

Advising FAQs

1. Who is my advisor (or how do I find my advisor)? If you are a freshman (i.e., <30 credit hours) your advisor is Miss Raven Baxter-Christian (388 SAMC, baxterr@buffalostate.edu, (716) 878-9820). There is some great information you can obtain through the Bengal Success Portal in Blackboard and also on the Biology Department homepage under 'For Students', then 'Advisement', and 'Freshman Advisement'. Non-freshman students can log on to your Degree Works account. Your advisor is listed in the upper right hand corner of the 'Student View' section at the top of the page.

2. When can I begin registering for classes each semester? The actual date you can begin to register is determined by how many credits you have earned (with some minor exceptions for student governance, honors, and athletics). In general, those with more credits will register before those with fewer credits. The Registrar's Office has a great 'Registration FAQ' on their website (<http://registrar.buffalostate.edu/sites/registrar.buffalostate.edu/files/uploads/Documents/registration/BannerGuide.pdf>). To find the actual date, follow these steps:

- Log onto your Banner account.
- Select "Registration".
- Select "Registration Status".
- Select the Term and click on "Submit".

Your Registration Status will display your assigned registration date, any holds you may have, your class designation (FR, SO, JR, SR), and your major for registration purposes. Class designations (FR, SO, JR, SR) and registration dates are based on EARNED credit hours.

3. How should I prepare for an advising session? First, get in the mindset that you need to be involved in your degree path. All students should download the 'Concentration Templates' found on the Biology Department website (<http://biology.buffalostate.edu/advisement>). Fill in the BIO courses you plan to take for EACH semester, making use of the course rotation master sheet (insert link) and the list of course prerequisites (insert link) available on the Biology Department homepage. You can use these two forms to know which semester each course will be offered and what pre-requisite courses you may need to complete before you can take it. Once your major courses are filled in, then you can insert other needed courses (e.g., IF courses, honors courses, minor courses) in the remaining open slots.

4. Which class should I take first, BIO 212, BIO 213, or BIO 214? You may take these course in any order. However, you may wish to consider whether your career path is more organismal or molecular and first take the 200-level that most closely matches that career path since the upper division courses in that area will require that 200-level course as a prerequisite. Additionally, note that BIO 214 is offered every semester, whereas BIO 212 and BIO 213 rotate around a bit. Use the course rotation master sheet as a guide to when each will be available.

5. Are there any prerequisites for BIO classes and how do I find them? Yes, almost all of the 300-level and above courses will have prerequisites. These can be found on the 'Course Prerequisite' master sheet available on the Biology Department homepage (insert link).

6. When will a certain BIO class be offered? The 'Course Rotation' master sheet is available on the Biology Department homepage (insert link). This form shows which semester each course is offered and is extremely useful when preparing for an advising session. However, be aware that this master plan sometimes can change, so be sure to check it each semester against the actual courses being offered.

7. How do I get an internship? Internships can be a great way to obtain career-related experience, but you need to be prepared. Internships are enrolled as BIO 488. Your cumulative and BIO GPA must be ≥ 2.5 , and you must have completed BIO 111, BIO 212, BIO 213, and BIO 214. If you meet these criteria, first make an appointment with your advisor to get ideas on sensible internships. Next, make an appointment with Dr. Beahm, the Biology Department internship Coordinator (beahmdl@buffalostate.edu). Upon securing an internship site, Dr. Beahm will get approval from the Department Chair and issue the overrides needed for you to register for BIO 488. There is more great information on internship opportunities, as well as an internship FAQ on the Internship page of the Biology Department website (<http://biology.buffalostate.edu/careers-and-internships>).

8. When do I apply for graduation? First, if you are asking this question, Congratulations! At about the time you have completed 100 credit hours, go to the Registrar homepage and find the link to Graduation Preparation (<http://registrar.buffalostate.edu/degreeapplication>). The deadline for each action you need to take will be found there. In a nutshell, here are the main steps:

- a. Verify you have earned at least 100 credit hours toward your degree.
- b. Download, fill out, and submit your [Application for Undergraduate Degree](#)
- c. Check [Application Deadlines](#)
- d. Review Degree Requirements. All students expecting to qualify for an undergraduate degree from Buffalo State must fulfill certain degree requirements as outlined in the college catalog and your Degree Works audit sheet. Questions on degree requirements can best be answered by student's departmental advisor.
- e. Submit Application for Undergraduate Degree by the specified deadline dates to the Registrar's Office, Moot Hall 210 either in person or by mail.

9. How do I get a minor? Minors can be a great addition to your major, and can be a way to separate you and your degree from other BIO graduates. Most minors require 18 credit hours of courses from the minor Department, so planning is essential. Discuss with your advisor which minor makes sense for your career path. To add a minor, obtain a 'Change or Commit Form for Major, Minor, Second Major, Dual Degree' from your advisor or the Biology office. This form needs your signature and Banner I.D., and it needs to be signed by the Chairperson of the minor Department. Once you have signed the form, deliver it to the minor Department. It is strongly recommended that you have a discussion with the Chairperson from the minor Department to understand any nuances for enrolling in the required courses for that minor.

10. What should I do if I am placed on Departmental probation? (i.e., I got a yellow letter in the mail) Department probation means your GPA is below a 2.0. You have two (2) semesters to bring your GPA up to at least 2.0. If after two semesters your GPA is still < 2.0 , you will not be allowed to remain a Biology major. The best strategy is to first go see your advisor! Your advisor will discuss your options. In general, it's a good idea to retake the course that sent you under a 2.0 if you obtained a D or E. If your grade happens to be a C-, you and your advisor might consider whether, given your chosen career path, it makes sense to forge ahead, aiming for a grade high enough to offset the C-. In any event, discuss this with your advisor.

11. Where is tutoring help available? There are multiple tutoring locations on campus and discipline areas you can obtain tutoring assistance, either in-person or online. The Academic Commons (<http://academiccommons.buffalostate.edu/tutoring>) has great links to different disciplinary tutoring

options. Science and technology tutoring is available in room 265 SAMC Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays at various hours. Stop by the tutor center and have a drop-in visit or make an appointment. The lists of hours can be found on their website (<http://academiccommons.buffalostate.edu/science-and-technology-tutoring-center>).

12. How do I withdraw from a course? Once you have registered for a course it will be on your permanent transcript unless you officially withdraw from the course. Not attending the first day or week of class does not withdraw you from a course! If you withdraw during the add/drop period (usually the first week of classes), then the course is erased from your transcript. There is a date deadline at the end of the 10th week of classes each semester (the actual date can be found on the Registrar's website). Before withdrawing, consider whether a change in the number of credits you are enrolled for will affect when you graduate, completion of prerequisites for later courses, or your financial aid. You can withdraw from a course online. The procedure to withdraw once you decide to do is:

- log on to your Banner account and click the Self-Service (SSB).
- Go to Add or Drop Classes screen.
- Click on the Action drop-down menu for the CRN (course reference number) you want to select or withdraw from.
- Select Student Course Withdrawal and click on Submit Changes.
- Before you Submit Changes, be sure to double-check that this is the course/CRN you want to withdraw from. **WARNING!** Withdrawal from course is final once entered. You cannot make a change after the action has been saved.

It is highly recommended that you speak with your advisor before officially withdrawing from a course.