

MOVING TARGET



The Study of Life



BEING ONE OF THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY SCIENCE OPTIONS AROUND, LIFE SCIENCES OFFERS AN ARRAY OF CHOICES TO STUDY HUMAN MECHANISM, OPINES **NIKITA MITHARE**

With the recent Hollywood flick 'Avatar,' director James Cameron created Pandora with a detailed study of life from a certain thousand light years from earth. He created the mesmerising living creatures on the Pandora inhabiting the Navi's. The movie if viewed with the backdrop of life sciences, would immediately strike us about the stunning creation of life on earth and the study of organisms inhabiting the planet.

What are Life Sciences?

We have been studying biology at school levels. But further at the high school and graduate levels, the study breaks into more systematic areas of study of Life Sciences. Life sciences help us understand the living world and utilise this knowledge for the benefit of mankind. With the enormous variety of living organisms and the complexity in their creation led to the expansion of a variety of specializations focusing on every aspect of life on earth.

A diverse alternative

About Life Sciences as an entirely diverse field of study, Dr. (Mrs.) Yasmina Avari, Head of Department of Life Sciences at the Jai Hind College, Mumbai opines, "Life Sciences as a study course have inter-discipli-

nary aspects. It is multi-faceted and has an edge over classical sciences. Though I don't deter the importance of classical sciences, I feel Life Sciences go beyond stoic classical subjects of science. Life Sciences offer a broader spectrum of knowledge."

Eligibility

To enrol for a Bachelor's course in Life Sciences, 10+2 or equivalent qualification with physics, chemistry, biology or mathematics is a pre-requisite followed by any level of biological sciences. The detailed course structure makes a candidate eligible to go for a Master's course opting for a specific specialisation based on the subject. Also, after Master's he/she can further pursue Research based studies or go for Doctoral thesis.

Areas of Specialisation

About the options that open up for BSc in Life Sciences, Dr. Avari suggests, "Life Sciences present a variety of advanced study courses as areas of specialisation. Specialisation is definitely the need of the hour. Life Sciences offer a range of subjects like Neurobiology, Biotechnology, Biomedical Research, Entomology, Molecular biology, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Cell biology, Genetics, Applied Nutrition, Clinical Research, etc. One can also enrol for post-graduate courses in these subjects ahead."

Personality traits

A candidate willing to pursue a career in Life sciences should have a high level of intelligence quotient, ability to concentrate for longer durations, a questioning mind, thorough determination, perseverance, team spirit, originality of ideas and better execution, a systematic and methodical approach, attention to trace minor details and practical approach towards the study of sciences. Most importantly, he/she should have a sci-

entific aptitude and a keen interest in the biological sciences.

Scope and prospects

By and large, pharmaceutical companies, bio industries, government and private sectors, research and development departments in multinational companies, medical sectors, processing industries and nutrition sectors, universities and research institutions offer maximum opportunities. Some institutes do offer job placements in certain areas but as Dr. Avari states, "Dedication towards a specific organization and commitment towards work is a default pre-requisite for the field enthusiasts." Life Sciences thus offers an entirely new threshold of medical and industrial careers.

Remuneration

Being an upcoming field and a desirable career option, a candidate can expect a decent pay packet. With advanced courses like Masters or Post Graduate Diplomas, one can expect an edge over their counterparts. The remuneration is fixed only for the government sector while in the private sector; it depends on the Company policies.

With a broad base for study and research options, life sciences definitely leads the way in propelling human intellect to seek a challenging career.

List of Institutes offering BSc. Courses in Life Sciences in India

- Jai Hind College, Mumbai.
- St. Xavier's College, Mumbai
- Sophia College for Women, Mumbai
- K. C. College of Arts, Commerce, Science, Mumbai
- National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health (NIRRH), Mumbai
- School of Life Sciences, University of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

