



Grinnell College

Biology Department

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We're Hiring!

The Grinnell College Department of Biology is seeking to hire a colleague with research and teaching expertise in Bioinformatics or Computational Biology. Biology is an ever-expanding discipline and working with large, complex datasets is an increasingly relevant approach to the study of biological systems in many areas. We seek to enrich our curriculum through offering more courses and research experiences in the realm of Bioinformatics, especially a survey course that exposes students to the various approaches falling under the umbrella of Bioinformatics. Further, we recognize that Bioinformatics is a powerful tool that can be applied in many subdisciplines of biology including genetics/genomics, microbial biology, neuroscience, and others, and we welcome the addition of other upper-level courses in these areas. The position description and application details can be found here, <https://apply.interfolio.com/130038>

This page contains information that maybe of special interest to people interested in joining our department. Read about our pedagogical approach, curriculum, departmental resources, and more on our [departmental web page](#) on the Grinnell College website. In particular, we draw attention to our innovative introductory course, [BIO150: Introduction to Biological Inquiry](#), a course that focuses on skill development and the research enterprise as opposed to broad content delivery. [See here](#) for a history of the origins of BIO150.

Beyond the standard stuff, we'd like to take a moment and share some not so obvious information on what it is like to teach and conduct research in the Grinnell Biology Department, and well as a bit about the greater Grinnell community.

Teaching Biology:

Grinnell is a highly-selective liberal arts college with a well-deserved reputation for undergraduate teaching. A [somewhat recent NSF report](#) ranks Grinnell 7th per capita among schools from which science and engineering Ph.D.'s received their bachelors degrees.

Grinnell College has a strong commitment to social justice, revealed, in part, by our need-blind admissions process. We do not consider ability to pay in making admissions decisions for domestic students, and we meet the full demonstrated financial need of all students we accept (including international students). The Biology department is also active in institution-wide diversity efforts, such as the [Grinnell Science Project](#) (GSP), which has been honored with the Presidential Award

for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring for more than twenty years of successful efforts to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups who earn degrees in the sciences.

So, Grinnell students are an amazing and rewarding group to teach. Class sizes are small (~24 per class at the 100 & 200-level, ~12 per class at the 300-level in Biology), and the high priority placed on advising means students and faculty get to know each other well.

Biology faculty teach regularly at all three levels of our curriculum, typically including BIO150, BIO251 or BIO252, and an advanced elective each year. The teaching load is 5 course equivalents per year, lecture counting as 1 course and lab counting as 0.5 courses. Biology purposely links lecture and lab, meaning students have the same professor in both. This is intended to reduce artificial barriers between the classroom and laboratory. As a result, a typical yearly teaching load for a Biology faculty member would be three courses, each with a lab (3 x 1.5 courses) plus another 0.5 courses from somewhere, such as a half-credit [Readings in Biology course](#).

Note, however, that the first-year teaching load for new tenure-track faculty is reduce to 4 course equivalents. Further, all faculty are guaranteed a one semester (3 course) leave prior to tenure.

Teaching at Grinnell can take place in many settings. Beyond traditional lecture halls and labs, there are opportunities for course-embedded travel and wonderful teaching spaces at the Conard Environment Research Area ([CERA](#)), Grinnell College's 365-acre remote campus that serves as a biological field station. CERA, just 11 miles from the main campus, boasts natural landscapes, ongoing long-term experiments, a research lab, and a LEED gold-certified Environmental Education Center, all of which support disciplinary and interdisciplinary learning across the College's curriculum. CERA's mission is to preserve and, through restoration, recreate a part of Iowa's vanishing natural heritage, providing a resource for the college and the broader community.

Research:

Given our research-forward curriculum and commitment to learning-through-doing, faculty at Grinnell College are expected to be productive scholars. A significant mode of research across campus, and particularly in Biology, is faculty-mentored student research in the form of what are called [Mentored Advanced Projects \(MAPs\)](#). MAPs can be conducted during the semester or summer. Students earn academic credit for the MAP and are awarded funds to support the project. Summer MAPs come with a stipend to support 10-weeks of full-time research. Faculty also receive a stipend for supervising MAPs. MAPs are popular and a part of our rich culture of student-faculty research. Demand always exceeds supply; however, faculty are not required to conduct MAPs.

Beyond MAPs, the College provides support for faculty scholarship in a number of ways:

- **Startup Funds.** New tenure-track hires negotiate a startup package with the Dean after being offered a position.
- **Research Labs.** All tenure-track faculty have dedicated research space in addition to office space.
- **Faculty Development Funds.** All faculty receive \$3,000 each year to support their research. Faculty can also apply for up to \$5,000 of competitive grants from the Dean's office.
- **Teaching Leaves.** Faculty contracts are for 9 months, freeing up summer for research that can include grant-supported supplementary salary. Pre-tenure faculty are eligible for a one-semester research leave in their fourth year, and can apply for a Harris Faculty Fellowship, which supports a full-year leave. Faculty are eligible for a full-year sabbatical with full pay after tenure, and after every 12 semesters of teaching thereafter.
- **Grants Office Support.** The College has an excellent [Grants Office](#) to help faculty apply for government grants and other external funding programs.

Grinnell, the Community:

Grinnell College resides in the city of Grinnell, a community of approximately 9,000 people situated in rural Iowa. The College actively seeks to engage with the local community. All College-hosted events (athletic, fine arts, etc.) are free and open to the public. While many faculty members find the community of Grinnell a great place to live, some faculty and staff do commute from cities such as Iowa City and Des Moines.