

# CaSB/Bioinfo DSP Info Sheet

Hello recent Departmental Scholars admits,

First, congratulations on your admission to the Departmental Scholars B.S./M.S. program (DSP)! It takes a lot of hard work to be eligible for DSP admission, and you should be proud of yourselves!

The following document goes over logistics in regards to the DSP program. Please read the packet and let me (or the appropriate DSP contact) know if you have any questions.

Annelise Werhel  
Academic Counselor  
Computational & Systems Biology

## Contacts and Advising

As a Departmental Scholar, there are three different counselors, including myself, who can help you navigate the program and requirements. Below, I've outlined how we divide up advising and who you should contact depending on your question.

Annelise Werhel ([casb@lifesci.ucla.edu](mailto:casb@lifesci.ucla.edu)): I will continue to be your main contact for any CaSB undergrad requirements, substitutions, etc. As of Summer 2021, I will also be your main contact for M.S. program requirements (master's thesis, program planning, substitutions, etc.).

Angel Perez ([aperez@college.ucla.edu](mailto:aperez@college.ucla.edu)): Angel is the Departmental Scholars Coordinator in the Honors Programs office and oversees all DSP programs. He is the contact for any questions about the DSP program in general, College requirements, increasing your unit maximum, removing an enrollment lock, etc. I may refer you to him as needed.

Gene Gray ([gene@lifesci.ucla.edu](mailto:gene@lifesci.ucla.edu)): Gene is the Bioinformatics Graduate Counselor and advises on some of the more difficult questions that come up regarding DSP. He also helps process some of the forms you will submit as a DSP student. I may refer you to him as needed.

## M.S. Coursework

Students can find the Bioinformatics M.S. requirements at: <https://grad.ucla.edu/programs/life-sciences/bioinformatics/>.

For the M.S. requirements, DSP students pursue Field 3: Computational & Systems Biology. Students can choose any of the Subfields. Only the M.S. Thesis Plan is available to DSP students in CaSB and, with adequate planning, this can be an extension of the senior thesis required for the bachelor's degree.

Students must complete all of the following for Field 3:

- MIMG CM234 or Biomathematics M261 (research ethics, 2 units);
- Eight units (2 quarters, 4 units each) of Bioinformatics 596 with your PI/Committee Chair. One of these 596 courses should ideally be taken in your final quarter (when you are in process of filing your thesis).

- A minimum of 26 units (minimum 6 courses) from your chosen subfield. Students must take at least 3 core courses and 3 elective courses from their chosen subfield, but may end up taking additional courses to meet the 26-unit requirement. Important: a maximum of 8 units of upper-division coursework (100-199 courses) can be applied towards your subfield requirements. At least 18 of the 26 required units must come from grad courses (200+).

### Thesis Research/Committee Chair

Students must complete their M.S. research under the advisement of a [Bioinformatics faculty](#) member, who will serve as the student's PI and the chair of their thesis committee. Students who have previously done research with a Bioinformatics faculty member may choose to continue that research for the M.S. thesis. Students who completed their undergraduate research with a professor who is not Bioinformatics faculty may need to find a new lab supervised by a Bioinformatics faculty member or talk to their current PI about finding a Bioinformatics faculty member who will be willing to serve as the committee chair for their current research. Students are encouraged to [contact professors via email](#) if they are interested in doing research with them and utilize the [Computational Biosciences Undergraduate Research Portal](#) and the Bioinformatics Graduate Program's [Undergraduate Research page](#) to find new projects.

### Enrollment

If a course is restricted to graduate students, Departmental Scholars must obtain a Permission to Enroll (PTE) number from the departmental advisor (of the department offering the course) or professor. For enrollment purposes, students should retain the acceptance letter from Graduate Admission as verification of Departmental Scholar status.

If you need help enrolling in a Bioinformatics course, please contact Gene Gray (see above). Otherwise, please contact the professor of the course or departmental counselor for that department directly. If you need help identifying the correct contact for a department, I am happy to help.

### Academic Policies

Students must complete all requirements for both degrees. No course may be used to fulfill requirements for both degrees (i.e., no over-lapping courses). For example, an upper-division course (100-199) applied towards the M.S. degree cannot be used towards upper-division units (minimum: 60) required for the B.S. degree.

All courses taken for a Letter Grade must be taken for a B or better. Students should have a 3.0 GPA in all courses applied towards the M.S. degree.

Courses must be taken for a letter grade, unless offered on S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) grading basis only.

### Petitions

If you are interested in petitioning a course to substitute for one of the listed requirements for the M.S., you must submit a [DSP Course Substitution Petition](#) form signed by your PI/committee chair to [casb@lifesci.ucla.edu](mailto:casb@lifesci.ucla.edu). Petitions are collected continuously throughout the year and submitted to the Bioinformatics chair for review. Please allow at least 2 weeks for faculty review.

## Advancement to Candidacy & Thesis Deadlines

It is your responsibility to make sure that, in addition to taking coursework, you meet all the requirements and deadlines to graduate.

### Advancement to Candidacy & M.S. Coursework Forms– Due Friday Week 8 of Second-to-Last Quarter Before Graduation

Students should submit the [Advancement to Candidacy form](#) and [MS Coursework form](#) to me at [casb@lifesci.ucla.edu](mailto:casb@lifesci.ucla.edu) by Friday Week 8 of the second-to-last quarter before graduation (i.e., Winter for a Spring Grad.) Forms must be reviewed by me/Gene Gray and submitted by Gene to the Registrar no later than Friday Week 2 of a student's final quarter/intended grad term. Submitting your Advancement to Candidacy Form by Friday Week 8 of the preceding term ensures that we can review your form and address any issues before the Friday Week 2 Registrar deadline. If the form cannot be submitted to the Registrar by Friday Week 2, the student will not be able to graduate that quarter.

### Committee Form – Due Friday Week 5 of Final Quarter/Intended Grad Term

Students should complete the [Nomination of Master's Committee form](#) and have it signed by all committee members. The signed form should be submitted to me at [casb@lifesci.ucla.edu](mailto:casb@lifesci.ucla.edu) no later than Friday Week 5 of the Final Quarter/Intended Grad Term.

Your PI/Thesis Chair should be able to help you identify other members for your Master's Committee. The Master's Committee must:

- Consist of a minimum of three faculty members from UCLA.
- The three Master's Thesis committee members must hold one of the following academic ranks:
  - Professor (any rank, regular series)
  - Professor Emeritus
  - Professor-in-Residence (any rank)
  - Acting Professor (any rank) - Acting Assistant Professors may serve as regular members but not as chairs.
- Faculty not in the above titles, such as, Adjunct Professor (any rank), Professor of Clinical X (any rank), Visiting Professor (any rank), and Lecturer may serve as an additional 4<sup>th</sup> member and/or Co-Chair if needed, but cannot be one of the three required members.
- The Chair of the committee and at least one other member must be [Bioinformatics faculty](#).
- By petition, one of the minimum three members may be a faculty member from another UC campus who holds an appropriate appointment as listed above.

### Thesis Filing – Due by 5 PM Last Day of Final Quarter/Intended Grad Term

The deadline for filing the thesis in final form is the last day of the student's graduating quarter. For registered students and those paying a Filing Fee, the summer deadline is the last day of Summer Session C. The exact date for each term is posted [here](#). You are encouraged to file as early as possible during the quarter. Students are strongly encouraged to [attend a thesis filing workshop](#) for more information on filing and formatting, and students should also review all the resources on how to format and file your thesis on [Grad Division's File Your Thesis or Dissertation](#) webpage.

All filing must be submitted online [here](#). For your manuscript to count as submitted, by the 5PM deadline:

- All required committee members must have approved electronically.
- Your committee must have certified that you have passed the final oral exam (if applicable).
- You must have submitted a final PDF via ProQuest.
- You must have completed the online Graduate Division process.
- If the Graduate Division has requested any changes, you must have submitted the specific changes within the designated time period.

It is your responsibility to ensure your committee has approved electronically and that you have submitted your final PDF and any corrections to your manuscript. Once you submit your thesis, you will not be allowed to make changes unless required by the UCLA Graduate Division. Be sure your manuscript is in its final form.

## DSP-Specific Policies

### Undergraduate Status

Although Departmental Scholars will be concurrently enrolled in undergraduate and graduate coursework, students remain an undergraduate in status and are subject to all rules and regulations affecting UCLA undergraduates. Please read up on the degree requirements and policies specifically for DSP undergraduates here: <http://www.honors.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Departmental-Scholar-Program-Guidelines.pdf>.

### Degree Expected Term (DET)

Eventually, you will need to update your DET to the term in which you will finish all M.S. and B.S. requirements. This can be done via myUCLA (under “Academics” tab, click “Declare Candidacy Term”). It is important that you do this because, if a student lists a DET of Spring 2022 (for example) and finishes their undergrad requirements by that term, the College may close out their record, even if they have not yet completed the master’s requirements. It is very difficult to open a record once closed. As such, you will want to update your DET to the term in which all bachelor’s and master’s requirements will be finished.

Now, I sometimes advise students not to update their DET right away because it gets a little bit more complicated when you factor in Commencement. For the College Commencement Ceremony, participation is limited to students with DETs of Spring 202X and Summer 202X (and Fall 202X by Special Inclusion Petition). Therefore, if you want to participate in the College Commencement Ceremony after your 4<sup>th</sup> year (when you would normally be finishing your undergrad requirements), sometimes DSP students will wait to update their DET until commencement tickets are distributed, or temporarily update their DET to Summer 202X (changing it again after Commencement to the correct term- do note there will be a processing fee each time it is updated). If you have questions about this as commencement approaches next year, I recommend contacting Angel Perez to talk about updating your DET in a way that will still make you eligible for the College Ceremony. You can participate in CaSB Commencement celebrations regardless of your official DET if you will be finishing your undergrad requirements that year.

### Unit Maximum

Please note that, because you are still considered an undergraduate while in DSP, classes taken for the M.S. will show up on your Degree Audit Report (DAR) as counting towards your unit maximum. Most

Departmental Scholars will exceed unit maximum and will need to petition to exceed unit maximum prior to their graduation to ensure that their diplomas are not delayed. Students may request to exceed the 216-unit maximum by the number of units required for the master's by filing a blue petition in Honors Programs. The petition should be submitted directly to Honors Counselor, Angel Perez. I recommend contacting Angel Perez for more information about unit maximum as a Departmental Scholar and the petition process.

### Funding & TA-Ships

Departmental Scholars, although pursuing graduate coursework, are not eligible for graduate financial aid, grants, or fellowships. Departmental Scholars may apply for Undergraduate Financial Aid as continuing students.

Departmental scholars, distinguished undergraduate students recognized by departments, are eligible for apprentice teaching appointments in lower-division courses, *with departmental endorsement and Graduate Division approval after the qualified pool of graduate students is exhausted*. They may also qualify for GSR appointments (without remission benefits).

Eligibility for Teaching Apprentice Appointments and Appointment Criteria:

- Cannot exceed 25% appointment in any term
- Must have a 3.5 GPA
- Must have completed 12 quarters at UCLA if entered as a freshman or 6 quarters if entered as a transfer
- Must have completed 8 upper-division courses toward the undergraduate major
- Must be enrolled in at least 12 units
- Must enroll in the same 375 and 495 TA training and pedagogy courses that are required of graduate students in their respective departments.