

Biology Registration Newsletter

For planning Spring '26 Course Registration

Spring 2026 Course Registration Window
Nov. 4-14, 2025

To help you prepare for Spring 2026 registration, please use the links below to assist in your planning. Though key policy updates are highlighted, a detailed description of policies, graduation requirements, etc. can be found in the [Biology Student Handbook](#). A general guide to registration can be accessed from [Records and Registration](#).

Getting help. Please include your PAWS ID number in any correspondence that concerns registration, enrollment, graduation requirements, or problems with your transcript with your advisor or the department chair, Dr. Clement (clementw@tcnj.edu).

Click on a topic below to go directly to a section of the newsletter.

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Quick Access for Independent Research Forms

Registering for Independent research?

- Talk to your research mentor first and then [click here](#) to fill out the Independent Research Form.
- Want to get involved in research? Read about Independent Research in the [Research Opportunities section](#) and fill in the [Independent Research Interest Form](#) to be considered for an independent research position.

The Registration Process, 101

When can I register?

- Registration is from Nov 4 through Nov 14, 2025. Each student is assigned a registration time based on earned course units. You can find your registration date and time in PAWS. Need help? Check out this [how-to](#) video!
- You can continue to register for Spring 2026 classes until the first week of the Spring 2026 term (end of add/drop period), but many courses will be closed long before then.

Academic Advising Appointments

- An Advising **Registration hold** has been placed on your account. Look for an email from your advisor to set up a meeting prior to your registration slot to discuss your progress in the major and plans for the next semester. Once you have that meeting, your advisor will remove the hold and you will be able to register for classes.
- Be sure to check PAWS for any additional holds you may need to address before you can register.

Biology Registration Policies - Seat Holding

- **Holding seats.** Registering in a course section in order to hold a seat for another student is a violation of TCNJ's Academic Integrity Policy for both the student holding the seat and the student taking the held seat. Course registration will be monitored by the chair for anomalies suggestive of seat holding.
- **Registering for classes you do not intend to take.** Please do not fill your schedule with placeholders by registering for classes you do not intend to take if you are waiting on a waitlist or for a seat to open up. This is another form of holding a seat that another student may need for their degree plan.

Correlate Course Updates for Spring '26 Registration

- **Physics requirement for the BS in Biology.** Biology students now have the option of taking either PHY 121 or PHY 201 to fulfill the physics requirement for any BS degree in Biology. The general difference is that PHY 121 is algebra-based physics, while PHY 201 is calculus-based physics. Please consult with your advisor to determine the right path for you.

- **Physics 202.** First, PHY 202 is not required of any Biology major. With that in mind, many students are interested in taking a second semester of general physics to fulfill prerequisites for medical school, graduate school, and more. For those who are interested in taking PHY 202 rather than PHY 122, please note MAT 128/CalcB is a prerequisite for this course. What does this mean for you? Read on!
 - **If you have taken MAT 128,** you can register for PHY 202 yourself when your registration slot opens.
 - **If you have not taken MAT128 and you plan to or already have taken STA215:**
 - You can opt to take PHY 122, which is an algebra-based physics.
 - You can take PHY 202 if you have a B or higher in PHY 201 and Mat127/CalcA. If this applies to you, please go to [this webpage](#) and fill in the Physics Dept permission form by the date specified on the website, and the Physics Office will work with you to enroll you in PHY 202 provided you are eligible.

Policies for Off-Campus Courses

- **Off-campus study**
 - **NJ Community or County Colleges:** Off-campus study (e.g., a summer course) at a NJ county college is regulated by [NJ Transfer \(njtransfer.org\)](http://njtransfer.org). You can use this website to see the course equivalencies of any community or county college in New Jersey and understand what courses or requirements that course would fulfill at TCNJ. You must fill in this [form](#) and have it approved by Records and Registration before taking a course at a community or county college.
 - **Off-campus study elsewhere.** Off-campus study at a non-NJ community college or a domestic four-year college must be approved by the chair of the department to determine which course(s) would be transferable to TCNJ. Be sure to confer with Dr. Clement before enrolling in these courses to determine the course equivalency. Here is the [form](#) for approving off-campus study.
 - Consult with Dr. Clement regarding online (distance learning) laboratory courses. As a general rule, courses with online labs are not approved.
- **Study abroad**
 - Can Biology majors study abroad? Of course! Any Biology major interested in studying abroad should contact the [Center for Global Engagement](#) and speak to their advisor well before they wish to travel abroad.
 - Any course to be taken abroad for biology option credit must receive approval of Dr. Clement before you enroll in the course.

Spring '26 Courses Offered

Below is a list of core and option courses offered this Spring '26. Note that courses marked with OE fulfill the organisms & evolution requirement of all biology majors.

Core Courses

BIO 201 — Foundations of Biological Inquiry	BIO 221 — Ecology and Field Biology
BIO 211 — Cell Biology and Biochemistry	BIO 231 — Genetics

Options Courses

BIO 302 — Human Anatomy & Physiology II*	BIO 411 — Animal Physiology (OE)
BIO 312 — Microbiology	BIO 461 — Advanced Evolution
BIO 341 — Biology of the Seed Plants (OE)	BIO 470A — Genetics of Human Disease
BIO 343 — General Entomology (OE)	BIO 470B — Conservation Biology
BIO 352 — Biostatistics	BIO 498 — Biology Seminar
BIO 372 — BioConnections ^	
BIO 390 — Biology Internship	

* NOW available as a Bio option for Biology students.

^This is a 0.5 unit course. This course can count as a Biology options course if combined with a second BioConnections course of a different topic.

Research, Internship, and Course Assistant Opportunities

In the Biology department, there are additional opportunities for students to earn course credit including (1) **Independent Research**, (2) **Internships**, and (3) **Course Assistants**. Each of these types of courses require enrollment through a form or application – you will not be able to add them to your shopping cart. See below for details and reach out to Dr Clement with questions.

1a. Independent Research

- To register for independent research, you must have approval from a faculty member and discuss which course and number of units (often either 0.5 or 1 unit) prior to registering. The three courses include (full descriptions and syllabi are in the [Biology Student Handbook](#)):
 - BIO 393 — Independent Research in Biology I
 - BIO 493 — Independent Research in Biology II
 - BIO 494 — Honors Independent Research in Biology II
- Once you have conferred with an independent research faculty member, you need to fill out the [Independent Study Qualtrics](#) form to be placed in the appropriate course. This form will be sent to your advisor to be approved before you are registered.
- Most Biology degree plans allow one unit of Independent Research to substitute for a Biology options course.

- If you are only taking a total of three courses next semester, it is important that you fill out this form and send it in as close to your registration window as possible. There is no need to register for a course you do not intend to take just to have full time status as you wait to be enrolled in research.
- Interested in getting involved in research? Talk with your advisor during your academic advising session and fill in this [Research Interest Form](#) by the Oct 9 deadline.

1b. Independent Research in Biology Capstone

- If you have completed at least one course unit of BIO 493 or BIO 494, you may complete your capstone by taking BIO 495 or BIO 496 with the same instructor.
 - BIO 495 — Independent Research in Biology Capstone
 - BIO 496 — Honors Independent Research in Biology Capstone
- To register for BIO 495 or 496, first confer with your research faculty mentor. Then, fill out the [Independent Study Qualtrics](#) form to be placed in the appropriate course. This form will be sent to your advisor to be approved before you are registered.
- BIO 495/496 Independent Research in Biology Capstone fulfills the capstone in the major, and so students enrolled in BIO 495/6 do not need to register for BIO 498 — Biology Seminar.

2. Internships

Biology Internship - BIO 390

- There are a number of biology-related internships in which students gain valuable experience and insights to applying biology in the workplace. If you have or are planning to participate in such a biology-related internship (paid or unpaid), you might consider registering for BIO 390 - Biology Internship and receive credit for a biology options class for your internship. Internships can occur during the summer or academic year.
- If you are interested, please reach out to the Biology Internship Coordinator, Dr. Pecor (pecor@tcnj.edu) about the possibility.

Biology Research Internship — BIO 399 (Offered in the Fall semester only)

- A number of local pharmaceutical and biotech companies, as well as universities and ecological field stations throughout the country, offer undergraduate summer research opportunities that qualify for academic internship credit. If you participate in such a program, you might consider registering for BIO 399 — Biology Research Internship and receive course credit for a biology options class for your internship.
- If you are interested in this opportunity, please reach out to the Biology Research Internship Coordinator, Dr Erickson (erickson@tcnj.edu) to discuss whether your experience could qualify for credit.

3. Course Assistants — BIO 300

- The Course Assistant (CA) Program in Biology provides students with the opportunity to mentor students in introductory and options courses. Currently, CAs are placed into nearly all core courses and selected upper level courses.
- CAs earn 0.5 units of elective credit, and the course is pass/fail. CAs meet weekly with a faculty mentor, attend a designated class at the same time each week, sometimes hold peer study hours, and write a final reflective essay on their experience.
- If you are interested in being a CA, watch for an email from Dr. Clement during the second week of Registration, which will provide a link to a CA Interest Form. Complete the interest form with your top choices and availability based on your courses for the following semester. If you are placed as a CA, you will be enrolled in BIO 300.

Summer '26 Courses

- Currently, the Biology department plans to offer the following courses during the summer sessions in 2026, provided there is sufficient enrollment to run the courses. However, for the most updated information, please make sure to look to PAWS for information on summer 2026 courses, including times and summer session.
 - BIO 201: Foundations of Biological Inquiry
 - BIO 231: Genetics
 - BIO 411: Animal Physiology

Looking Ahead

- The following Biology option courses are those likely to be offered during the **Fall 2026 semester**. Please note this list is neither exhaustive nor guaranteed. Courses designated organisms and evolution are noted by OE.
 - BIO 301: Human Anatomy and Physiology I
 - BIO 312: Microbiology
 - BIO 372: BioConnections

Spring '26 Course Descriptions

Below are brief references for courses that are either new or have special attributes. Be sure to refer to PAWS for descriptions and prerequisites of all courses offered.

BIO 372: BioConnections: Topic: Growing a Green Lens (Clement)

Bound by their inability to move, plants inhabit nearly all environments across the globe and exhibit a stunning array of adaptations that connect them to their habitats. Plants are plentiful in nearly every landscape and are essential to our everyday lives; however, we as a species often struggle to recognize and differentiate members of this lineage of life, or describe the value of these organisms to life on Earth. From a scientific lens, we will consider the role plants play in our past and future

from their part in an infamous mutiny to their importance in drug discovery. We will identify misconceptions that contribute to our disconnection to the photosynthetic world and discuss how we can more effectively communicate key information to the general public about the plants we depend on. Also, our collaborative work in "Growing a Green Lens" will connect us with ongoing efforts focused on combating climate change and increasing sustainability practices here at TCNJ. These topics and more will be explored through a series of readings (primary literature and non-fiction book), discussions, and short assignments. A final goal will be a science communication project to unlock the hidden histories of the greenest members of campus.

This is a 0.5 unit course that meets once a week. This can be combined with a second BioConnections course to fulfill a Biology options course requirement.

BIO 470A: Genetics of Human Disease (Nayak) (Lecture only)

The Genetics of Human Disease applies principles from the Biology Core Curriculum to the study of human genetic diseases and syndromes. Essentially, this course takes genetic, genomic, molecular, and biochemical approaches to the analysis of disorders that affect the major human systems. For each system, we will evaluate the inheritance of diseases in families, mapping of the disease loci, molecular and biochemical mechanisms that result in disease, and explore current diagnostic tools and treatments. The writing assignments for the course will cover the dramatic social implications of novel genetic screening technologies, the application of high-throughput genome sequencing projects, cloning, the use of embryonic stem cells, and related topics that impact human health. Lecture only.

BIO 470B: Conservation Biology (Morandini)

The major topic of this course is biological diversity. You will explore the various meanings of diversity, the role of diversity in natural systems and its importance in human welfare. You will also study present and past biogeographic patterns, and factors affecting those patterns, with special emphasis on human impacts. Finally, you will focus on the methods used to ameliorate negative impacts on diversity within the framework of the social, economic, political and ecological problems involved in this endeavor.

BIO 498A: Biology Seminar: Wildlife Conservation Genetics and Evolution (Elderkin)

For this seminar we will explore wildlife conservation at the population level and look at how microevolution (in some cases macroevolution) shapes our understanding of wildlife populations around the world. We will look at wildlife of your choice and explore data from the last 50+ years that has been published on the population genetics and phylogenetics of these species. Further the capstone experience will culminate with studies from the 2000-2025 where the introduction of genomics analysis is rapidly reshaping conservation management.

BIO 498B: Biology Seminar: Comparative Physiology of Fantastical Figures (Sitnick)

This seminar will be using comparative physiology to investigate mechanisms, functional differences and adaptations across various species in order to explain how a super power or ability could exist in the real world.

BIO 498C: Biology Seminar: Sexual Selection (Murphy)

Some of the most striking and intriguing features of living organisms have evolved to increase success in the competition for mates: bright coloration, loud vocalizations, extravagant ornaments, and energetically expensive behaviors. In this seminar, students will select a topic within the field of sexual selection that is of interest to them and explore that topic in depth. Based on that research, students will synthesize and share the current state of their topic through presentations, discussions, and a detailed review paper. Through these activities, students will apply and strengthen the skills they have been developing as biology majors.