



*The*  
*University of Mississippi*

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# A Brief History of Biology at Ole Miss



A LEGACY OF ACHIEVEMENT WITH VISION FOR TOMORROW

## A Brief History of Biology at Ole Miss

Biology was not offered at Ole Miss until after 1870. Although the University first began classes in November 1848, there was no provision on the faculty or in the curriculum to include Biology. Up until 1870 the so-called "closed curriculum" was in use in the University and there were only two courses of study, entirely prescribed, leading to either a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Law degree.

In 1870, by action of the Board of Trustees, the "closed curriculum" system was changed and three departments were created. They were:

1. Department of Preparatory Education (Preparatory School)
2. Department of Science, Literature and the Arts (Undergraduate School)
3. Department of Professional Education (Graduate School)

Within the Department of Science, Literature, and the Arts was a "department" of Natural History which included a "school of Botany" and a "school of Zoology." The Board action also created for the first time a position for "a Professor of Botany and Zoology to be filled by the same professor who chairs Mineralogy and Geology." Thus in 1872, Dr. George Little, Professor of Mineralogy and Geology became the first "Provisional Professor of Botany and Zoology" at the University of Mississippi.

The first classes in Botany were held in room 10 of the Lyceum in the fall of 1872. At that time the Lyceum was still in the original state i.e., the north and south wings had not yet been added. The wings were not added until 1903.



LYCEUM BEFORE 1903

Another decision by the Board of Trustees in 1870 was to have a later direct effect upon the Biology Department. This was the decision to create a Medical School at the University of Mississippi "to be patterned after that of the University of Virginia." Although sanctioned in 1870, the Medical School was not funded until 1903.

The "open curriculum" revision of 1870 meant that undergraduate students in the Department of Science, Literature and the Arts could choose among courses leading to one of four degrees:

1. Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
2. Bachelor of Science (B.S.)
3. Bachelor of Philosophy (Ph.B.)
4. Course for Civil Engineers (C.E.)

The B.A. and C.E. required four years of study while the B.S. and Ph.B. required three years. The B.S., Ph.B. and C.E. degrees called for a study of Botany in the first year using Gray's School and Fieldbook in Botany as a text. A Zoology course was required of those seeking the B.A. as well as the B.S. and Agassiz's and Gould's Zoology was the text.

By 1876 a prize of \$100 was offered annually for the best student in Zoology and the texts used in Biology included Gray's Lessons, Gray's Structure and Systematic Botany, Chapman's Flora of the Southern States, Agassiz's and Gould's Zoology and Nicholson's Manual of Zoology. The catalogue of 1876-77 states that the "University now has a Spencerian compound microscope of the highest power. A fine binocular by Grunout and some pieces belonging to this subject." It also includes the fact that "the University Herbarium contains specimens of all forms of vegetable life indigenous to Mississippi and some adjoining states."

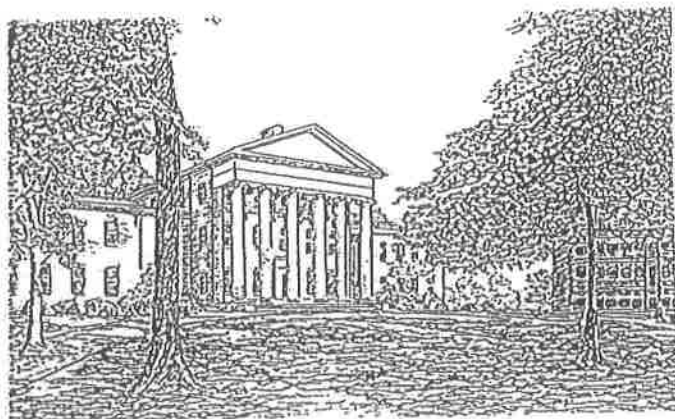
The texts listed above were still used in Biology as late as 1878 and in addition Gray's Field, Forest and Garden Botany; Jordan's Manual of the Vertebrates and Packard's Our Common Insects and Guide to Study of Insects. The lengthening list of texts reflected an expanding curriculum in Biology. In 1895, Biology courses and laboratories were moved into in room # 3 of Lamar Hall, later known as "Old Geology" and now known as Ventress Hall. This building was erected in 1889 as the University Library and was used as such until 1911 when it was used by the Law School. Today much of it is occupied by the Art Department.



VENTRESS HALL

The curriculum during the last five years of the 1890's required students in the school of Zoology to have Invertebrate Zoology, Mammalian Anatomy and Physiology during their Freshman year while their Sophomore year contained "as much Natural Science as time will allow to include: an introduction to Anatomy, Histology, and Embryology." During this same span, third and fourth term students in the "school of Botany" took Vegetable Anatomy and Physiology and Systematic Botany.

In 1903 the Medical School was funded by the legislature and the curriculum in Biology began to reflect the role this area was to play in the pre-medical education of students desiring a career in medicine. Biology and medical courses were again taught in the Lyceum (by now newly remodeled) until 1906 when the new Science Building, to house Medicine and Biology, was completed.



LYCEUM CIRCA 1905  
NORTH DORMITORY ON THE RIGHT



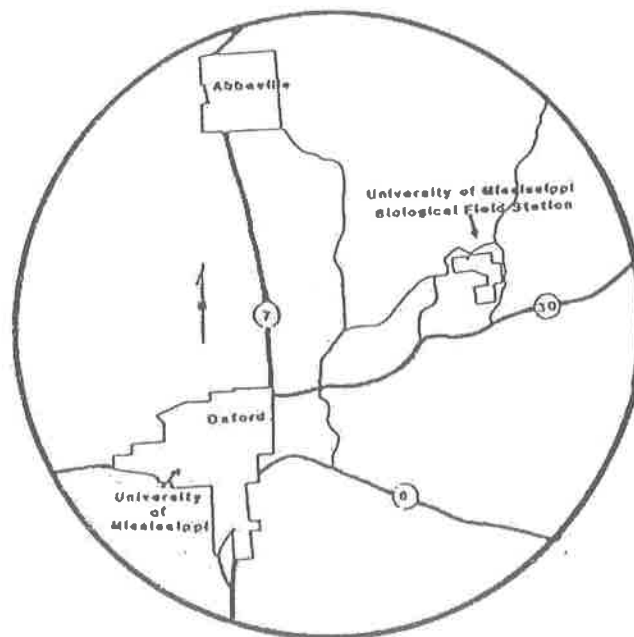
SCIENCE BUILDING  
AND  
FIRST MEDICAL SCHOOL

Throughout the next fifty years, Biology curriculum centered primarily around the needs of the Medical School. For example in the 1920's there was, for a time, an undergraduate Department of Bacteriology and Pathology as well as a Biology Department. Pathology could be taken only by students who completed Histology and Chemistry was a pre-requisite for Bacteriology and Pathology. The Biology Curriculum in this decade included General and Pre-medical Zoology, Comparative Vertebrate Morphology, Comparative Invertebrate Morphology Embryology, and Heredity and Eugenics.

The curriculum of the 1930's, 40's, and 50's remained essentially unchanged except that Bacteriology curriculum was incorporated in the Biology Department and Pathology dropped out of the curriculum and reappeared for a few years in the 1970's as part of the Biology curriculum.

In 1956, the Medical School was moved to Jackson and the Science Building was occupied solely by the Biology Department. In 1963 the present Biology building was completed and the Science Building was demolished. This building was located just west of the present Shoemaker Biology Building and just in front of Hume Hall.

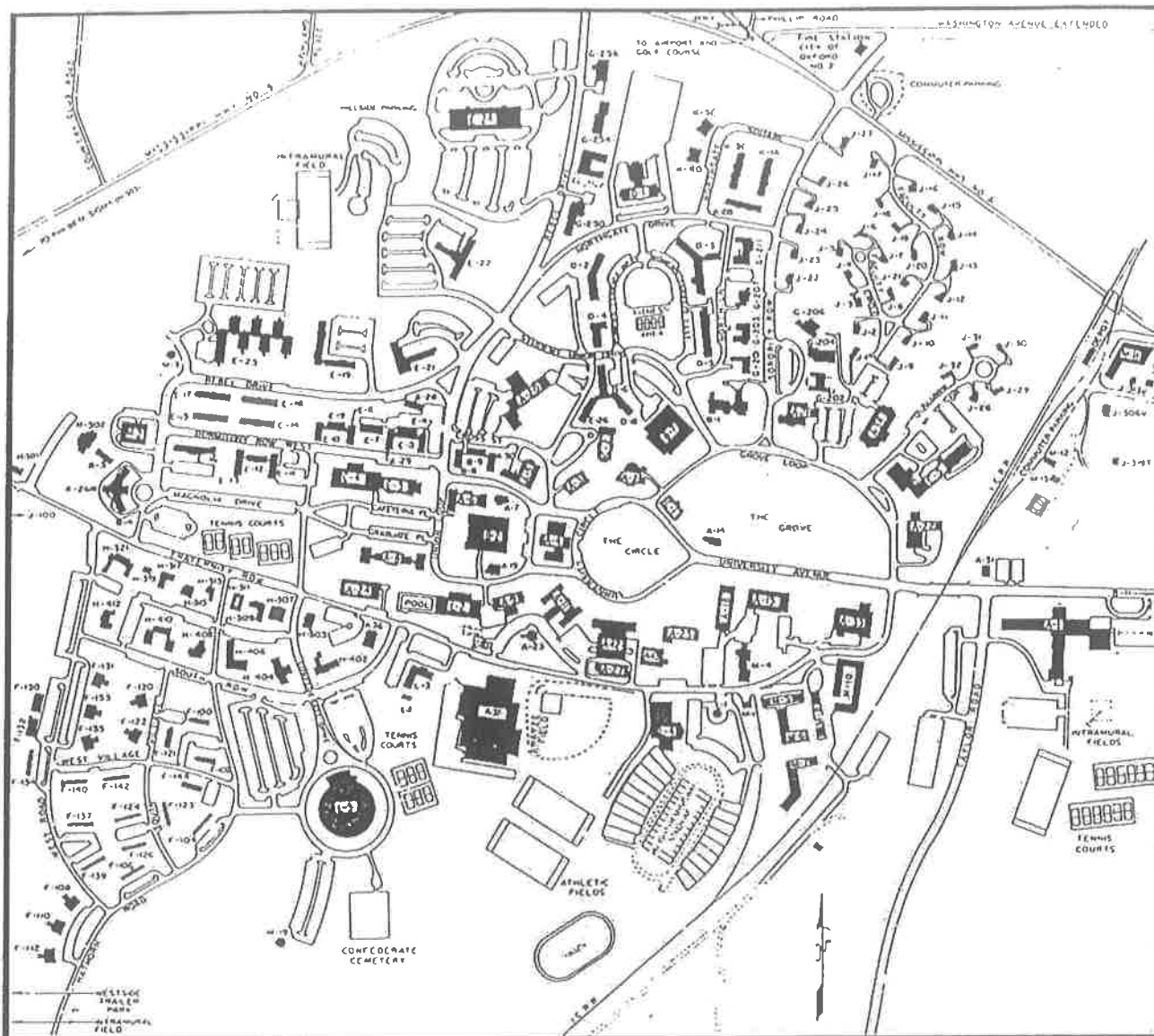
Today, the Biology curriculum continues to be revised and updated so that the department is able, not only to provide a modern pre-medical curriculum, but also can offer a broad, current, and adaptive research and teaching program to meet the needs of its students in the 1980's. Among the department's expanded teaching and research facilities is the University of Mississippi Biological Field Station. It was obtained by the University in December 1985 and dedicated on April 25, 1986. Located approximately six miles northeast of the campus, the site consists of about 550 acres and is unique because of an unusual combination of terrain, vegetation, water resources and engineering. This facility provides a resource for obtaining field-tested environmental data dealing with such diverse research as runoff and sedimentation, aquaculture, fisheries and water quality.



CHRONOLOGY OF BIOLOGY CHAIRMEN

- 1872 - 74 GEORGE LITTLE, Ph.D.  
Professor of Mineralogy and Geology and Provisional  
Professor of Botany and Zoology
- 1874 - 75 NOT FILLED  
Professorship in Natural History and Geology
- 1875 - 82 RICHARD W. JONES, LL.D.  
Professor of Chemistry and Natural History
- 1882 - 89 GEORGE LITTLE, Ph.D.  
Professor of Natural History and Geology
- 1889 - 94 RICHARD W. JONES, LL.D.  
Professor of Natural History
- 1895 - 98 THOMAS OVID MABRY, M.A.  
Assistant Professor of Natural History in Charge of Zoology,  
Botany, Mineralogy and Geology
- 1898 - 99 NO CHAIRMAN LISTED  
For Zoology, Botany, Mineralogy, or Geology
- 1899 - 1921 WALLER S. LEATHERS, A.M., M.D.  
Professor of Biology and Geology  
The medical school was established in 1905-06, and the  
professorships of Biology and Geology were separated.  
Dr. Leathers then became Professor of Biology and Physiology  
and Dean of the Medical School. In 1916 he became Professor  
of Biology and Histology and Dean of the Medical School.
- 1921 - 24 HARRISON R. HUNT, B.S., M.A., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology
- 1924 - 25 GEORGE EDWIN JOHNSON, M.S., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology and Embryology
- 1925 - 30 LLOYD EVANS THATCHER, A.B.  
Professor of Biology and Embryology
- 1930 - 37 FRANK MONTGOMERY HULL, B.S., M.S.  
Associate Professor of Biology and Head of the Biology  
Department
- 1938 - 51 FRANK MONTGOMERY HULL, B.S., M.S., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology
- 1951 - 60 IRWIN CLARK KITCHIN, B.S., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology
- 1960 - 69 MAEBURN BRUCE HUNEYCUTT, A.B., M.S., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology
- 1969 - 76 LYMAN ABBOTT MAGEE, B.S., M.S., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology
- 1976 - 87 EDMUND DAVIS KEISER, B.A., M.S., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology
- 1987 - IOLA TAYLOR MCCURKIN, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology

# BUILDING KEY



## ACADEMIC

- A-1 School of Education
- A-2 Bryant Hall (Art and Theatre Arts)
- A-3 Peabody (Psychology)
- A-4 Lyceum (Administration)
- A-5 Conner Hall (Accountancy, Business Administration)
- A-6 Weir Memorial (Computer Center)
- A-7 Public Relations
- A-8 Bondurant Hall (Humanities, Sociology)
- A-9 Lewis Hall (Physics)
- A-10 Physics Research
- A-11 Old Chemistry (Financial Aid, Art)
- A-12 Carrier Hall (Engineering)
- A-13 Engineering Science
- A-14 Ventress Hall (Art)
- A-15 Faser Hall (Pharmacy)
- A-17 Animal House
- A-18 Shoemaker Hall (Biology, Graduate School)
- A-19 University House (Honors Center)
- A-20 Meek Hall (Music, Home Economics)
- A-21 Farley Hall (Journalism, Computer Science)
- A-22 E.F. Yerby Center (Continuing Education)
- A-23 Kennon Observatory
- A-24 Bishop Hall (Humanities)
- A-25 Home Hall (Mathematics, Social Work)

- A-26 Psychology Laboratory
- A-27 Anderson Hall (Engineering)
- A-28 George Hall (Communicative Disorders)
- A-29 Barr Hall (Classics, Music, Afro-American Studies)
- A-30 Deupree Hall (Political Science)
- A-31 Home Management
- A-33 Coulter Hall (Chemistry)
- A-34 Lamar Law Center
- A-35 Turner Center (HPER)
- A-36 Track and Field Area
- C-6 Acoustics (Physics)

## ACADEMIC SERVICES

- B-1 McCain Hall and Barnard Observatory (Naval ROTC, Center for the Study of Southern Culture)
- B-2 John Davis Williams Library
- B-3 R.O.T.C. Rifle Range
- B-4 Guyton Hall (Student Health and Army, Air Force ROTC)
- B-7 Ole Miss Union
- B-8 Odom Hall (Police)
- B-9 LaBauve Hall (Student Employment, Pre-med/Pre-dent Adviser)
- R-11 University Museums
- C-1 Old Chapel (International Programs, Religious Life)
- C-3 Paul B. Johnson Commons, East (Band Hall, ID Center, Rebel Shop)
- D-8 Isom (Women's Studies)
- E-21 Miller (Student Housing)

## CONVOCATION

- C-1 Old Chapel YMCA
- C-2 Fulton Chapel
- C-4 Paul B. Johnson Commons, West (Cafeteria)
- C-5 Alumni House

## MEN'S RESIDENCE HALLS

- D-4 Eula Deaton (Freshmen)
- D-6 Barnard
- D-8 Isom
- E-4 Howry
- E-5 Falkner
- E-11 Garland (Freshmen)
- E-12 Heddlston (Freshmen)
- E-13 Mayes (Freshmen)
- E-19 Guess-North
- E-22 Kincannon
- E-24 James Stockard (Freshmen)
- E-25 Athletic Dormitory
- E-26 Somerville

## WOMEN'S RESIDENCE HALLS

- D-1 Crosby
- D-2 Stewart
- D-3 Brown (Freshmen)
- D-5 Hefley
- E-19 Guess-East
- E-21 Miller
- E-24 John D. Martin (Freshmen)

## MARRIED STUDENT HOUSING

- F-100 to F-144 Married Student Apartments

## SORORITIES

- G-201 Phi Mu
- G-202 Alpha Delta Pi
- G-203 Delta Gamma
- G-204 Kappa Delta
- G-206 Delta Delta Delta
- G-207 Zeta Tau Alpha
- G-211 Kappa Kappa Gamma
- G-250 Alpha Omicron Pi
- G-254 Pi Beta Phi
- G-256 Chi Omega
- G-257 Kappa Alpha Theta

## FRATERNITIES

- H-303 Chi Psi
- H-307 Delta Psi
- H-309 Sigma Alpha Epsilon
- H-311 Tau Kappa Epsilon
- H-313 Sigma Pi
- H-315 Phi Kappa Psi
- H-317 Zeta Beta Tau
- H-319 Phi Kappa Theta
- H-321 Phi Delta Theta
- H-402 Alpha Tau Omega
- H-404 Beta Theta Pi
- H-406 Sigma Chi
- H-408 Pi Kappa Alpha
- H-410 Sigma Nu
- H-412 Kappa Sigma
- H-501 Phi Kappa Tau
- H-502 Kappa Alpha
- H-503 Phi Beta Sigma

## FACULTY RESIDENCES

- J-1 to J-32 Faculty Houses
- J-100 Chancellor's Residence

- T Tyler Avenue
- U University Avenue
- V Van Buren Avenue
- K-1 to K-5 Northgate Apartments

## ATHLETIC

- A-36 Track and Field Area
- L-1 Stadium Tickets
- L-2 Gymnasium and Swimming Pool
- L-3 Intercollegiate Athletics Office
- L-4 Stadium Field House
- L-5 Tad Smith Coliseum

## SERVICE

- M-1 University Fire Department
- M-2 University Printing and Receiving Department
- M-3 Water Tank
- M-4 Power Plant
- M-5 Physical Plant Department
- M-6 to M-8 Plant Maintenance
- M-9 Wastewater Treatment
- M-10 to M-13 University Warehouse
- M-19 Water Tank

## AUXILIARY SERVICE

- E-8 Hill
- E-14 Lester
- E-15 Baxter
- E-17 Gerard
- E-18 Sam

## Goals

### Teaching

- I. The biology faculty will provide a curriculum of instruction in modern biology emphasizing a laboratory/field-based foundation in basic biology and its practical applications, including a B.A. major appropriate for Liberal Arts students, including future health practitioners, and a B.S. major appropriate for professional biologists.
2. The Biology faculty will provide Liberal Arts courses in human biology and the environment that will enhance the development of informed, biologically literate citizens.
3. Students majoring in biology will master the essential core of modern biology and associated disciplines.
4. Students majoring in biology will develop fundamental skills and experience in laboratory and field experimentation.
5. Students majoring in biology will utilize computers in biological applications.
6. Students majoring in biology will have skills in the written communication of biology.
7. Students majoring in biology will feel that they have received the knowledge and skill required for career success in biology.
8. The Department will improve its teaching laboratories including its laboratory facilities, the quality of graduate assistant teaching, and the quality of field experiences at the University of Mississippi Biological Field Station.
9. Departmental faculty will increase use of current research and recent publications in their lectures in order to expose undergraduate and graduate students to state-of-the-art research techniques and contemporary topics.
10. Departmental faculty will increase requirements for class presentations and readings of contemporary research publications. Contemporary publications will be required in all graduate courses.
- II. Students in graduate programs will conduct and complete original research that contributes to the field of biology at a national level.
12. The faculty will engage in research activities that make contributions to knowledge and practice in biology at the national level and will disseminate these contributions through classroom teaching activities, formal presentations at scientific meetings, and professional publications, including papers and books.
13. The Department will enhance opportunities for research and teaching activities at the University of Mississippi Biological Field Station and Center for Wetlands and Water Quality, especially developing multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional collaborations.
14. The Department will strengthen and expand research opportunities by assisting faculty members, as may be appropriate, in acquiring funds through grants and contracts.



# *THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI*

## *DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY*

### MISSION STATEMENT

#### DESCRIPTION

The faculty and students of the Department engage in learning and research in the Liberal Arts field of biology. The Department is located in Shoemaker Hall on the Oxford campus and at the nearby University of Mississippi Biological Field Station. The Department provides nationally competitive programs of undergraduate education leading to the B.A. and B.S. degrees and nationally recognized programs of graduate education and research leading to the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Biological Science. The Department has the leadership role in the University of Mississippi Biological Field Station and Center for Wetlands and Water Quality.

#### MISSION

The mission of the Department of Biology is to provide a vigorous and interactive academic environment in which faculty and students actively and effectively pursue and disseminate modern biological knowledge. The educational activities of the Department, part of the science component of the University's Liberal Arts emphasis, are carried out by nationally recognized faculty who aim to educate lower-division core students to be biologically literate citizens, and to educate biology majors to be health practitioners and professional biological scientists capable of contributing to the discipline and to society at both a regional and national level. In their teaching, research, and service activities, the faculty and students discover, disseminate, synthesize, and apply biological knowledge to the needs of Mississippi, the nation, and human society. Faculty and student scholarship emphasize understanding the organization and function of ecological systems, particularly freshwater and aquatic systems of ecological, economic, and medical importance through studies focusing in the subdisciplines of ecology, microbial ecology, and ecotoxicology. An important component of the departmental mission is the development and management of the University of Mississippi Biological Field Station and Center for Wetlands and Water Quality, which comprise a national center of excellence for multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional experimental field studies.

Adopted 7 December 1992