

Zoology Graduate Program Workshop 2024

Dr. Jason L. Brown,
Director of Graduate Studies,
Zoology





Agenda



One webpage to rule them all:

<https://www.jasonleebrown.org/zgp>



The Brown Lab

Spatial evolutionary ecology: connecting genes, organisms, & ecosystems

- Home
- People
- Research
- Publications
- Software
- Community
- Other



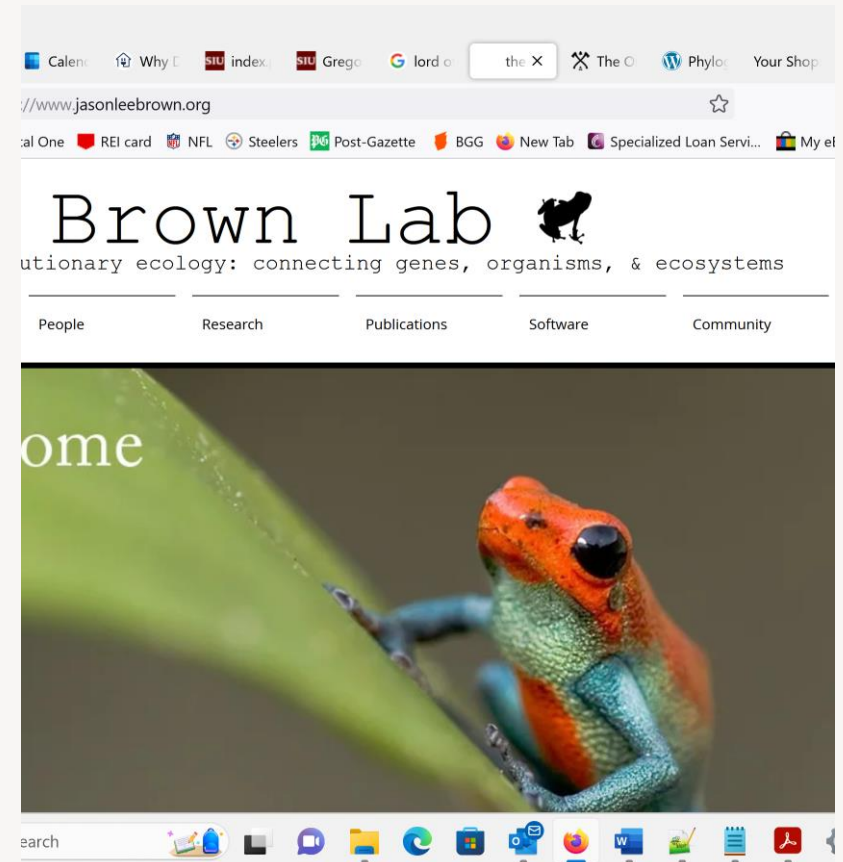
- SIUC Zoology Graduate Program
- Biodiversity Informatics
- Join the lab!
- Seminar/ Meeting Calendar
- Lab Handbook
- Links
- Photos
- Videos
- Get in touch

https://www.jasonleebrown.org/zqp

Rules for graduate degree:

-The Graduate School's [Graduate Catalog](#) (generic part: pg. 13-64 and Zoology: pg. 717-727)

-[Zoology Graduate Program Rules](#) (to be used in combination with the Graduate School Rules)



Graduate Program Timeline:

BENCHMARK

Committee Form

Plan of Study

Research Proposal

Prelim Exam (PhD)

Defense²

TARGET¹

End of 1st semester

End of 2nd semester

Thesis: end of 3rd semester

Dissertation: end of 4th semester

End of 3rd **year** (target)

Thesis: end of 3rd **year** (target)

Dissertation: end of 5th **year** (target)

¹Summer session is considered a semester.

²Stipend support limits established by the Graduate School.

Main Forms

Phase:

Early

1. Graduate Student Advisory Committee Approval Form
2. Plan of Study Approval Form
3. Cover Sheet for Graduate Student Research Plan

Mid (PHD ONLY)

- Doctoral Candidacy Form (PHD ONLY)

End

4. Approval to Schedule Defense
- 5a. Written Thesis Approval Form (MS ONLY)
- 5b. Written Dissertation Approval Form (PHD ONLY)
6. Oral Defense Approval Form
7. Graduate Student Assessment Form



Document Submission

- As of Jan 1 2023, **all forms and documents must be submitted as a digital document** (e.g. a PDF). This means if you have a physical document, you must scan it and send me the scan (see preferred method below). You are also encouraged to put the physical document in my mailbox for safekeeping. Please label the document appropriately with your last name and the document type (e.g. “BrownJL_PlanOfStudy.pdf” or “SmithA_CommitteeForm.pdf”).
- **Preferred document submission method.** Upload the Zoology Graduate forms onto the [shared OneDrive folder](#) (you must use your SIU.EDU email account to access this folder). I will routinely clear these files out and move them to the private ‘Zoology Graduate Program Archive’.
- **Alternative document submission method.** Given some of you might not feel comfortable placing these documents in a shared folder, feel free to send them via email to grad.zoology@siu.edu. Do not send them to my standard SIU account, they will likely be lost. Any document with personal information not typically shared should be emailed.

Plan of Study (form and worksheet)

- Once you have sorted out your tentative coursework, submit a plan of study. If this changes, resubmit it.
- Use the program worksheet for assistance tabulating that all requirements are met

Course Requirements (Masters)

- All requirements of the Graduate School must be satisfied.
- At least 30 hours of graduate credit:
 - 15 credit hours at the 500-level is required beyond the bachelor's degree
 - 21 credit hours of graded coursework
 - 2 credit hours of ZOOLOGY 589 Zoology Colloquium
 - 6 credit hours of ZOOLOGY 599
 - 2 or more courses in a specific area representing the research tool.
 - New 2024: up to 3 credits of ZOOLOGY 596 can be used toward degree*

A grade point average of 3.00 in graduate coursework must be maintained.

Masters Tidbits

- **Program Time Limits:** A student has six calendar years to complete the degree. This time is calculated from initial enrollment to completion of all degree requirements including any document that must be approved by the Graduate School. This time limit includes courses taken either at SIU or elsewhere.
- **RA and TA support are not guaranteed and are dependent on satisfactory progress; after 3 years TA support not typical**
- **Credit Hours:** typically, you must take 8 credits Fall/Spring semesters, 3 during Summer (if on RA or TA) to keep tuition waver
 - Some Fellowships/Scholarships require 9 credits
 - If not paid during summer, there is no need to take 3 credits during Summer

Course Requirements (Doctorate)

There is no minimum credit-hour requirement beyond the Graduate School's residency and dissertation requirements.

A student, in consultation with his or her advisory committee, prepares a program of study that includes courses (including two semesters of ZOOLOGY 589), seminars, and research. A research tool, consisting of at least two courses in a specific subject area, is required. A 3.25 grade point average in graduate coursework must be maintained.

Graduate School's residency: 24 credits, including 2 credits of ZOOLOGY 589 Zoology Colloquium

New 2024: up to 3 credits of ZOOLOGY 596 can be applied towards residency

up to 6 credits of ZOOLOGY 600 can also be applied towards residency

Dissertation requirements: 24 credit hours of ZOOLOGY 600 (18 credits must be taken after the student becomes a doctoral candidate)

Doctoral Tidbits

- **Program Time Limits:** The candidate must fulfill all requirements for the degree within a five-year period after admission to candidacy.
- **RA and TA support are not guaranteed and are dependent on satisfactory progress; after 5 years TA support not typical**
- **Credit Hours:** typically, you must take 8 credits Fall/Spring semesters, 3 during Summer (if on RA or TA) to keep tuition waver
 - Some Fellowships/ Scholarships require 9 credits
 - If not paid during summer, there is no need to take 3 credits during Summer

Doctoral Candidacy

- See Zoology Rules for a detailed explanation.
- In short:
 - 1) Candidacy Exam: Consists of written (usually taken over 3.5 days) and oral exams (a couple of hours), usually, in the third year of Ph.D. When you are ready to do this, find a candidacy exam chair (another faculty member in Zoology) to chair your exams.
 - 2) Residency Requirements are satisfied (see previous slide)
 - 3) Meet the research tool requirement of the program (also previous slide)

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Zoology Graduate Student Digital Archives

- To view a list of important graduate files cataloged of yours, [go here](#) (vs. emailing me). This table is routinely updated. Your ID is the last four digits of your dawg tag.

Recent Changes (2024)

- 1) Annual committee 'check-in' to ensure you have appropriate communication with committee members and stay on track
 - Annual email or in person follow-up with all committee members. You are required to provide a 1 page or less summary of your current research and academic progress to your graduate committee. In this document you should provide information on other academic activities, including information on: presentations given, posters presented, meetings attended, and manuscripts or reports prepared this year (this includes non-SIUC research).
 - **Annual Committee check-in must be submitted by each committee member before the official end of Spring semester** (but no earlier than Spring Break).
 - You are responsible for providing annual summary to committee and then soliciting your committee members to fill out Annual Committee check-in. If you have yet to form a committee, you must have your PI fill out annual check-in.
- 2) Require students that go beyond the normal window (3 yrs and 5 yrs for MSc and PhD) to file action plans for completion (done each semester), you will be contacted by the DGS and this information will be requested

Grievance Policy

- Step 1: Contact the Director of Graduate Studies (for Dr. Brown's students: contact Director of the School of Biological Sciences)
- Step 2: The DGS (or Director for School of Biological Sciences) will approach the professor regarding the issue

If unresolved:

- Step 3: If academic, bring the issue to the students' student's entire committee.
 - If personal, help the student file a formal grievance within SBS or with the Graduate School

If still unresolved:

- Step 4: Contact the Dean of the College of Agricultural, Life, and Physical Sciences and/or the Dean and Director of the Graduate School

Note that Title IX violations reported are mandatorily reported following normal university protocols

Jason's Main Goals For Improving The Graduate Program

- Short-term
 - Centralize all the documents
 - Improve bookkeeping
 - Improve communication
 - Cloud based-signature of all documents (you can help here, let me know)
 - With GSABS, create a forum for graduate students to give talks
 - Simplify or remove unnecessary items/documents/roadblocks
- Long-term
 - Fix seminar series
 - Dramatically increase the salaries ($\$ > 22,000$)
 - Merge procedures with the PLB graduate program: eventually there will be a single person managing both programs

Random things

- 50% and 25% appointments = 20 and 10 hrs. weekly
 - 50% is considered full-time employment
- For RAs, always take a photo of your contract as the duties described within and what you are required to do
- Your proposal is an outline of your progress and is used in case of grievance

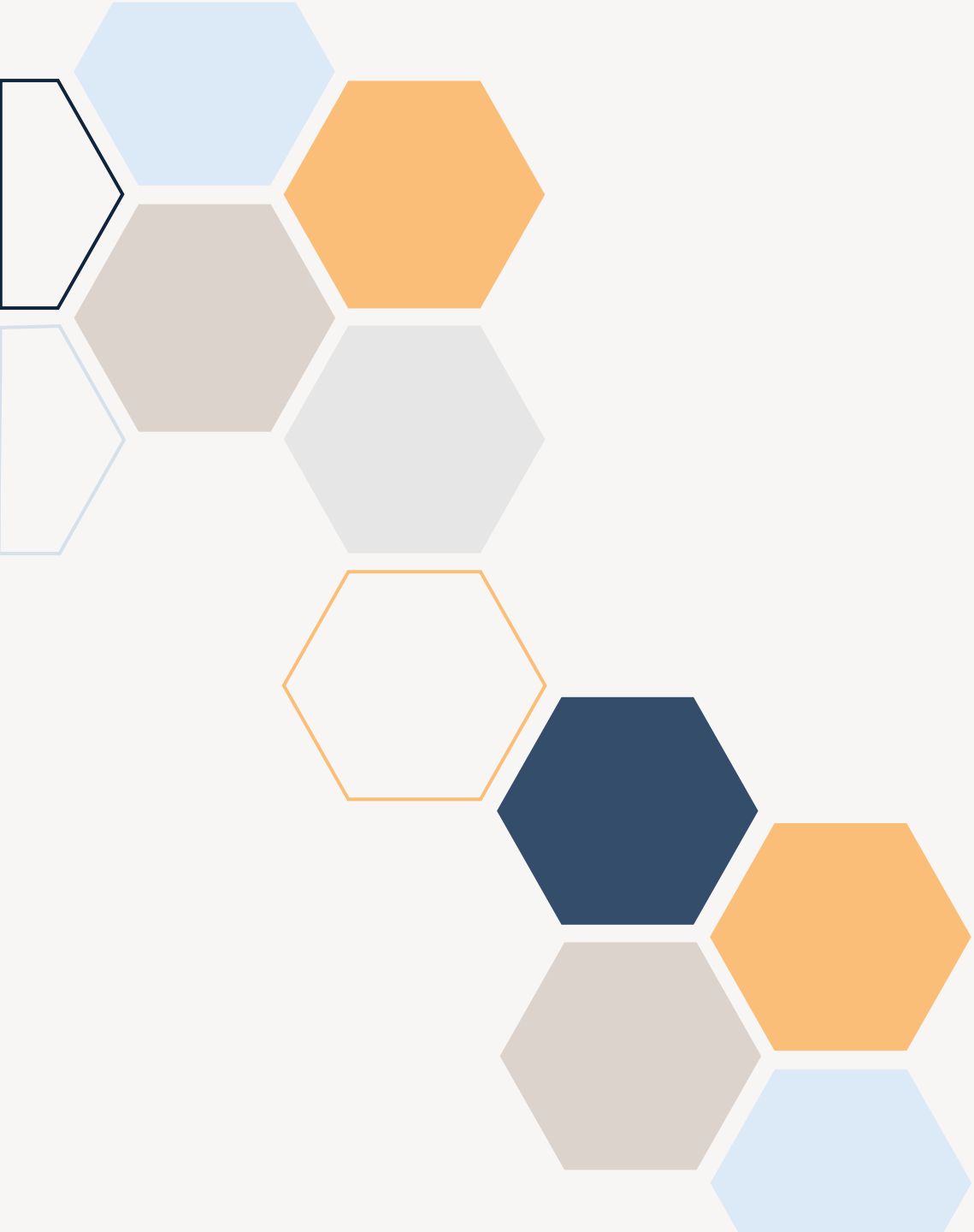


Thank you

Dr. Jason Brown

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Questions?

