DEPARTMENT OF MARINE BIOLOGY

The Department of Marine Biology offers undergraduate Bachelor of Science degrees in Marine Biology, Marine Fisheries, and Marine Biology-License Option from Texas A&M University. At the graduate level, the department offers Master of Science and Doctoral degrees in Marine Biology. Teaching and research facilities are located in Galveston, Texas along the shore of Galveston Bay. The semitropical climate provides students and faculty with year-round access to a variety of estuarine, coastal and pelagic marine ecosystems, including salt marshes, oyster reefs, seagrass meadows and coastal sand dunes and beaches. A state-of-the art Sea Life Facility is available for additional hands-on experiences with marine organisms.

With a low student-to-professor ratio, undergraduate students have extensive opportunities for laboratory and field education and research at national and international locations. International educational opportunities are frequently available through courses offered in Mexico, Greece, Italy, and New Zealand through the TAMU Study Abroad Program, as well as a summer field course in Alaska.

The faculty have research expertise in marine fisheries, marine invertebrate and vertebrate zoology, marine botany, marine mammalogy, biological oceanography, wetlands ecology, marine conservation and management, biospeleology, biodiversity, seafood microbiology, genomics, toxicology, physiology and evolutionary biology.

Marine biology undergraduate students obtain employment with State and Federal agencies, private industry, environmental consulting entities, biomedical research, zoos and aquariums, and teaching. Many undergraduates pursue postgraduate studies in marine biology, as well as in the fields of medicine, veterinary sciences and environmental law.

Faculty

Alvarado-Bremer, Jaime, Associate Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of Toronto, 1994

Armitage Chan, Ania R, Associate Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of California, Los Angeles, 2003

Borda, Elizabeth, Lecturer
Marine Biology
PHD, City University of New York, 2007

Davis, Randall W, Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of California, San Diego, 1980

Ditty, James, Lecturer
Marine Biology
PHD, Louisiana State University, 2002

Eytan, Ron I, Assistant Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Louisiana State University, 2010

Guillen, George J, Lecturer
Marine Biology
PHD, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, 1996

Hala, David, Assistant Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Brunel University, 2007

Hall, Christopher, Lecturer
Marine Biology
MBA, Texas A&M University, 2003

Hill, Ron, Lecturer
Marine Biology
PHD, University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez, 2002

Hochman, Mona E, Lecturer
Marine Biology
MS, University of Maryland, 2000

Iliffe, Thomas M, Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, 1977

Labonte, Jessica, Assistant Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of British Columbia, 2016

Liu, Hui, Assistant Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 2006

Marshall, Christopher, Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of Florida, 1997

Metz, Tasha L, Lecturer
Marine Biology
PHD, Texas A&M University, 2004

Miglietta, Maria P, Assistant Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Duke University, 2005

O’Neal, Clifford C, Lecturer
Marine Biology
PHD, Southern Illinois University, 2005

Petersen, Lene H, Instructional Assistant Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Memorial University of New Foundland, 2010

Quigg, Antonietta S, Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Monash University, 2000

Rooker, Jay R, Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, The University of Texas at Austin, 1997

Rowe, Gilbert T, Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Duke University, 1968
CERT, US Coast Guard, 1996
Schulze, Anja, Associate Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, University of Victoria, Canada, 2001

Schwarz, John R, Senior Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1972

St Clair, Katherine I, Lab Instructor
Marine Biology
MS, Texas A&M University, 2014

Wells, R.J. David, Associate Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, Louisiana State University, 2007

Würsig, Bernd, Senior Professor
Marine Biology
PHD, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1978

Majors

- Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/galveston/marine-biology/bs)
- Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology, License Option (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/galveston/marine-biology/license-option)
- Bachelor of Science in Marine Fisheries (http://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/galveston/marine-biology/marine-fisheries-bs)

Minors


Courses

MARB 285 Directed Studies
Credits 1 to 4. 1 to 4 Other Hours.
Special topics and problems in field and/or laboratory work suited to analysis by individuals or small groups concerning aspects of marine biology. Usually requires a report describing techniques and results. Only 3 credit hours may be used in the degree plan curriculum.
Prerequisites: 2.25 GPR, Approval of instructor.

MARB 289 Special Topics in Marine Biology
Credits 1 to 4. 1 to 4 Lecture Hours.
Study of selected topics in an identified area of marine biology.
Prerequisite: Approval of instructor.

MARB 300 Scientific Methods in Marine Biology
Credits 2. 1 Lecture Hour. 3 Lab Hours.
An introduction to field, laboratory and analytical methods, equipment and instruments. The field portion will include making proper observations, sampling techniques, and data recording. The laboratory portion will include sample analysis methods, use of instruments, introduction to data analysis including elementary statistics, introduction to scientific literature and report writing style.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Curriculum sophomore, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 301 Genetics
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Fundamental principles of genetics; physical basis of Mendelian inheritance; expression and interaction of genes, linkage, sex linkage, biochemical nature of genetic material, and mutation.
Prerequisites: CHEM 227, 228, 237 and 238. Curriculum junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 302 The Sea World Experience
Credits 3. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Exploration of marine organisms, survey topics in vertebrate marine biology and the role that aquatic oriented parks play in education, research and conservation; hands-on experiences by participating in aspects of maintaining aquatic organisms in captivity including animal care and nutrition, physiology, behavior, animal training and water quality; exposure to marine organismal taxonomy, natural history, anatomy and ecology.
Prerequisites: BIOL 111 with a grade of C or better; GPA greater than 2.00.

MARB 303 Biostatistics
Credits 3. 2 Lecture Hours. 2 Lab Hours.
Introduction to sampling, experimental design, analysis of data, and testing of hypotheses, with emphasis on methods applied to biological investigations. Parametric and non-parametric techniques. Descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, correlation and regression.
Prerequisites: MATH 151 or MATH 142; sophomore, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 310 Introduction to Cell Biology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Cellular structure/function; prokaryotic vs. eukaryotic cells; examination of cellular membranes and membrane transport; analysis of DNA replication, transcription, and protein translation (an extension of their treatment in MARB 301); introduction to the components and genetics of immunology.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, CHEM 228, MARB 301; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor; MARS 360 is recommended but not required.

MARB 311 Ichthyology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Freshwater and marine fishes. Subject will be mainly systematic, but evolution, ecology, life history, and economics of more important species will be treated.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112 and MARB 315. Curriculum sophomore, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 312 Field Ichthyology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Field and laboratory studies on identification and ecology of freshwater and marine fishes of Texas. Field trips required.
Prerequisites: MARB 311. Curriculum sophomore, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 315 Natural History of Vertebrates
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Natural history of fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals, with emphasis on coastal Texas vertebrates.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Curriculum sophomore, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.
MARB 320 Fisheries Techniques  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
An introduction to theory and techniques in fisheries biology and ecology. Experience with fisheries equipment and techniques will be provided in both field and laboratory. Practical sampling design, collection, and interpretation of data from estuarine, coastal and offshore environments will be addressed.  
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, MARB 311. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 325 Biospeleology  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
A field-oriented introduction to the biology of aquatic and terrestrial cave organisms with discussions on the origin of caves, cave environment, cave fauna, and evolution. Field trips required.  
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, CHEM 101. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 334 Biology of Sea Turtles  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
Living sea turtles of the world, with emphasis on species in the Atlantic, Gulf and Caribbean basins. Emphasis includes phylogeny, population biology, ecology, life history, behavior, social and economic aspects and their impact on sea turtle conservation and recovery.  
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, MARB 315 or instructor approval.

MARB 335 Fish Physiology  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.  
Study of the basic physiology of fishes. Examination of fish cardiovascular, renal, digestive, locomotor, reproductive, and central/peripheral nervous systems. Discussion of physiological adaptations enhancing survival in a water medium.  
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 340 Tropical Marine Ecology  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
This course provides for field-oriented experience in coral reef, mangrove, sea grass and other tropical marine ecosystems. Special emphasis will be placed on biodiversity, ecology and conservation issues specific to Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico.  
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. All students who dive must either be a current AAUS scientific diver or present a current medical examination (which will be provided by the Diving Safety Officer or instructor) completed within the past 12 months and signed by a doctor, to the instructor before class participation in the pool will be allowed. Prior to using scuba equipment, all students must provide proof of open water certification or equivalent diving experience (advanced certification recommended). Permission of the instructor and the Diving Safety Officer is required before any pool activity takes place. Divers Alert Network insurance, or equivalent, is required.

MARB 345 Introduction to Scientific Diving  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
Prepare and qualify divers for entry into the TAMUG Scientific Diving Program. Students must pass medical, swimming, skin diving and scuba diving tests. Lectures include diving equipment, physics, physiology, medicine, regulations, environment, emergency and decompression procedures.  
Prerequisites: BIOL 111, PHYS 201, advanced scuba certification. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. All students must present a current medical examination (which will be provided by the Diving Safety Officer or instructor) completed within the past 12 months, to the instructor before class participation in the pool will be allowed. Prior to using scuba equipment, all students must provide proof of basic certification. Permission of the instructor and the Diving Safety Officer is required before any pool activity takes place. Divers Alert Network insurance, or equivalent, is required.

MARB 350 Methods in Research Diving  
Credits 4. 2 Lecture Hours. 6 Lab Hours.  
Survey of research methods and techniques using diving. Lecture and lab designed to train students in safe, efficient use of diving to collect and record data underwater for studies primarily in biology, geology, and archaeology.  
Prerequisites: MARB 345. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. All students must present a completed medical examination (Appendices 1-4 in the TAMUG diving manual) signed by a doctor, to the instructor before class participation in the pool will be allowed. Prior to using scuba equipment, all students must provide proof of advanced open water certification or equivalent diving experience. Permission of the instructor and the Diving Safety Officer is required before any pool activity takes place. Divers Alert Network insurance, or equivalent, is required.

MARB 360 Marine Conservation Biology  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
Lectures and laboratories cover the major principles of conservation biology; a new synthetic field that applies concepts of ecology, systematics and evolution, biogeology, genetics, behavioral sciences, and social sciences to the conservation of marine fisheries resources. Lab exercises include morphometric and genetic variation, GIS, molecular systematics and phylogenetic inference.  
Prerequisite: Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 400 Biology of Marine Mammals  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
A broad-spectrum course on the taxonomy, evolution, morphology behavior, and ecology of marine mammals, including sirenians, carnivores, baleen and toothed whales and dolphins.  
Prerequisite: BIOL 112, MARB 315. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 401 Physiological Ecology of Marine Mammals  
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours. 0 Lab Hours.  
Anatomy, taxonomy, phylogeny and physiological adaptations of marine mammals.  
Prerequisites: MARB 315; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 403 Cetacean Behavior and Behavioral Ecology  
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.  
This course consists of lecture of up to date descriptions of Cetacean behavior and ecology; and of labs that evaluate the literature of topics of present relevance.  
Prerequisite: MARB 315. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.
MARB 404 Behavioral Ecology of Marine Mammals and Seabirds of New Zealand
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Behavioral ecology of Marine Mammals and Seabirds of New Zealand. Ecology and behavior of marine birds and mammals of South Island, New Zealand; literature comparisons of marine vertebrates; emphasis is on animals in nature; laboratory experience of the animals from boats and shore; readings, videos, interpretation and peer-review of scientific papers and books.
Prerequisites: MARB 315 or other vertebrate or chordate course. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 405 Marine Parasitology
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Fundamentals of parasitology, with emphasis on marine applications. Survey of major parasites of marine animals and the diseases they cause, especially in ecologically and commercially-important host species.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 406 Life in Extreme Environments
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Key metabolic and physiological innovations of extremophile organisms; topics include the molecular biology, biochemistry and physiology of organisms living in extreme environments.
Prerequisites: MARB 315; CHEM 228; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 407 Research and Conservation in the Gulf of Corinth, Greece: Dolphins, Fisheries and Cultural Heritage
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Lectures, readings and labs on the ecology and behavior of the vertebrate fauna of the Gulf of Corinth, Greece; Laboratory hands-on experience of the marine environment from boats, readings, videos, interpretation, and select major peer-review scientific papers and books.
Prerequisites: Junior or senior classification; MARB 315 or approval of instructor.

MARB 408 Marine Botany
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Morphology, systematics, ecology, and biochemistry of representative algae, fungi, and submarine grasses.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 410 Animal Behavior
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Examination of ethological concepts. Discussion of the development, genetics, physiology, and evolution of animal behavior patterns involved in reproduction, territoriality, aggression, communication, population dispersion, sociality, and sociobiology of invertebrates and vertebrates.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Curriculum sophomore, junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 414 Toxicology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
History and scope of toxicology as it applies to mammals; where possible, marine species will be used for examples and assigned papers.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, CHEM 227 and CHEM 228.

MARB 415 Coastal Marine Biology and Geology of Alaska
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Field course conducted in south-central Alaska for two weeks; work at the remote Alice Cove Research Station located in Prince William Sound; conduct research on marine mammals behavior and ecology; exploration of the geology and glaciology.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112.

MARB 420 Comparative Animal Physiology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Principles of animal physiology are examined using invertebrate and vertebrate model systems. Topics include osmoregulation in marine vs. freshwater vs. terrestrial organisms, excretion, fluid circulation, nervous system structure and function, muscle activity, sensory neurobiology, and endocrine mediation.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112, CHEM 228, MARB 310. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 423 Mariculture
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Study of factors determining the success of efforts to cultivate estuarine and marine species of economic importance. Mariculture practices used worldwide in the production of algae, mollusks, crustaceans, and fishes will be discussed.
Prerequisite: Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 425 Marine Ecology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Relationship between various marine environments and their inhabitants; intra- and interspecific relationships between organisms; structure and function among marine communities. Laboratory emphasis is placed on study of living material and natural habitats in the Gulf of Mexico.
Prerequisites: MARB 315; senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 426 Aquatic Animal Nutrition
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Chemistry, digestion, absorption and intermediary metabolism of nutrient classes with special emphasis on their relationship to warmwater fish nutrition. Determination of nutrient requirements, feed evaluation, feed processing, ration formulation and feeding practices.
Prerequisites: CHEM 227. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 430 Coastal Plant Ecology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Study of the identification, distribution, production, and ecological importance of estuarine, coastal marsh, and dune vascular plants; the interaction of plants with their abiotic and biotic environments; and techniques of vegetation management and evaluation.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 433 Applied Bioinformatics
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Fundamental concepts and methods in bioinformatics using sequence analysis and practical applications; includes biological databases, sequence and structure alignments, structural bioinformatics, gene prediction and genome analysis; emphasis on understanding and application of these concepts.
Prerequisites: MARB 301; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.
MARB 435 Marine Invertebrate Zoology
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Marine Invertebrate Zoology. General biology of marine invertebrate animals; morphology, evolution, and systematics. Laboratory will stress studies of local fauna.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 437 Pathology of Marine Animals
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
Examination of changes or loss of physiological function as related to common diseases (viral, bacterial, parasitic) or injury; mechanisms of disease in cells, tissues and organ systems of marine vertebrates; emphasis on marine mammals; fishes and marine reptiles/birds; clinical manifestations, diagnostics and treatments.
Prerequisites: MARB 315; junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 438 Coastal Ornithology
Credits 3. 2 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Coastal Ornithology. Field and laboratory studies on the identification, classification, distribution and ecology of birds with special emphasis on birds of the Texas Gulf Coast. Classroom lectures to include anatomy, physiology, behavior and migration. Field trips required.
Prerequisites: MARB 315. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 445 Marine Fisheries Management
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
Basic knowledge from marine ichthyology, biology of fishes and biological oceanography related to applied aspects of marine fisheries sciences. Emphasis placed on management techniques applicable to tidal-influenced inland water, estuaries, and oceans.
Prerequisite: Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 460 Fisheries Population Dynamics
Credits 4. 3 Lecture Hours. 3 Lab Hours.
An introduction to the behavior of populations. Classical and recent population theories will be discussed in lecture. In lab, extant and programs written by students will be used to explore population behavior and interactions.
Prerequisites: MATH 151. Senior classification or approval of instructor.

MARB 466 Evolutionary Biology
Credits 3. 3 Lecture Hours.
A conceptual examination of evolutionary theory, not a survey of specific organismal evolutions. Evidence for the abiotic origin of life is presented, followed by a discussion of micro-evolutionary (including drift and natural selection) and macro-evolutionary (including evolutionary trends) mechanisms. The course concludes with application of these concepts to human evolution.
Prerequisites: BIOL 112. Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor. MARB 301 is recommended but not required.

MARB 482 Seminar in Marine Biology
Credit 1. 1 Lecture Hour.
Compilation of literature pertaining to topics in marine biology. Emphasis placed on preparation of a written report and presentation of a synopsis of that report.
Prerequisite: Junior or senior classification or approval of instructor.