MOLECULAR BIOLOGY, B.A.

Admissions to the molecular biology B.A. have been suspended as of fall 2019. If you have any questions, please contact the department (molecularbiomajor@ls.wisc.edu).

ABOUT THE MAJOR

Molecular biology is the basic science that seeks an understanding of biological processes in terms of the properties and functions of the molecules that make up living cells. The scope of questions addressed in molecular biology spans from evolution to development to the regulation of gene expression. A career in molecular biology requires a strong background in biology as well as a solid foundation in chemistry, mathematics, and physics.

The molecular biology major has been designed primarily for three groups of students:

1. those who plan to enter a research career in molecular biology or related areas such as biochemistry, genetics, oncology, microbiology, cell biology or developmental biology;
2. pre-professional students who plan to enter either a research or clinical career in medicine, or allied health fields;
3. students who plan to teach biology at the college or secondary-school levels.

Students with other interests are also welcome, of course. Career opportunities for students with an undergraduate degree in molecular biology are amazingly diverse. Graduates of the program have gone into patent law, science journalism, forensics, philosophy, nutrition, genetic counseling, veterinary medicine, anthropology, archeology, marine biology, theology, and much more (https://molecularbiomajorsite/290/2017/07/What_can_I_do_with_a_MolBio_Major_.pdf).

Major requirements have been set to assure a high degree of proficiency in the various areas specified while still allowing as much flexibility as possible for students to individualize their programs. For the undergraduate interested in life sciences, this major uniquely provides access to the extraordinary scope and strength of biology courses and laboratories on the UW–Madison campus. Each student in the major is assigned a faculty advisor, and it is hoped that students will take advantage of both the staff and faculty advising service available to make a judicious choice of courses, as well as to gain scholarly experience outside the classroom that will further their academic and career goals.

Students who wish to obtain further information about the program or to declare a molecular biology major should contact the student services coordinator. (https://molecularbio.is.wisc.edu/advising) Faculty advisors are assigned through the program office and are located in many related departments throughout campus. Molecular biology faculty advisors are especially competent to provide counsel regarding the major and career opportunities in molecular biology.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Undergraduate molecular biology students at UW–Madison are fortunate to have the opportunity to work with some of the world’s leading researchers. Many opportunities for laboratory research experience are available on campus for undergraduate students and this type of experience is strongly encouraged. Such an experience provides students the opportunity to apply what they’re learning and compliment their knowledge with practical skills. Research experience is highly valued by employers, graduate programs, and professional schools. See the major website (https://molecularbio.ls.wisc.edu/undergraduate-research) for more information on how to get involved in undergraduate research.

HOW TO GET IN

Admissions to the Molecular Biology B.S. have been suspended as of fall 2019. If you have any questions, please contact the department (molecularbiomajor@ls.wisc.edu).

To declare the molecular biology major, students must contact or make an appointment (https://calendar.wisc.edu/scheduling-assistant/public/profiles/aBNo2X.html;jsessionid=53F9D957BE6099BCF95E0A8487F3B94.primary) with the molecular biology student services coordinator. If students are not currently in the College of Letters & Science (L&S), you must transfer into L&S before declaring. However, students are welcome to meet with the molecular biology student services coordinator to discuss the major before transferring.

REQUIREMENTS

UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin—Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatestudenttext) section of the Guide.

General Education

- Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits
- Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits
- Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits
- Communication Part A & Part B *
- Ethnic Studies *
- Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE

BREADTH AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.)

Students pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in the College of Letters & Science must complete all of the requirements below. The College of
Letters & Science allows this major to be paired with either a bachelor of arts or a bachelor of science curriculum. View a comparison of the degree requirements here. ([https://pubs.wisc.edu/home/archives/ug15/images/babs2009.pdf](https://pubs.wisc.edu/home/archives/ug15/images/babs2009.pdf))

**BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

**Mathematics**
Fulfilled with completion of University General Education requirements Quantitative Reasoning a (QR A) and Quantitative Reasoning b (QR B) coursework. Please note that some majors may require students to complete additional math coursework beyond the B.A. mathematics requirement.

**Foreign Language**
- Complete the fourth unit of a foreign language; OR
- Complete the third unit of a foreign language and the second unit of an additional foreign language

Note: A unit is one year of high school work or one semester/term of college work.

**L&S Breadth**
- Humanities, 12 credits: 6 of the 12 credits must be in literature
- Social Sciences, 12 credits
- Natural Sciences, 12 credits: must include one 3+ credit course in the biological sciences; must include one 3+ credit course in the physical sciences

**Liberal Arts and Science Coursework**
108 credits

**Depth of Intermediate/Advanced work**
60 intermediate or advanced credits

**Major**
Declare and complete at least one (1) major

**Total Credits**
120 credits

**UW-Madison Experience**
30 credits in residence, overall
30 credits in residence after the 66th credit

**Minimum GPAs**
2.000 in all coursework at UW–Madison
2.000 in intermediate/advanced coursework at UW–Madison

**NON–L&S STUDENTS PURSUING AN L&S MAJOR**

Non–L&S students who have permission from their school/college to pursue an additional major within L&S only need to fulfill the major requirements and do not need to complete the L&S breadth and degree requirements above. Please note that the following special degree programs are not considered majors so are not available to non-L&S degree-seeking candidates:

- Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics (Bachelor of Science–Applied Mathematics, Engineering and Physics)
- Journalism (Bachelor of Arts–Journalism; Bachelor of Science–Journalism)
- Music (Bachelor of Music)
- Social Work (Bachelor of Social Work)

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR**

**MATHEMATICS, CHEMISTRY & PHYSICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATH 221</td>
<td>Calculus and Analytic Geometry 1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or MATH 211</td>
<td>Calculus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculus 2 or Statistics—one course:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 222</td>
<td>Calculus and Analytic Geometry 2</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 213</td>
<td>Calculus and Introduction to Differential Equations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 234</td>
<td>Calculus–Functions of Several Variables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 276</td>
<td>Topics in Calculus II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 301</td>
<td>Introduction to Statistical Methods</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAT 371</td>
<td>Introductory Applied Statistics for the Life Sciences</td>
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**General Chemistry—complete one option:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 103</td>
<td>General Chemistry I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; CHEM 104</td>
<td>General Chemistry II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 109</td>
<td>Advanced General Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 115</td>
<td>Chemical Principles I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; CHEM 116</td>
<td>Chemical Principles II (by consent of instructor only)</td>
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**Analytical Chemistry**

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<tr>
<td>CHEM 327</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Analytical Science</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>or CHEM 329</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Analytical Science</td>
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**Organic Chemistry**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 343</td>
<td>Introductory Organic Chemistry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 344</td>
<td>Introductory Organic Chemistry Laboratory</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

**Physics—complete one option:**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHYSICS 201</td>
<td>General Physics</td>
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<tr>
<td>&amp; PHYSICS 202</td>
<td>General Physics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PHYSICS 207</td>
<td>General Physics</td>
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<tr>
<td>&amp; PHYSICS 208</td>
<td>General Physics</td>
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**Total Credits**
25-31

**GENERAL BIOLOGY**

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Complete one option:</td>
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**Option A:**

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOLOGY/</td>
<td>Introductory Biology</td>
<td>10-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTANY/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZOOLOGY 151</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; BIOLOGY/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTANY/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZOOLOGY 152</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENETICS 466</td>
<td>Principles of Genetics</td>
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**Option B (BIOCORE):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOCORE 381</td>
<td>Evolution, Ecology, and Genetics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOCORE 382</td>
<td>Evolution, Ecology, and Genetics Laboratory</td>
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</table>
BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOCORE 383</td>
<td>Cellular Biology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOCORE 384</td>
<td>Cellular Biology Laboratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOCORE 485</td>
<td>Principles of Physiology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 BIOCORE is an Honors program. Students may find more information here (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/biology-core-curriculum/biology-core-curriculum-honors-certificate).

**Biochemistry**

- 3-7 credits

Select one of the following:

- BIOCHEM 501 Introduction to Biochemistry 3
- BIOCHEM 507 General Biochemistry I 6
- BIOCHEM 508 and General Biochemistry II 7

**Molecular Biology** - 3 credits from:

- AGRONOMY/HORT 339 Plant Biotechnology: Principles and Techniques I 3
- AGRONOMY/HORT 340 Plant Cell Culture and Genetic Engineering 3
- BIOCHEM/GENETICS/MICROBIO 612 Prokaryotic Molecular Biology 3
- BIOCHEM/GENETICS 620 Eukaryotic Molecular Biology 3
- GENETICS 545 Genetics Laboratory 3
- HORT/PATH-BIO 500 Molecular Biology Techniques 3
- HORT/GENETICS 550 Molecular Approaches for Potential Crop Improvement 3

**Advanced Courses - 6 credits from 2 areas:**

**Development**

- BOTANY 500 Plant Physiology 3
- ZOOLOGY 470 Introduction to Animal Development 3
- ZOOLOGY 555 Laboratory in Developmental Biology 3
- ZOOLOGY 625 Development of the Nervous System 3

**Microbiology**

- BOTANY/PL PATH 505 Plant-Microbe Interactions: Molecular and Ecological Aspects 3
- MICROBIO 303 Biology of Microorganisms 3
- MICROBIO 304 Biology of Microorganisms Laboratory 3
- MICROBIO 330 Host-Parasite Interactions 3
- MICROBIO/SOIL SCI 425 Environmental Microbiology 3
- MICROBIO/PL PATH 622 Plant-Bacterial Interactions 3
- MICROBIO/ONCOLOGY/PL PATH 640 General Virology-Multiplication of Viruses 3
- M M & I BIOCHEM 575 Biology of Viruses 3

**Genetics**

- BIOCORE 587 Biological Interactions 3
- BIOCHEM/MICROBIO/PL PATH 640 General Virology-Multiplication of Viruses 3
- ZOOLOGY/PSYCH 523 Neurobiology 3
- ZOOLOGY 570 Cell Biology 3

**Biochemistry and Physical Chemistry**

- BIOCHEM 508 General Biochemistry II 3
- BIOCHEM/NUTR SCI 510 Nutritional Biochemistry and Metabolism 3
- BIOCHEM 550 Topics in Medical Biochemistry 3
- BIOCHEM 551 Biochemical Methods 3
- BIOCHEM/BOTANY 621 Plant Biochemistry 3
- CHEM 561 Physical Chemistry 3
- CHEM 565 Biophysical Chemistry 3
- NEURODPT 533 Molecular Physiology 3

**Quantitative and Computational Sciences**

- B M I COMP SCI 576 Introduction to Bioinformatics 3
- BOTANY 563 Phylogenetic Analysis of Molecular Data 3
- COMP SCI/I SY E/MATH 425 Introduction to Combinatorial Optimization 3
- F&W ECOL/HORT/STAT 571 Statistical Methods for Bioscience 3
- F&W ECOL/HORT/STAT 572 Statistical Methods for Bioscience 3
- STAT 333 Applied Regression Analysis 3
- STAT/B M I 541 Introduction to Biostatistics 3

**Total Credits**

21-26
LABORATORY/INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

2 credits from:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HORT/PATH-BIO</td>
<td>Molecular Biology Techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENETICS 545</td>
<td>Genetics Laboratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMOLCHEM 504</td>
<td>Human Biochemistry Laboratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICROBIO 304</td>
<td>Biology of Microorganisms Laboratory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOCHEM 551</td>
<td>Biochemical Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZOOLOGY 555</td>
<td>Laboratory in Developmental Biology</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thesis/Directed Study: 2

- MOL BIOL 681 Senior Honors Thesis
- & MOL BIOL 682 and Senior Honors Thesis
- MOL BIOL 691 Senior Thesis
- & MOL BIOL 692 and Senior Thesis
- MOL BIOL 699 Directed Studies in Molecular Biology

For assistance finding a directed lab or research experience and for information about scholarships, see the advisor for this program and/or consult the Undergraduate Research page (https://molecularbio.ls.wisc.edu/undergraduate-research).

RESIDENCE AND QUALITY OF WORK

2.000 GPA in all MOL BIOL and major courses

2.000 GPA on 15 upper-level major credits, taken in residence1

15 credits in MOL BIOL, taken on the UW–Madison campus

1 Courses accepted in the major that are intermediate or advanced are considered upper level in this major.

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

Students may declare Honors in the Molecular Biology Major in consultation with the Molecular Biology undergraduate advisor.

HONORS IN THE MOLECULAR BIOLOGY MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

To earn Honors in the Major in Molecular Biology, students must satisfy both the requirements for the major (above) and the following additional requirements:

- Earn a 3.300 overall university GPA
- Earn a 3.500 GPA for all courses accepted in the major
- Complete the Advanced Course requirement, two courses in two different areas, utilizing the courses indicated with the 3 above, taken for Honors credit and with grades of B or better earned in each individual course
- Complete one of the following, with a grade of B or better: MICROBIO/BIOCHEM/GENETICS 612 Prokaryotic Molecular Biology, BIOCHEM/GENETICS/MD GENET 620 Eukaryotic Molecular Biology, HORT/GENETICS 550 Molecular Approaches for Potential Crop Improvement
- Complete a two-semester Senior Honors Thesis in MOL BIOL 681 Senior Honors Thesis and MOL BIOL 682 Senior Honors Thesis, for a total of 6 credits
- Complete MOL BIOL 686 Senior Honors Seminar in Molecular Biology

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Total Degree To receive a bachelor’s degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.

Residency Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. "In residence" means on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.

Quality of Work Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Summarize the energetic and thermodynamic basis of life.
2. Define and explain the molecular basis of life and relationships between the structure and function of biological macromolecules.
3. Describe the nature of the cell and its role as the basic unit of life.
4. Understand the nature of the genetic material and its roles in inheritance, evolution, and cellular function.
5. Demonstrate comprehension of basic molecular biology laboratory techniques.
6. Utilize the scientific method to solve biological problems characteristic of today’s society.
7. Understand the primary scientific literature and apply concepts from literature to draw conclusions about modern topics in the field.
8. Communicate scientific ideas in written and oral form.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

ADVISING AND CAREERS

Admissions to the molecular biology B.A. and the molecular biology B.S. have been suspended as of fall 2019. If you have any questions, please contact the department (molecularbiomajor@ls.wisc.edu).

Students in the major are assigned to a team of advisors composed of a faculty advisor and a the major’s student services coordinator. See the major’s advising page (https://molecularbio.ls.wisc.edu/advising) for a list of advisors and for the student services coordinator information. The faculty advisor provides guidance specific to the molecular biology discipline through discussions about undergraduate experiences (i.e., research, coursework, internships) that will help prepare students
for graduate work or a career after graduation. The student services coordinator provides guidance specific to the discipline, and also helps students with major declarations, course selection, registration, DARS, L&S degree and major requirements, and tracking progress toward graduation, as well as connecting students with important resources on campus.

**L&S CAREER RESOURCES**

SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science helps students leverage the academic skills learned in their major, certificates, and liberal arts degree; explore and try out different career paths; participate in internships; prepare for the job search and/or graduate school applications; and network with professionals in the field (alumni and employers). In short, SuccessWorks helps students in the College of Letters & Science discover themselves, find opportunities, and develop the skills they need for success after graduation.

SuccessWorks can also assist students in career advising, résumé and cover letter writing, networking opportunities, and interview skills, as well as course offerings for undergraduates to begin their career exploration early in their undergraduate career.

Students should set up their profiles in Handshake (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/handshake) to take care of everything they need to explore career events, manage their campus interviews, and apply to jobs and internships from 200,000+ employers around the country.

- SuccessWorks (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu)
- Set up a career advising appointment (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/make-an-appointment)
- INTER-LS 215 Communicating About Careers (3 credits, fulfills Com B General Education Requirement)
- Handshake (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/handshake)
- Learn how we’re transforming career preparation: L&S Career Initiative (http://ls.wisc.edu/lsci)

**PEOPLE**

Committee of Advisors: Ahmad (Dermatology), Amann (Integrative Biology), Fabry (Pathology and Laboratory Medicine), Filutowicz (Bacteriology), Grinblat (Neuroscience), Martin (Biochemistry), McMahon (Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering), Newmark (Integrative Biology), Otegui (Botany), Raman (Biochemistry), Schuler (Comparative Biosciences)

**RESOURCES AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

**HILLDALE UNDERGRADUATE/FACULTY RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

The Hilldale (https://awards.advising.wisc.edu/all-scholarships/hilldale-undergraduatefaculty-research-fellowship) Undergraduate/Faculty Research Fellowships support undergraduate research done in collaboration with UW–Madison faculty or research/instructional academic staff. Approximately 97 – 100 Hilldale awards are available each year. The student researcher receives $3,000, and faculty/staff research advisor receives $1,000 to help offset research costs (e.g., supplies, faculty or student travel related to the project).

**HOLSTROM ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Holstrom Environmental Scholarships (https://awards.advising.wisc.edu/all-scholarships/holstrom-environmental-research-fellowship) support undergraduate research done in collaboration with UW-Madison faculty or research/instructional academic staff. Research proposals must have an environmental focus, and applicants must have at least a junior standing at time of application.

**SOPHOMORE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

Funded by grants from the Brittingham Fund and the Kemper K. Knapp Bequest, the Sophomore Research Fellowships (https://awards.advising.wisc.edu/all-scholarships/sophomore-research-fellowship) support undergraduate research done in collaboration with UW–Madison faculty or research/instructional academic staff. Approximately 15 awards are available.

**UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS**

The Undergraduate Research Scholars (https://urs.ls.wisc.edu) program (URS) is dedicated to enhancing the academic experience of UW-Madison students by providing first and second year undergraduates with opportunities to earn credit for participating in the research and creative work with UW-Madison faculty and staff. The program has been designed to include partnerships between students and mentors, seminars on research-relevant issues, and practice in research/artistic presentations. The many benefits of the program are found in the fluid interaction between these activities.

**UNDERGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM**

The annual Undergraduate Symposium (https://ugradsymposium.wisc.edu) showcases undergraduate creativity, achievement, research, service-learning and community-based research from all areas of study at UW–Madison including the humanities, fine arts, biological sciences, physical sciences, and social sciences. This past year nearly 700 students presented, displayed or performed their work for members of the University, the surrounding community, family and friends.

**UNIVERSITY BOOK STORE AWARD**

Supported by a generous grant from the University Book Store, (https://awards.advising.wisc.edu/all-scholarships/university-book-store-award) this award recognizes undergraduate students who have completed an outstanding independent project, such as a senior thesis, at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Projects in all academic fields are eligible.

**WISCONSIN IDEA FELLOWSHIPS**

Wisconsin Idea Fellowships (https://morgridge.wisc.edu/students/wisconsin-idea-fellowships) are awarded annually to undergraduate student projects working towards solving a challenge identified along with local or global community partner. Fellowships are awarded to semester-long or year-long projects designed by an undergraduate student (or group of students) in collaboration with a community organization and a UW-Madison faculty or academic staff member.