Explore more majors
Ecology, Evolution and Behavior

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College of Biological Sciences
Degree Type(s)
B.S.
Link to major's website
Degree Requirements

When you major in ecology, evolution, and behavior (EEB) you’ll focus on three related areas of biology. Ecology examines the growth and maintenance of populations and their interactions in communities, and relationships among organisms and physical events in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Evolution investigates the origin and change of biological diversity by studying evolutionary patterns and processes at various temporal and spatial scales. Behavioral biology explores behavioral adaptations to the environment, mechanisms of behavior, and the evolution of social systems. Studying these three concentrations will build a foundation for success in various future paths.

In this major, you’ll study with world-class faculty like renowned ecologist David Tilman and be among people who are also passionate about EEB. You’ll also have unique opportunities to gain field biology experience at the college’s two field stations: Itasca Biological Station and Laboratories and Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve. These experiences will greatly enhance your undergraduate career at the U of M.

A degree in EEB prepares students for graduate study in integrative biology and related biological sciences, careers in teaching, and entry-level scientist positions in industry, government agencies, nonprofit agencies, and universities.

Student Experiences
It can be hard to tell people about your dream career, especially when it’s a little off the “typical” path. And when your dreams are repeatedly dampened by others’ frowny-faced reactions, your plan can begin to feel like a parade that’s constantly being rained upon. That was certainly Nick Beermann’s (B.S. Biology) experience. He found that whenever he mentioned that he wanted to be a high school science teacher after graduation, he needed a figurative umbrella to ward off the downpour of negativity.

Then he became the student of Dr. Sehoya Cotner, who recently received a Morse-Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Award. Her passion for the profession of teaching encouraged him so much that he applied to, and was accepted by, the Milwaukee Teaching Fellows program.

“It’s an alternative licensing program placing high-achieving college graduates in urban, high-need teaching positions,” Beermann says. He was assigned to the MacDowell Montessori High School, where he teaches Physical Science, International Baccalaureate Biology and Anatomy and Physiology for grades 10 through 12.

Beermann recently completed his master’s degree in Teaching at Cardinal Stritch University. “My thesis was on the use of labs on the evolution of multicellularity to teach evolution,” he says. He hopes someday to take on a leadership role at a Montessori or project-based school. In the meantime, he’s been very busy getting an aquaponics program installed at MacDowell.

“I love it when students get the opportunity to investigate things in which they’re interested and conduct research they design themselves,” he says. “So many people told me that teaching was not a career worth pursuing,” Beermann adds. “But Dr. Cotner showed me otherwise.”

Student Group Spotlight: Ecology Club
Study Abroad Options


You might also explore

- Marine Biology Minor
- Biology, Society, and Environment
- Genetics, Cell Biology, and Development
- Animal Science
- Biology
- Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology
- Forest and Natural Resource Management

Associated Careers

Elementary, Middle, and High School Teachers; Environmental Engineers; Environmental Scientists; Foresters and Forestry Technicians; Park Rangers; Wildlife Technicians