

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

[August 2009]

Message from Department Chair, Thomas Sharkey

Deadlines

Applications are normally only reviewed for admission in Fall semester, which begins around the last week of August. The deadline for receiving completed applications for consideration for admission each Fall semester is the preceding December 1.

All materials should be sent to:

**Graduate Admissions Secretary
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Michigan State University
105B Biochemistry Building
East Lansing, MI 48824-1319**

Department Admission Standards

This department **has not established minimum cut-off values** for any of the required application materials. Comparisons are made among all applicants, taking into consideration each applicant's overall qualifications, as demonstrated by their academic record/scores, research experience, and letters of recommendation. We attempt to select those students with the most promise for superior achievement in our program.

Individuals sometimes ask us to make a **preliminary evaluation** of their qualifications for admission. We are sorry, but this **is not possible**. We make comparisons among all applicants each year and must have complete application files before a proper evaluation can be made. We believe that this instruction sheet contains sufficient information for potential applicants to decide whether or not they should apply for admission to our graduate program.

The following standards serve as general guidelines for those considering applying for admission to the Biochemistry graduate program:

- * a bachelor's degree from a recognized college or university;
- * a grade point average of 3.2 or better during the last two full years of undergraduate study in courses pertinent to the pursuit of a career in science;
- * a major in the sciences and at least 6 semester credit hours of biochemistry, preferably with 2-4 additional semester credits of biochemistry laboratory training;
- * favorable evaluations of the applicant by at least three former instructors, preferably in the applicant's undergraduate major. Letters of recommendation from faculty members who have supervised any research experience are extremely important;
- * satisfactory scores on the GRE...both general test scores AND a subject test score in biochemistry/cell and molecular biology, biology, or chemistry are required;
- * applicants are admitted to the program only if judged to be qualified to complete the doctoral degree.

NOTE: Applicants planning to complete solely the Master's program are considered only under unusual circumstances since our program is not designed to provide funding for an M.S. degree only.

Program Accessibility

Handicapper accommodations may be requested by contacting the Department office at (517) 353-0807. TDD Services are available through the Michigan Relay Center, (800) 649-3777.

Checklist:

- Application Form** – Michigan State University requires ON-LINE APPLICATIONS. Please obtain the on-line application via <http://grad.msu.edu/apply/online.aspx>. **All other supporting materials should be mailed directly to the Graduate Admissions Secretary** (see page 1). Be sure to include your personal statement of purpose indicating your area of research interest, your long-term goals, and any research experience you possess. If your application is received too late to be considered by the Department for admission Fall semester (after December 1), the University application will still be processed and the fee applied, even though the Department (in most cases) will not consider the application for admission until the following year.
- Transcripts** – One official copy of your transcript for ALL college level study must be sent by the issuing university or college in a sealed envelope directly to the Graduate Admissions Secretary (see page 1).
- Letters of Recommendation** – Applicants must arrange to have three letters of recommendation submitted to the Department on their behalf. These letters must be written on the author's institution letterhead, signed, and mailed directly to the Graduate Admissions Secretary by the author. IF the letters are sent with the complete application packet, they MUST be sent in a signed, sealed envelope by the author. (Request for Recommendation form.)
- GRE (Graduate Record Exam)** – Both general test scores and an advanced test score in biochemistry/cell and molecular biology, biology, or chemistry are required. You should arrange to have a copy of your GRE scores report sent to the Department by the Education Testing Service. If you have any questions about taking the GRE tests, write to: Education Testing Service, Box 955, Princeton, NJ 08540, or 1947 Center Street, Berkeley, CA 94704. The MSU Testing Office also has excellent information at <http://testingoffice.msu.edu> or check with the appropriate office at your university or college. NOTE: We will NOT consider any application for admission without the required GRE scores.
- TOEFL Exams** – International applicants are required to submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores to the Department as part of the application process.

Application Review Process – When complete, application files are circulated among the faculty members serving on the departmental Graduate Admissions Committee for their individual evaluations of the applicants' qualifications for admission. The Graduate Admissions Committee subsequently meets as a group to render final decisions on those applications. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decision as soon as possible. Since the number of new students that can be admitted each Fall semester is strictly limited, we must proceed sequentially and can extend invitations to join our program to only a limited number of students at any one time. We will review complete applications as quickly as possible, but the timing of the procedure is not entirely under our control and we cannot guarantee dates of notification. On occasion, incomplete applications may be reviewed if there is sufficient information to reach a decision. Incomplete applications that cannot be adequately assessed will be reviewed only when additional information is received, provided that unfilled openings for new graduate students still exist.

Financial Assistance – Typically, all students accepted into our doctoral program are provided financial support in the form of a departmental graduate assistantship.

Interviews and Visits – In general, we do not conduct personal interviews as part of the selection process. Domestic applicants offered admission to the graduate program, are, however, invited and encouraged to visit the Department so that an informed decision concerning acceptance of our offer can be made. Such visits will be at the expense of the Department and the necessary arrangements will be made by the Department's Graduate Admissions Office after consulting with the student.

Students applying from People's Republic of China, [click here](#).