Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, BS

Department: Watershed Sciences Department
College: S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources

Overview

About This Degree

Utah State University is the only university in the state with a college devoted to the study of natural resources, and the fisheries and aquatic science program is one of the few programs in the nation where students have the opportunity to focus on freshwater fish populations. Fisheries and aquatic scientists understand the biology of rivers, lakes, and wetlands. The program highlights the ecology of freshwater and marine systems, management of important fisheries, restoration of riparian and wetland areas, and protection of the plant and animal communities in lakes and rivers.

Students of fisheries and aquatic sciences learn the skills necessary to understand and manage freshwater fish populations. This major also includes an understanding of the relationships among physical, chemical, and biological components of aquatic ecosystems. Graduates of this program may go on to work as scientists and managers for state and federal natural resource agencies, researchers, or as professionals for environmental consulting firms, nonprofit environmental firms, and water-based industries.

Students may use their electives to explore interests in policy or water law, environmental history or ethics, oceanography, or genetics.

Career Options

With a degree in fisheries and aquatic sciences, students may be qualified for the following careers:

- Fisheries biologist
- Aquatic resource specialist
- Endangered species coordinator
- Restoration ecologist
- Research scientist
- Fisheries manager

Career Services provides counseling and information on hundreds of job and internship opportunities and even helps students apply and interview.

What it takes

Admissions Requirements

In addition to Utah State University's admissions requirements, the fisheries and aquatic sciences program has additional requirements:

- **Freshman:** New freshmen admitted to USU in good standing qualify for admission to this major.
- **Transfer Students:** Transfer students from other institutions and from other USU majors need a 2.5 total GPA to be admitted to the major.

International students have additional admissions requirements.

Major Requirements

Click here to see course requirements for the **Bachelor of Science**.

Contact

Advising

All new USU students participate in a New Student Orientation program, where they receive detailed information about major requirements, registering for classes, and other important advising information.

Wayne Wurtsbaugh
Professor
Office: BNR 106
Phone: (435) 797-2584
Email: wayne.wurtsbaugh@usu.edu

Get Involved

Professional Organizations, Honor Societies, and Clubs

American Fisheries Society: AFS is the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing fisheries science, and conserving fisheries resources.

American Geophysical Union: The American Geophysical Union is dedicated to furthering the geophysical sciences through the individual efforts of its members and in cooperation with other national and international scientific organizations.

Aggie Recyclers: Aggie Recyclers is a club designed to serve the community and the environment, accomplished through educating people how to live in a sustainable way. The club is very involved with recycling on campus as well as promoting other sustainable practices. In addition to raising awareness, members also participate in a variety of service activities.

Fisheries Club: This club improves the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems, provides networking experiences and financial support to students in fisheries-related fields, and promotes continued education to fisheries professionals and the community.

Student Organization for Society and Natural Resources: SOSNR was established in 2003 to promote opportunities for service in the community, provide forums for individuals to present research, and give students opportunities to participate in conferences to help further their academic careers.

Student Sustainability Council: The Student Sustainability Council is a student organization devoted to promoting sustainability on campus, educating the student body and the local community, and giving students the opportunity to serve in areas related to sustainability.

Labs, Centers, Research

With the second oldest undergraduate research program in the nation, USU offers students a wide range of opportunities to gain hands-on research experience. The Undergraduate Research and Creative Opportunities program allows students to apply for grants and receive funding. USU's Honors Program prepares students for excellent graduate programs by helping them build relationships with professors, participate in research projects, take smaller, more intensive classes, and develop leadership skills.

Ecology Center: The Ecology Center is an administrative structure in the university that supports and coordinates ecological research and graduate education in the science of ecology and provides professional information and advice for decision makers considering actions that affect the environment. The Ecology Center at USU has had a string of directors known nationally and worldwide as premier scientists in the field of ecology, and students graduating with a degree in ecology are able to make important contacts with influential faculty that can help them go on to prestigious post-doctoral programs and faculty positions at universities around the world.

S.J. and Jessie E. Quinney Natural Resources Research Library: The Quinney Library maintains collections of materials pertaining to natural resources and the environment in a number of formats that support the programs of study and research in the College of Natural Resources and several partnering centers. The library has more than 60,000 items, both print and electronic, as well as videos, images, and more.

Utah Botanical Center: The UBC, located in Kaysville, Utah, is home to research and demonstration projects focused on sustainable living in the Intermountain West. Studies of water conservation, horticulture, water quality enhancement, wetland ecology, integrated pest management, urban forestry, agriculture, fish and wildlife, highway

enhancement, and storm-water management combine to make the center a living laboratory.

Utah Water Research Laboratory: The UWRL works on nearly 250 water-related projects a year and has projects in all of Utah's 29 counties and more than 40 countries. The lab is one of the go-to places that addresses the technical and societal aspects of water-related issues, including quality, quantity, and distribution of water.

Water Initiative: Utah State University supports a broad community of students and faculty engaged in water education, research, and outreach. The USU Water Initiative provides an overarching umbrella for the activities of this community aimed at fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and collegial sharing of ideas related to water across the departments and colleges of USU.