be reviewed by the Admissions Committee until all required materials are received. The key is to plan early. Remember that you can use your online account to track the status of required materials. It is to your advantage to check frequently to insure compliance with our December deadline. The admission committee begins reviewing applications immediately following our deadline.

Learn how long it takes for your academic institutions to provide certified transcripts; don't wait until the last minute to order. Sadly, the program receives late transcripts long after the committee has made its decisions on interviews.

ETS has specific dates for the GRE exam. Be sure to take the exam as soon as possible to insure timely distribution of your scores to the graduate programs you are applying to. Have ETS submit your scores electronically for faster processing.

Provide early notice to your three referees that you will be asking for letters of recommendation. This way, each referee will know to look for the online notice in their e-mail. Inform them of when the letters are due and how each institution may require a different method of letter submittal. Fall can be a busy time for your referees and advance notice is always appreciated.

What are the minimum GPA and GRE requirements for entrance into Pop Bio?

The Office of Graduate Studies has set a [minimum requirement](#) of a B grade average (3.00) in prior coursework. The Population Biology Graduate Group has not set any additional minimum GPA or GRE entrance requirements.

What if I didn't take the GRE biology subject specific exam?

The subject test in biology is not required for Population Biology admissions application review.

What is the required preparatory coursework for admission?

The following courses are required* for admission:

- a one-year course in introductory biology for biology majors (e.g. BIS 1 or BIS 2 series or equivalent)
- a one-year course in calculus (e.g. MAT 17 series or equivalent)
- a course in statistics (e.g. STA 13 or STA 100 or equivalent)
- an upper-division course in general ecology or population biology (e.g. EVE 101 or equivalent)
- an upper-division course in genetics (e.g. EVE 102 or equivalent)
- an upper-division course in evolution (e.g. EVE 100 or equivalent)

***Must I complete all preparatory coursework prior to admission?**

Applicants who are offered admission with missing entrance requirements will be notified prior to matriculation. Once enrolled in the program, students will be required to complete missing entrance requirements in the first year of residence in the program. First year students will meet with their First-Year Guidance Committee to determine how the missing entrance requirements will be completed. Entrance deficiencies in upper division courses must be taken for a letter grade; lower division courses may be taken for an S/U grade. (We may recommend taking courses on campus, a community college, being a teaching assistant in a specific course, or other arrangements as deemed appropriate.)

Do you have a recruitment weekend?

Yes. The recruitment weekend is by invitation only. Invitations will be sent via e-mail in mid to late January. The Population Biology Graduate Group Recruitment weekend for those invited is held in February. Candidates will have one full day to interview with multiple faculty members and current graduate students (Friday). During the visit, candidates will lodge with Pop Bio students, and on the second day (Saturday), candidates will visit one of the nearby nature reserves.

When will I know if I have been accepted or denied admission to the Pop Bio program?

Those students eliminated during the first round of reviews will be notified in the last week of February if not sooner. Students from the second round will be notified of either admission or denial approximately one week after the recruitment weekend. Please track your status using the online application system.

Why do I have to apply for fellowship?

To be eligible for program support (grants and fellowship) and other UC Davis fellowships, you must complete both the internal fellowship application and a FAFSA (note separate deadlines).

1. You will be prompted to complete the "**UC Davis Internal Fellowship Application for New Students**" as you progress through the online admission application.
2. U.S. citizens, permanent residents or immigrants must submit the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) online **NO LATER THAN MARCH 1 to meet the California State deadline**. (Earlier is better.)
International students are exempt from filing a FAFSA as international students are not eligible for federal financial aid.

Do you provide funding to graduate students?

Yes, the Population Biology Graduate Group offers five years of support in the form of Teaching Assistantships (TAs), Graduate Student Research assistantships (GSRs) and Block Grant Fellowships, assuming continued satisfactory progress to degree. Please visit our website for further funding information.

What is the normative time to degree completion for the Pop Bio Ph.D. program?

Four to six years.

What if I only want a Masters degree?

Our graduate group accepts Ph.D. students only. Exceptions may be made for mid-career applicants in professional agencies or education who seek a Masters degree to strengthen their backgrounds in population biology. Such applicants will be expected to meet the same admission standards as Ph.D. candidates.

General application advice:

How the admission process works ([link to http://www-eve.ucdavis.edu/eve/pbg/Admissions_How_Admission_Works.html](http://www-eve.ucdavis.edu/eve/pbg/Admissions_How_Admission_Works.html))

Preparing for Grad School: An Overview ([link to http://www-eve.ucdavis.edu/eve/pbg/Grad%20School%20Overview%20CLIMB.pdf](http://www-eve.ucdavis.edu/eve/pbg/Grad%20School%20Overview%20CLIMB.pdf))