Accelerated non-thesis BS/MS program in CMMB

This program allows B.S. majors to take graduate courses for the elective part of the Biology degree and apply them to a non-thesis M.S. degree in Biology. Successful students will be able to earn the M.S. degree in two additional semesters beyond the completion of the B.S. degree.

This accelerated program shares 12 credits between already existing degrees/concentrations:
B.S. in Biology, Concentration in Cell and Molecular Biology (submitted)
M.S in Biology, Concentration in Cell and Molecular Biology (non-thesis option)

Target students and expected outcomes
This program will appeal to the more competitive Biology majors who would benefit professionally from having the M.S. when they enter the job market but do not want to commit to the longer time a thesis M.S. or a Ph.D. program takes to complete. Professions that do not require bench laboratory experience but desire the broadened knowledge base are targeted. Graduates from this program would be ideally suited for health professions, technology based industry, education and government. We also expect that some students will be interested in doctoral education in the biological or biomedical areas.

Description and Requirements
Biology majors who have completed the following courses may apply to this program:
- PCB3023 Cell Biology
- PCB3063 Genetics
- MCB3410 Cell Metabolism
- PCB4024 Molecular Biology of the Cell or PCB4026 Molecular Biology of the Gene

Students who have been admitted to the program but subsequently fail to achieve a 3.0 GPA in the last 60 hours of their B.S. degree, or who do not complete at least 30 of their last 60 hours at USF, will be dismissed from the program.

Once accepted, students must meet with BioAdvise (the advising office for biological sciences within the College of Arts and Sciences) to prepare an action plan to complete the B.S./M.S. accelerated program. This requires them to take all the courses required for the B.S. in Biology: Concentration in Cell and Molecular Biology. Students may take up to 12 credits of graduate courses as electives in CMMB and apply those courses to both the B.S. and M.S. degrees. They will not be admitted as graduate students until they have completed their B.S. degree and met all the requirements for admission to CMMB as graduate students. The action plan should include a schedule of coursework to complete their B.S. degrees and a date in their last year in the B.S. program to take the GRE.

For fall admission to the M.S. portion of the accelerated program, all application materials must be received by February 15 of the same year. For spring admission, the deadline is August 1 of the previous year.
Application materials are the same as the M.S. in Biology:
1. Two official transcripts of undergraduate work from other institutions. Applicants need not supply USF transcripts.
   2. Three letters of recommendation
   3. A brief essay stating your professional goals
   4. GRE scores must be sent to USF directly from the testing agency (USF institution code is 5828).

Students admitted into the M.S. portion of the program must complete all the requirements for the M.S. degree (non-thesis) within three semesters of admission. The requirement is 30 hours of graduate work and at least 16 hours must be at the 6000 level; 26 hours must be formally structured courses; and at least 15 hours must be in CMMB courses. These requirements can be partially met by up to 12 hours of graduate courses taken as undergraduates. Students must form a committee as part of their action plan to complete their graduate work and must submit a review paper of a topic approved by that committee. Upon approval of that paper, students must successfully complete a comprehensive oral exam by their committee.

Timeline and benchmarks:

1. Completion of prerequisite upper division courses and application to the accelerated program.
   Typically students will be in their junior year.
2. Acceptance into the program and an action plan within a semester of application.
3. Students will take up to 12 credits of graduate credit in CMMB courses following acceptance into the program. Typically these courses will be taken in the latter half of the junior year and in the senior year. BioAdvise will monitor the progress of the students and ensure they follow their action plan. Students who do not complete at least 9 hours of graduate work by graduation will be dropped from the accelerated M.S. program.
4. GRE exams will be taken in a timely manner so scores will be available for admission to the M.S. portion of the program. Students who do not complete the GRE in time will not be admitted to the accelerated M.S. program.
5. Students must apply for admission to the M.S. portion of the program in a timely manner (Fall admission deadline is February 15, Spring deadline is August 1).
6. Students admitted to the accelerated program must form a committee prior to the beginning of their first semester in the M.S. portion of the program and must continue to follow the action plan which will be monitored by BioAdvise.
7. Students admitted to the accelerated M.S. program must complete the requirements within three semesters or will be dismissed from the program.
Model Curriculum for Accelerated Non-thesis MS/BS

Year 1
BSC 2010, BSC 2011 with labs 8

Year 2
MCB 3410-Cell Metabolism 3
PCB 3063-Genetics and lab 4
PCB 3023-Cell Biology and lab 4

Year 3
PCB 4024-Molecular Biology of the Cell 3
PCB 4026-Molecular Biology of the Gene 3
3 hr graduate elective structured course (5000) 3

Year 4
9 hr graduate elective courses (5000 or 6000) 9

Year 5
18 hr graduate courses
must have 26 credits structured graduate courses
with at least 16 hours at 6000 level
4 hr non-structured (seminar, independent study)
Oral exam and review paper done at the end of year 5