M.A. Program in Biology
Hegis # 0401.00
Program Code 02563

1. **Type of Change**: degree requirements

2. **From**:

**Degree Requirements**

All students (matriculated or nonmatriculated) should consult with the Departmental Graduate Adviser regarding their programs. The following three tracks toward the Master of Arts degree are available:

- **Independent Laboratory Research (Track A). 30 credits.**

  A student may elect to substitute 3 to 6 credits in original laboratory research (BIO 799.1, 799.2, and 799.3) for 3 to 6 credits of coursework. When a student is ready to select a research problem, a research advisory committee of faculty members will be established in consultation with his or her thesis adviser,* to guide the investigation. A thesis based on this research must be defended satisfactorily in an oral presentation prior to its submission in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts. Approved copies of the thesis must be deposited in the Lehman College Library and the Department of Biology.

  *Students who choose a thesis adviser at the New York Botanical Garden or at another institution must have an "in-house" adviser. This individual must be a full-time faculty member of the Department of Biological Sciences at Lehman College and a member of the graduate faculty in biological sciences.

- **Comprehensive Examination (Track B). 30 credits.**
Students who select this track must complete 30 credits and then must pass a comprehensive examination (which is the CUNY Doctoral Program in Biology's First Examination). Passing this examination will not only meet the requirements for the Master of Arts degree but also qualify the student to proceed into the CUNY Doctoral Program in Biology. A grade of 65 is deemed a passing grade to meet the requirements for the Master of Arts degree, while a grade of 70 is the minimal passing grade that will allow the student to proceed into the CUNY Doctoral Program in Biology (subject to satisfactory meeting of other admission requirements).

• **Tutorial (Track C). 34 credits.**

A student must include 4 credits of tutorial (BIO 792.2) as part of 34 credits required in this track. This tutorial is performed under the supervision of a member of the graduate faculty in Biological Sciences. It is intended to involve the student in the performance of a carefully supervised project. The project may involve research in the laboratory, a library review of relevant topics, or a combination of the two. The results of this project will be written and submitted to the Department of Biological Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the master's degree. This document will become part of the departmental library.

3. **To:**

**Degree Requirements**

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• **Independent Laboratory Research (Track A). 30 credits.**

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**Academic Probation and Continuation**

All graduate students whose GPA falls between 2.7 and 3.0 will be placed on academic
probation. See the College's graduate policies and procedures regarding probation and
continuation.

Graduate students in Biological Sciences degree programs whose GPA falls below 2.7
will not be eligible for probation and may only continue in their program upon successful
appeal to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Students who received a failing grade in a course and have a cumulative GPA between
2.7 and 3.0 will only be granted one semester to make sufficient progress towards
degree completion and bring the GPA back up to 3.0 or above. Students may not
continue in any course for which the failed course is a prerequisite. If the GPA is not
raised to a 3.0 or above by the end of the next registered semester the student will be
asked to discontinue their program of study.
Students, who receive two failing grades in any of the courses satisfying the degree curriculum, will not be eligible for probation and will be asked to discontinue their program of study.

4. **Rationale**

This program specific update addresses the need for a more stringent probation policy than the one administered by the Office of Graduate Studies for all graduate level students. The new policy will be enforced by the Biological Sciences Department and is created to avoid the situation in which students attempt to stay in the program when they have little likelihood of raising their GPA above 3.0 within two semesters. The Department strongly believes that graduate students earning unsatisfactory grades or an F grade deserves, upon appropriate petition, a second attempt to bring their index back up to 3.0 and above in a timely fashion. However, earning two F grades is a clear demonstration of the student’s inability to perform at the graduate level and/or the statistical improbability of raising the GPA given the limited number of credits required by the program.

5. **Date of program approval:** March 21, 2012