

Ph.D. in Evolutionary Primatology-- See also NYCEP

Columbia has offered a Ph.D. program in Evolutionary Primatology since the inception of the E3B Department. Many aspects of this program are coordinated with the New York Consortium in Evolutionary Primatology (NYCEP). NYCEP, a consortium of the City University of New York, Columbia University, New York University, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Wildlife Conservation Society, provides a multiinstitutional venue for graduate training leading to the Ph.D., which emphasizes all aspects of the behavioral, morphological and evolutionary biology of primates. Course offerings in this program are coordinated across the NYCEP institutions. Six units of fulltime residency (4 for students with advanced standing) are required by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Please note: The Ph.D. application deadline is usually December 15th; early applications are strongly encouraged, preferably by mid-November. The most up-to-date information will be in the E3B Handbook. See the [ADMISSION](#) page for more information.

Requirements Advisors

Students are admitted to the program to work with a particular research advisor. During the first 2 years, they develop a 5-member dissertation committee, which normally includes the readers of their advanced exams and literature review, as well as the research advisor. Some committee members may belong to institutions other than Columbia.

Core Courses

First year students are required to take the NYCEP core course/s that cover evolutionary morphology, genetics and behavior and ecology. Students receiving a grade of less than B+ in any of these courses are required to take a written exam at the end of the first summer based on the core course material. In addition, students must take the NYCEP seminar in both semesters of the first two years of study, and attendance is expected thereafter if the student is resident in New York.

Advanced Courses

Advanced courses provide specialized training in one or more of the major subdivisions of evolutionary primatology. Students usually take at least 3 such courses, which include courses in other departments at Columbia, as well as through the NYCEP Consortium (NYU, CUNY, RGGGS). Students are expected to take advanced statistics courses to gain the proficiency they will need for their research.

Internships

Two internships are required, with faculty other than the student's advisor. One of these internships must be mentored by faculty from a different NYCEP institution, and one must bring an interdisciplinary aspect to a project that relates to a student's prospective research focus. Internship sponsors may include other members of the NYCEP consortium.

Teaching Assistantship

All Ph.D. students will serve as teaching assistants, usually for undergraduate courses, for 3 semesters. This experience provides students an opportunity to develop skills related to many professional directions they may eventually follow. Service as a TA is a component of all fellowships. Students may not register for courses they TA.

Advanced Examinations

Two advanced written examinations on general topics relevant to the dissertation research must be taken by the end of the 3rd year of study, and normally by the end of the 5th semester.

Each exam is read by two faculty members of the student's committee.

Literature Review

One in-depth review of the scholarly literature most relevant to the proposed dissertation research, written in the style of an article submitted to a scholarly journal or an introductory chapter of a dissertation, will be submitted for approval by two faculty readers by the end of the third year of study. **Oral Examination of the Dissertation Proposal**

A well-developed research proposal, in a style necessary for submission to a specific granting agency, is submitted for provisional approval by two of the faculty members on the student's dissertation committee. After this approval, and before the end of the third year of study (second for students with advanced standing), students defend their dissertation proposal orally before their 5-member dissertation committee. Final revisions to the dissertation proposal are discussed and the committee recommends whether or not to advance the student to Ph.D. candidacy.

Advancing to Candidacy

Students advance to candidacy if they pass their oral exam (proposal defense), and have completed all other requirements of the Ph.D. degree other than the dissertation. A student advanced to candidacy is eligible for the M. Phil. degree (see below).

Dissertation Research

Once a student is advanced to Ph.D. candidacy, he/she is expected to submit the proposal to granting agencies for outside funding. **M.A., M. Phil., and Ph.D.**

The sequential M.A. degree is awarded to Ph.D. students who have completed one full year in the program. The M. Phil. degree is awarded upon successful completion of all the Ph.D. requirements other than the preparation and defense of the dissertation. This degree is to be completed by the end of the fourth year of study. Six units of residency and 40 E credits approved by the DGS and the student's advisory committee are required for this degree.

The Ph.D. degree is earned after the defense and final deposition of the dissertation. The written dissertation is first submitted to the student's sponsor and other readers as recommended.

After revisions, the dissertation is submitted to the full five-member dissertation committee, and the student defends the dissertation orally.

Admission Requirements

For the EEB Ph.D. program, an undergraduate major in one of the natural sciences is preferred, and extensive preparation in biological science is mandatory. It is also desirable that students have had course work in calculus, physics, chemistry, statistics, genetics, ecology, and organismal biology. Prior field biology experience is strongly recommended.

Students are admitted to begin in the Fall semester only. The GRE general test is required and the biology subject test is strongly recommended. Applicants must also contact a full-time or affiliated faculty member with whom the applicant is interested in working and who may act as the applicant's dissertation sponsor. The application deadline is December 15th.

Application

For further information on how to apply, please follow the link below, which will lead you to the 'Prospective Students' page of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. You will be able to fill out an online application by following the link to the Ph.D. programs.

Prospective Students

If you want to go straight to the application, follow this link instead:

[APPLY ONLINE NOW!](#)

Fellowships Please see Grad Handbook for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the application deadline? The Ph.D. application deadline is December 15th. NO exceptions.
2. Can I apply for Spring Admission? There is no Spring Admission for the Ph.D. program.
3. Is there a part-time option? There is no part-time option for the Ph.D. program.
4. What are the admission requirements? Those who have been accepted have diverse backgrounds and qualifications. Please see the GSAS Bulletin for some information about admission requirements. The general GRE is required. The Biology Subject test is strongly recommended.
5. How competitive is the admissions process? Admission is extremely competitive. In the past few years, less than 1 in 20 applicants was admitted. Of vital importance is contacting a potential dissertation advisor willing to mentor you through this program.
6. Should I visit? Visiting Columbia is an excellent idea. It will give you a chance to see if you would like to come to school here, if you could thrive in a city like New York, and to meet faculty and other students to get their perspectives. Before coming to visit, contact a potential advisor who can arrange to show you around. The Director of Administration and

Finance will also be able to help you contact students currently in the program and answer other questions you may have.

8. What type of fellowships or financial aid are available? Ph.D. students are offered fellowships which cover five years of tuition, Columbia Health Insurance and Health Fees, and a stipend.

9. Is there housing?

As part of the fellowship offer, Ph.D. students are guaranteed housing as long as they apply on time.

10. What are Residence Units?

RUs are equivalent to full-time registration for a semester. Six RUs are required for the Ph.D. A student registered for RU is charged the full-time rate of tuition. Students on fellowship have their tuition paid through their award.

11. Can affiliate faculty be my advisor?

PhD students are sometimes advised by affiliate faculty that appear on the GSAS list of official sponsors. However, student support may present extra challenges in such situations, and it is advisable to contact faculty members of interest to see whether they are able to take students in a given admission cycle.

12. How many students are in the program?

Currently we have 25 students over the two E3B Ph.D. programs.

13. Do students have a teaching commitment? All Ph.D. students are required to serve as teaching assistants for two to four semesters. This is a stipulation of the fellowship.

14. How long does it take to finish a graduate degree?

Ours is a full-time Ph.D. program. Students take about 5-6 years to complete their doctorates.