

# Frequently Asked Questions for Accelerated Master of Science In Microbiology & Cell and Molecular Biology

## **Program Description:**

The non-thesis Accelerated Master of Science (AMS) program offers students an opportunity to obtain graduate-level knowledge of Microbiology & Cell and Molecular Biology in a 1-year time frame. Students complete two semesters of rigorous coursework and a summer of literary review that provides a strong knowledge base for professional degree applications or a career in biomedical industry.

## **Link to the Application:**

To apply to our Accelerated Master's program in the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at Oklahoma State University, please submit your application at the web site of the [OSU Graduate College](#).

**Application Deadline:** July 1<sup>st</sup>

## **Supplemental materials for your application:**

1. GRE Scores
2. Complete transcript records from every institution attended prior to this application
3. Three letters of recommendation (no special format required)
4. Personal Statement (no special format required)
5. Information about any publications on which you are a co-author
6. TOEFL scores (for international students only)

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### Program Questions

1. Does the department only accept students for the fall?
  - Yes.
2. Is there any interview before final decision regarding application status?
  - Yes, usually 2-3 faculty members gather to talk to you by Skype or over the phone, which takes about 20-30 minutes. Most discussion is about what your research experiences and interests are. This is a great chance for you to learn about our program, so please prepare your questions.
3. How many AMS students are in the department and what is the graduation rate and average time for graduation?
  - The department usually has 5-10 Accelerated Master's students at any given time.
4. How many Accelerated Master's students are typically admitted each year?
  - The department usually admits 4-7 students each year.
5. What constitutes a student being in "good standing with the department"?
  - Either A's or B's in all coursework and making progress in their research projects.

## Application Process

1. Can I apply if my Bachelor's degree is not in microbiology?
  - Our preference is for applicants with a degree in biology or other life science degrees, however we will consider applicants with other relevant degrees. An applicant without a degree in life sciences should at least have taken several biology courses and stand out in other respects in order to have the best chance of acceptance, and the applicant should address this issue in their Personal Statement.
2. What is the fee for submitting an application and can this fee be waived?
  - You will need to pay the fee (as of January 2016: \$50 for domestic students and \$75 for international students) to the OSU Graduate College in order for your application to be processed and forwarded to our department. The fee cannot be waived.
3. What GRE/TOEFL scores and GPA are required?
  - GRE
    - i. While there is no minimum GRE score requirement, a competitive GRE scores are typically in the top 50 and 80 percentile for verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE. Weaker GRE scores can be made up by strengths in other areas of the application.
  - TOEFL
    - i. There is no minimum TOEFL score. A score above 20 for the speaking portion of the TOEFL is advantageous. A score above 25 in the speaking portion of the TOEFL automatically qualifies international students for TA positions.
  - GPA
    - i. Competitive GPAs tend to be at or above 3.5 out of 4. Note: it is not a problem if your transcript does not use this grading format. Weaker GPAs can be made up by strengths in other areas of the application.
4. Would an MCAT, GMAT, or DAT score be acceptable instead of a GRE?
  - The Department requires a GRE score; the MCAT, GMAT, and DAT can be submitted with the application, and can substituted for the required GRE score.
5. Where should I send my recommendation letters and GRE scores?
  - Both the GRE scores and letters of recommendation should be sent to the OSU Graduate College. Letters need to be in sealed envelopes, but require no additional formatting.
6. What are your GRE codes?
  - The GRE code for Oklahoma State University is 6546.

## Tuition, Fees, and Funding

1. Do I have to pay tuition and fees?
  - Tuition and Fees will NOT be waived for any student and will be assessed by credit hour per semester. More information about Fees and Tuition can be found at <https://bursar.okstate.edu/tuition-and-fees>.

2. What are the funding opportunities for new/incoming graduate students that are offered by the department?
  - Students in the Accelerated Master's program do not have funding provided by the department or the university.

### Healthcare

1. Does the department or the university provide health insurance for students in the Accelerated Master's program?
  - No, the university does not provide health insurance for students enrolled in the Accelerated Master's program.
2. Does the university have a clinic for the students on campus?
  - Yes, the university does have a full health clinic for our students complete with an adjoining pharmacy available for prescriptions given from the clinic.
3. Do I need any immunizations or provide my immunization records?
  - Yes, all policies on immunizations can be found at the University Health Services website (<http://www.okstate.edu/UHS/uhshealthhist.htm>).

### International Students

1. Are international students required to provide information for the financial statement/sponsors information (for international students)?
  - There is no need to arrange this information for your application. However, it is required for the graduate college and related to obtaining a visa from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service after being admitted. For more details, please visit the International Student Services website at <http://iss.okstate.edu>.

### Advising

1. Do I need to identify an advisor before being accepted into the Accelerated Master's program?
  - No, this is not required. Students accepted into our program identify their research mentor during the first semester in our program. However, it is highly encouraged that a student be looking into various resources to have an idea of a mentor that they would want to join.
  - For more information about our faculty, visit <https://microbiology.okstate.edu/faculty-staff>.

### Questions about Stillwater and OSU

1. What is the cost of living in Stillwater, Oklahoma?
  - Overall, the cost of living in Stillwater is about 14% lower than the U.S. average. Visit the City of Stillwater Chamber of Commerce's website for more information about general life in Stillwater (<http://www.stillwaterchamber.org/general.asp?id=418>).
2. Where can I live while getting my degree?



- Students in our program live in housing both on and off OSU main campus. There are numerous apartment complexes in Stillwater that are in very close proximity to the main campus.
- 3. Is it necessary to have a car in Stillwater? Is there a transit system?
  - It is much easier to get around Stillwater with a car, but it is not necessary. The OSU Bus system also serves the transport needs of Stillwater. With your OSU ID, all students can use the bus to get around Stillwater for free. These bus routes go to a majority of the apartment complexes located in Stillwater.
- 4. Is there a gym on campus for use by the students?
  - Yes. As an OSU student, you have free access to OSU's gym on the main campus. The only requirement for entry is your OSU ID.
- 5. Are there lots of places to eat on campus?
  - Yes, OSU offers many places to eat on campus as well as some campus convenient stores so students can buy ingredients to make their own food.
- 6. How would I get to know other graduate students?
  - There is a departmental MMGGSA organization that hosts numerous events and has monthly meetings. Our graduate students have a lounge equipped with furniture and refrigerator for graduate student comfort.
- 7. Can I get ahold of current graduate students?
  - Yes, contact the secretary 307 Life Sciences East for a list of graduate student contact information. Secretary information can be found at <http://microbiology.okstate.edu/contact-us>

Useful Links for Potential Graduate Students:

1. The City of Stillwater
  - <http://stillwater.org>
2. OSU Graduate College
  - <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu>
3. Travel Oklahoma
  - <http://www.travelok.com/>
4. State Parks
  - <http://www.stateparks.com/ok.html>
5. MMGGSA Facebook page
  - a. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OkstateMMGGSA/>
6. Microbiology home page
  - <http://microbiology.okstate.edu>

**For additional questions:**

Contact Dr. Wouter Hoff ([wouter.hoff@okstate.edu](mailto:wouter.hoff@okstate.edu))