

## FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

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The Valparaiso University Department of Biology is housed in the modern Neils Science Center on the Valparaiso University campus. Completed in 1974, the Neils Science Center houses the three primary "hard science" departments: Biology, Chemistry, and Physics and Astronomy. Not only does the Neils Science Center support laboratory teaching and learning, but it also has many comfortable classrooms. The six primary classrooms in the building are equipped with internet access and modern multimedia presentation devices, e.g., video/data LCD projectors and document cameras. The most recent upgrade of these classrooms occurred in August, 2005. Smaller classrooms use mobile multimedia devices, when required.

Our departmental facilities include a greenhouse, herbarium, cell culture laboratory, and a well-equipped microscopy laboratory. All of our modern general purpose teaching laboratories have computer connections to the campus network and thus the world. In addition to teaching laboratories, we also have spaces dedicated to [student investigations](#) and [faculty research](#).

Our microscopy laboratory is equipped with a wide array of modern equipment, including:

**Our computer-interfaced scanning electron microscope (JEOL 35-CF). The Department also has a critical point dryer and a sputter coater for sample preparation in electron microscopy.**

**A new Nikon wide-field fluorescence stereomicroscope with a research grade digital camera attached to computers for image analysis.**

Other recent additions to our imaging capabilities include the following new light microscopes:

- 96 Nikon binocular compound microscopes
- 24 Leica stereo dissecting microscopes (with fiberoptic illuminators)
- two Nikon phase contrast microscopes.

These light microscopes have been purchased since 1999, and complement our fluorescence-equipped research grade Olympus compound microscope. Our department makes good use of this imaging equipment by offering many courses in which these instruments are used.

We are also well-equipped for molecular biology and cell culture. We have recently acquired a third thermal cycler for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) experiments, two manual DNA sequencing chambers, agarose gel electrophoresis equipment, a superspeed centrifuge, and a UV/visible spectrophotometer. Our cell culture lab is equipped with two laminar flow hoods, a new, microprocessor-controlled water-jacketed carbon dioxide incubator, and a mega-pure water system. Wireless and wired Internet access for on-line database searching in molecular biology is available in the Neils Science Center and across campus.

Department of Biology - Valparaiso University  
Valparaiso University is located approximately 15 miles south of Lake Michigan and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, near the Valparaiso moraine. Regarded by many as the birthplace of succession ecology, the dunelands are an invaluable resource for our students and faculty, with abundant opportunities to investigate ecological relationships.

Further information on the Biology Department can be obtained by calling 219-464-5369, or the VU [Admission Office](#).

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