Collection Subject Statement: Biological Sciences

Last Reviewed: May 2025

Purpose
The Biological Sciences collection in the University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS) supports the academic programs and research needs of the students, faculty, and staff across the university. The collection supports multiple B.S. degrees (biological sciences/biology, biochemistry, computational biology, ecology & evolution, exercise science, health & physical education, microbiology, molecular biology, natural sciences) at various campuses and two-year A.S. programs in nursing at Bradford and Titusville. In addition, the Pittsburgh campus offers M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. Research from the undergraduate to post-doctoral and faculty levels is supported at each campus as appropriate. The collection aims to support all aspects of teaching and learning in the departments of biological sciences, including theory and practice, and to enable and encourage independent inquiry and research. Relevant materials are located in Bevier Library, Hanley Library, Haskell Library, Millstein Library, Owen Library, and Thomas Blvd. Library.

Audience
The collection primarily serves the needs of students, faculty, and researchers in the departments of biological sciences across the university. This includes students taking biological sciences courses as requirements for or in support of majors in other departments, as part of pre-health science programs, or for secondary education degrees with certification to teach biology. The collection is also a resource for those in disciplines such as bioengineering, biophysics, chemistry or chemical biology, computational biology, environmental science, neuroscience, and certain health sciences.

Guiding Principles and Areas of Focus
The collection is intended to represent the broad range of study and research in biological sciences at the university. It includes anatomy and physiology (human and animal), animal science (including ornithology and wildlife management), biodiversity, biostatistics, cell biology, computational biology, developmental biology, ecology, ecology of infectious diseases, entomology, evolution, genetics, immunology, microbiology, molecular biology, molecular genetics, and plant biology. Subject matter is guided by current teaching and research. The focus is on original writing and research in all formats, but on occasion reprints of classic works or collected works of major contributors to the field are acquired.

Collection Scope
The Biological Sciences collection offers a wide range of print and digital materials in the form of monographs, journals, selected book series and conference proceedings, compilations of data, and electronic databases related to biological disciplines. Resources covering laboratory methodology, experimental techniques, and instrumentation are

acquired, but "one-time use" laboratory manuals, workbooks, and most spiral bound material are not. Advanced and graduate level textbooks may be acquired, but most undergraduate and introductory textbooks will only be acquired on request in support of course reserves. Works of history and philosophy are generally reserved for History and Philosophy of Science but may be acquired selectively. A limited number of more general or biographical treatments may be acquired to support general interest reading. English is the primary language of the collection. Materials are acquired primarily from publishers based in North America and Europe, but individual works and journals reflect a broad international scope of authors and contributors. The emphasis is on adding current publications. Subjects that are excluded from the collection include agriculture, gardening, and veterinary science, as well as medical aspects of human biology and reproduction.

Library of Congress Classification

Typical classifications in which materials are acquired are listed below. Selective acquisitions may also be made in other categories based on need and interest. Works classified in the "R"s (Medicine) are acquired selectively and generally when the focus is on the biology underlying the medical aspect.

Q (Science (General))

- Q181-183 Study and teaching *(selectively and as related to biological sciences)*

QA (Mathematics) *Materials in QA are acquired in support of specific courses or research or when they have specific applications to biological science or computational biology. Acquisitions are made in conjunction with those for mathematics, statistics, computing, engineering, and other sciences*.

QD (Chemistry)

- QD415-436 Biochemistry *(primarily proteins and nucleic acids, crystallography of biological compounds, and in conjunction with what is acquired for chemistry)*

QH (Biology (General))

- QH211 -273 Microscopy. Microscopes
- QH301-323.2 Biology (General) *(selectively)*
- QH323.5 Biometry. Biomathematics. Mathematical models
- QH324 Methods of research. Technique. Experimental biology
- QH359-425 Evolution
- QH426-470 Genetics
- QH471-489 Reproduction
- QH491-499 Development. Morphogenesis
- QH501-531 Life
- QH540-549.5 Ecology
- QH573-671 Cytology

QK (Botany)

- QH474.8-495 Spermatophyta. Phanerogams
- QH504-635 Cryptogams
- QH640-673 Plant anatomy

- QH710-899 Plant physiology
- QH900-989 Plant ecology

QL (Zoology)

- QL360-599 Invertebrates
- QL605-739 Chordates. Vertebrates
- QL750-795 Animal behavior
- QL799 Morphology
- QL801-950 Anatomy
- QL951-991 Embryology

QM (Human Anatomy) *Acquired selectively in conjunction with course and research needs, as much of this material is collected by the Health Sciences library.*

QP (Physiology) *Acquired selectively in conjunction with course and research needs as much of this material is collected by the Health Sciences library and some is collected for the Department of Neuroscience.*

- QP501-801 Animal biochemistry. *(Collected for biological sciences and chemistry depending on the focus and expected usage of the resource.)*

QR (Microbiology) *Primarily bacteria, immunology, and virology as related to specific courses and research.*

Connections & Collaborations

The ULS collaborates with other institutions and consortia to acquire specialized materials that support research, teaching, and learning in the disciplines of Biological Sciences, particularly in areas where shared resources improve accessibility to rare or costly materials. Regionally and nationally, the ULS participates in several consortia for collection development (*NERL, EAST, Hathi Trust, CRL*) and resource sharing (PALCI EZBorrow, OCLC Interlibrary Loan, RapidILL) that shape strategy for the Biological Sciences collection. Within the university, the ULS cooperates with the Health Sciences Library System to provide shared access to a variety of electronic books, journals, databases, videos, and specialized resources. Development of the collection takes into account the connection of Biological Sciences with related disciplines, such as bioengineering, chemistry, computational science, environmental science, health sciences, mathematics, neuroscience, physics, and statistics.

Subject Experts

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Sources of Information

https://www.upb.pitt.edu/academics/majors-minors

https://www.greensburg.pitt.edu/academics
https://www.titusville.pitt.edu/academics
https://www.johnstown.pitt.edu/academics/majors-programs
https://www.biology.pitt.edu/