

FALL 2026 SUGGESTED COURSES

Biological Sciences (BIO)

Course Load

As you adjust to Cal Poly and/or a new environment, we recommend enrolling in **12-14 units, with no more than 3 labs**. You can determine if your course has a lab by reading the course description. All course descriptions, including prerequisites, can be found in the [Cal Poly Catalog](#).

Course Suggestions

MAJOR:

- If needed, **BIO 2253**: Principles of Ecology and Evolution (4 units)
- Select **one** of the following options:
 - **BIO 3351**: Principles of Genetics (3 units)
 - **BIO 3352**: Principles of Animal Physiology (4 units)

**If you already have credit for BIO 2253, you could consider taking both BIO 3351 and BIO 3352. Speak to an advisor about whether this makes sense for you.*

CONCENTRATION OR APPROVED ELECTIVE COURSES:

Concentration course selection will depend on your chosen concentration.

It's a good idea to consult advisors about your choices, *especially* if you plan to pursue graduate studies or if you are interested in a health professions career. Pay special attention to course descriptions and the footnotes on your curriculum sheet. Courses used in the core of a major cannot also be used toward a concentration/elective. However, if a major/support/concentration/elective course is also a GE, it can be used to fulfill both requirements.

Selected options:

- **BIO 2255**: Molecular and Cellular Biology Lab Skills (1 unit)
 - Required for Molecular & Cellular Biology concentration and may not be offered Spring.
- **MCRO 2224**: General Microbiology I (4 units)
 - Required for several health professions careers.
- **BIO 3321**: Mammalogy (4 units)
- **BIO 3325**: General Entomology (4 units)
- **BIO 3326**: Invertebrate Zoology (4 units)
- If you have already satisfied the equivalent of **BIO 2253**, then consider these options:
 - **BIO 3327** Wildlife Ecology (3 units)
 - **BIO 3343**: Principles of Conservation Biology (3 units)
 - **BOT 3326**: Plant Ecology (4 units)
 - **MSCI 3300**: Marine Ecology (4 units)
 - **MSCI 4437**: Marine Botany (4 units)
- If you have already satisfied the equivalent of **MCRO 2224**, then consider these options:
 - **MCRO 3320**: Emerging Infectious Diseases (3 units)
 - **MCRO 4421**: Food Microbiology (3 units)

SUPPORT

If needed, complete any remaining support courses. In particular, Organic Chemistry is required for some upper-division biology courses; talk to an advisor about whether **CHEM 2240** (4 units) or **CHEM 2242** (5 units) is best for your goals.

GENERAL EDUCATION

If needed, complete any remaining lower-division GE courses. Otherwise, select an upper-division GE course.

Other Graduation Requirements

GWR

[The Graduation Writing Requirement \(GWR\)](#) must be fulfilled by enrolling in a [GWR-certified course](#) or by completing a [GWR Portfolio](#). **Please note** that completion of **BIO 4461**: Senior Project – Research Proposal or **BIO 4463**: Senior Project – Meta-analysis in Biology will the GWR.

USCP

Students must satisfy the [United States Cultural Pluralism \(USCP\)](#) requirement. Please [click here](#) for a list of USCP courses in the Cal Poly catalog.

Additional Information

PERMISSION NUMBERS

If you need a permission number for a major class, please contact the instructor for that class section or the BIO department office.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFO

- [Building 33 \(Fisher Science\), Room 281](#)
- bio.calpoly.edu
- biosci@calpoly.edu
- 805-756-2788

BAILEY COLLEGE STUDENT SERVICES CONTACT INFO

- [Building 53 \(Science North\), Room 211](#)
- csmadvising.calpoly.edu and prehealth.calpoly.edu
- csmadvising@calpoly.edu and prehealth@calpoly.edu
- 805-756-2615