

Ph.D. and M.S. research assistantships: Aquatic Ecology and Harmful Algal Blooms  
Auburn University, School of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Aquatic Sciences  
Auburn, Alabama USA

**Description:** Three graduate research assistantships (Ph.D. (preferred) or M.S.) in aquatic ecology and harmful algal blooms are available in Alan Wilson's lab at Auburn University (<https://www.wilsonlab.com/>). We are an active and productive lab with current research projects that are funded by a variety of grants from USDA ARS, USDA NIFA, NSF Dimensions of Biodiversity, and USGS which take advantage of our field station that includes hundreds of aquaculture ponds and nearby recreational and drinking water reservoirs. Here, we pursue basic and applied questions associated with understanding the ecological, evolutionary, and limnological mechanisms controlling the structure and function of freshwater plankton communities. **Harmful algal blooms are the foci for many of our projects.** My students are welcome to participate on existing projects, which include large-scale field experiments and monitoring, lab-based analytical analyses, modeling, and meta-analysis, but are **strongly encouraged to develop their own projects** in addition to applying for external grants and fellowships, such as the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship program. There are numerous opportunities to work directly with important stakeholders, such as aquaculture farmers, water utilities, and natural resource managers.

I am motivated to maintain a productive, diverse, and inclusive lab and encourage students from under-represented groups to consider joining us. Moreover, lab members are strongly encouraged to develop outreach activities to broaden the impact of their research.

**Qualifications:** Ideal candidates will be data driven, hard-working, honest, highly self-motivated, team-oriented, and excited about studying freshwater communities. Prior coursework in ecology, limnology, and statistics, a strong interest in mentoring undergraduates and participating in outreach, and relevant research experiences (including analytical skills, such molecular, GC-MS, GC-FID, HPLC, ELISA) are desirable, but not required. **Minimum qualifications** include a B.S./B.A. (for M.S. position) or M.S. (for Ph.D. position) in Biology, Ecology, or related field; GPA of 3.2 or greater; and above average GRE scores (at least 50th percentile for quantitative and verbal; at least 4.0 for analytical writing).

**Support:** Competitive graduate research assistantships (starting for Ph.D. = \$25k/yr and M.S. = \$20k/yr) include 12-month stipend and full tuition waivers. Highly qualified Ph.D. candidates will be considered for an AU Presidential Graduate Research Fellowship (<http://graduate.auburn.edu/au-presidential-graduate-research-fellowships/>) or AU Presidential Graduate Opportunity Fellowship (<http://graduate.auburn.edu/prospective-students/presidential-graduate-opportunity-program/>), which can last 3 years and include an annual stipend of at least \$40,000. Moreover, all students in the lab are well supported to conduct high quality research and are strongly encouraged and supported to share their research at scientific conferences.

**Start date:** Flexible but summer or fall 2023 would be ideal considering current projects.

**How to apply:** Interested students are encouraged to submit their application materials at <https://forms.gle/WocXAMDtfSs5vWHm9>

**The University:** Auburn University is an R1 land-grant institution organized into twelve academic colleges and schools and ranked 40th among public universities in the U.S. News and World 2021 Report. For 2020, 24,505 undergraduates as well as 6,232 graduate and professional students were enrolled. The University is nationally recognized for its academic excellence, commitments to community engagement, positive work environment, flourishing student life programs, and beautiful campus. To learn more about the University, please visit: <http://www.auburn.edu/>

**The Community:** Auburn is recognized as one of America's best small towns with a moderate climate and easy access to major cities, beaches, and mountains. The city is situated along the rapidly developing I-85 Atlanta, Georgia, and Montgomery, Alabama, corridor. The combined Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Statistical Area boasts a growing population of over >60,000. The City of Auburn grew 43% in the past decade and is known for an excellent public school system and a local medical center acknowledged as among the best in the region. The City of Auburn website has information on the community and services that can be accessed at: <https://www.auburnalabama.org/>