The Department of Biology Co-Terminal BS/MS Program

Application deadline for Fall submission is October 1
Application deadline for Spring submission is April 1

You must apply no later than the semester before you graduate with your BS, so if you will graduate in December, you must apply in April. Juniors can also apply in April. If you will graduate in May, you may apply in either October or the April of your junior year.

Below is a description of the department requirements for applying to the Co-terminal Program in Biology:

Types of Co-Terminal MS degrees in Biology

- Co-Terminal without thesis (30 CR)
    - A combination of courses and a Professional Project (BIOL 6970). The project requires a faculty member to be the instructor, i.e. read and grade the project. Student must register for BIOL 6970 (Professional Project) for 1-2 semesters (2-9 credits).
- Co-Terminal with thesis (30 CR, recommended only in unusual cases).
    - A combination of courses, Research Project and written Thesis. Includes a formal written document approved by a thesis committee and submitted to the Graduate School following all the MS thesis rules. Student must register for BIOL 6990 (Master's Thesis) for 1-2 semesters (4-9 credits).

Course Requirements

- At least half of the 30 credits for the MS degree must be at the 6000 level (may include research and readings).
- No more than 15 credits may be from 4000 level courses (courses below 4000 level are not allowed).
- At least 15 credits must be BIOL or BCBP courses (may include research and readings).
- At least 21 credits must be from course work (including readings courses), and no more than 9 credits from research.
- Cannot repeat a course at the graduate level that was already taken at the undergraduate level.
- Student must complete the required credits for the BS, and graduate with their B.S. in eight or fewer semesters, with a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- **Students can't take UG classes that are applied to their B.S. while they are classified as graduate students.**
- The Biology Core Courses are meant for Ph.D. students. Permission from the course instructor is required to take a Biology Core Course.

Grade Requirements

- Students must maintain an overall average of B (3.0) or higher in their MS courses. They must pass each course with a C- or higher.

Additional Information

- Students must still pay tuition. The graduate advisor does not pay tuition or stipend.
- Students can still receive financial aid from RPI.
- Student may get a MS in Biology and a BS from another major.
- Students graduate with B.S. in their fourth year (128 credits or more) and may walk with their B.S. class.
- Co-terminal students are not allowed to be a graduate RA or TAs during their fifth year, but may be graduate RAs during the summer prior to starting their graduate program (if a faculty member is willing to support them).

Student Requirements to Apply

- GPA of 3.3 or above
- 90 credits of coursework completed (AP, transfer and courses in progress count)
- Complete the Co-Terminal Application form from the Office of Graduate Education.

- https://info.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/Co-Terminal%20Application.pdf
    - This must be signed by the student's Undergraduate Advisor and Graduate Advisor(s). Note that the undergraduate and graduate advisors may be the same faculty member or may be different faculty members. The Graduate Program Director's signature is not required at this time. She/he will sign it if the application is accepted by the Biology Department.
- Complete a Plan of Study (POS)
    - https://info.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/Graduate%20Plan%20of%20Study.pdf
    - See above for information on course requirements
    - Graduate advisor's signature must be on the form. The Graduate Program Director will sign it if the application is accepted by the Biology Department.
- Complete the 4th and 5th year planner (last page of application form)
    - Must have at least 128 credits applied to BS, and at least 30 for MS.
    - Student must take a minimum of 12 credits of courses each semester.
    - Student may take both BS and MS courses during their fourth year, **but may not take courses to be applied to their B.S. during their fifth year.**
- Submit a copy of Degree Works Degree Audit.
- Submit a written 1-2 page statement of purpose. This must include **how** this program will benefit them and **why** they should be admitted. The statement will be important for determining acceptance into the program. It should include possible ideas for independent research or a plan for their program project.
- Submit 2 letters of support. One from their graduate advisor and a second from another faculty member. **The graduate advisor must state that they will be responsible for advising the student, and will be the instructor of the student's program project classes or will help find willing program project instructors for the student.**

General Application Process*

Completed application must be submitted on Slate by October 1 for May BS completion, or by April 1 for December BS completion.

1. Student obtains application and information from the Office of Graduate Education website.
2. Student identifies a graduate advisor to help develop Plan of Study, and completes the 4th/5th Year Planner.
3. Both the graduate advisor and undergraduate advisor must sign the application form.
4. Student submits complete application on Slate by the October 1 or April 1 deadline.
5. Graduate Admissions committee reviews applications after submission deadlines.
6. Applications accepted by the committee are signed by the Graduate Program Director and applications are sent to the Office of Graduate Education for approval. Students are notified if they are not accepted.
7. Accepted students receive notification of admission from Graduate Admissions Office.

* See the Office of Graduate Education web page: https://info.rpi.edu/co-terminal-program/co-terminal-application for additional information about the Co-Terminal program. Note that the Biology program has additional requirements not listed by the Office of Graduate Education.