Applicants who have submitted a statement of intent and have received the link to apply for the MS portion of the program should submit the official UC San Diego Graduate Studies application online and pay the application fee. Pay careful attention to deadlines. **There are no exceptions or extensions to application deadlines.**

**It is your responsibility to ensure the application is completed by the deadline.** Applications with missing documents or unfinished required sections will be considered incomplete, and the applicant may forfeit eligibility for the BS/MS program.

1. Applicants may begin the BS/MS in Biology application by doing the following:
   a. Create a new account in the Application Management System
   b. Select “Start New Application”, “Create Application”, and “Open Application”
   c. Read through the Application Instructions
   d. In the Program Selector Page:
      i. Answer Yes, you are a current UCSD student
      ii. Answer No, you have not previously registered as a graduate student (if this is not true, contact the Program Coordinator)
      iii. Enter PID
      iv. Select “B.S./M.S.” for Degree Type
      v. Select “Biology – B.S./M.S. “in Program Interest
      vi. Select the correct academic term

2. In the “Academic History” section, the applicant will be prompted to upload transcripts. Applicants who do not have an official UCSD transcript can upload an unofficial transcript by saving an unofficial copy of their academic history from TritonLink. Applicants must also upload transcripts from any other university or college attended after high school, even if this transcript has already been submitted to UCSD. These transcripts may also be unofficial unless/until an official offer of admission is received from the Graduate Division. The admission offer will contain the instructions for submitting official transcripts.

3. When listing the current undergraduate degree, please select “Bachelor’s Degree or Equivalent.”

4. Applicants must scan and upload a signed Master’s Thesis Research Plan form into the application as a .PDF file. All sections must be complete and include signatures from the applicant, thesis advisor, and one additional thesis committee member who is a tenure-track faculty member with the Division of Biological Sciences. The thesis advisor and second committee member must answer the questions and sign the form in the appropriate section. Only complete forms will be accepted. Applications with missing documents or unfinished required sections will be considered incomplete, and the applicant may forfeit eligibility for the BS/MS program.

   **Additional Tips for Master’s Thesis Research Plan:**
   - Convert the PDF to a Word Document. This will allow typing directly into the template.
   - Timetable- Must have estimated dates (Month/Year) for completing key steps in the proposed research.
Division of Biological Sciences, BSMS Program Application Instructions

- **Scientific Papers**: Must be in APA format. List ALL papers referenced in developing the plan. Applicants must demonstrate to the committee a strong understanding of the scientific literature related to proposed research. This is not accomplished by listing 1-3 papers. Applicants should be prepared to list AT LEAST 5 papers, and should include ALL papers on this list.

- **Research plan** – be as specific as possible. This is the applicant’s sole opportunity to prove that the proposed research will result in a MS degree. Do not assume that the admissions committee knows the research project. Provide enough detail that will give the committee a good understanding of the project.

- **Mentorship Plan** – Mentorship with the thesis advisor, beyond lab meetings, is required. MS students are expected to have regular meetings with their faculty advisor (not merely other lab supervisors) throughout the MS program to discuss progress.

The Master’s Thesis Research Plan:
https://biology.ucsd.edu/education/contiguous-bsms/admissions/index.html#Application-Information

For applicants looking to identify a second committee member, here is the link to the Division of Biological Sciences faculty list:
https://biology.ucsd.edu/administration/directories/directory-faculty.html

***Eligible titles for the additional thesis committee member include Professor Emeritus, Distinguished Professor, Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor***

5. If the proposed advisor is **NOT** in the Division of Biological Sciences, the second committee member will serve as the co-chair and **MUST** be from Biological Sciences with one of the following titles: Professor Emeritus, Distinguished Professor, Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor.

6. All applicants must request a letter of recommendation from their thesis advisor. Additional letters will not be considered. The letter must come directly from the faculty thesis advisor, not a different lab supervisor. Emailed letters will not be accepted. The letter is due by the application deadline.
   a. Students must enter their advisor’s contact information in the “Recommendations” section of the application. Students must not upload the letter of recommendation themselves.
      i. Recommenders will receive an automatic email notification through the application portal with instructions detailing how to submit a letter of recommendation after their email is entered in the application portal.
   b. The letter of recommendation must address the following for all applicants:
      i. How long a student has conducted independent research with their current lab (either as a volunteer, or through BISP 199/196/193)
      ii. Outline a plan that demonstrates the applicant will be supported academically and in their research while in the MS program
      iii. Any details the advisor feels address the applicant’s potential to succeed in the MS program
   c. For students who do not meet the GPA requirement for admissions (3.0 cumulative GPA and 3.3. upper division Biology GPA), the letter must also:
Division of Biological Sciences, BSMS Program Application Instructions

i. Acknowledge that the applicant has discussed their GPA with their faculty advisor
ii. Explain why the faculty advisor believes the student will succeed as a Master’s student
iii. Outline a clear plan detailing how the student will balance coursework with research demands if admitted. This can include, but is not limited to:
   1. Quarterly plans to discuss course enrolment
   2. Discussions to determine time spent on research (in and out of lab) v. time dedicated to coursework

7. Applicants must upload the Statement of Purpose into the application. General guidelines for the Statement of Purpose are located on the BS/MS Admissions webpage. There is no page or word limit/requirement for the Statement of Purpose.

- Applicants are NOT required to submit GRE scores.
- CRVs and/or Resumes are not required.
- Applicants must file a Degree and Diploma Application with their college before the Graduate Division can make an official offer of admission
- Admitted students register for MS program classes only after they receive and accept the offer of admission.

Decisions will be communicated as soon as they are available, typically no later than the posting of grades for the final undergraduate term. Inquiries regarding the decision timeline will not receive a response.

Other questions? Please contact the program coordinator through the Virtual Advising Center.