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Purpose and Scope of this Document

The Coastal Sciences Graduate Student Handbook contains the policies and guidelines for doctoral and masters level graduate students in the Division of Coastal Sciences (COA) in the School of Ocean Science and Technology (SOST). These guidelines augment those stipulated in The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Graduate Bulletin (<http://catalog.usm.edu/index.php>). It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with all policies and deadlines in these documents.

Research Mind-Set

Graduate study in COA is research intensive and seeks to provide students the opportunity to specialize in a particular field of study through active research. It is important that new graduate students make the transition from an undergraduate mind-set where degree requirements are fulfilled by completing a defined number of classes or credit hours to a graduate mind-set where degree requirements are fulfilled by completing and defending a research thesis.

Graduate Faculty

The Graduate Faculty implements graduate education in COA. Only members of the Graduate Faculty may:

- Teach graduate courses
- Serve as member of Graduate Advisory Committees
- Serve as Major Professor.

There are various categories of Graduate Faculty. Regular Graduate Faculty are tenured or tenure track members of the university faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty are not. General requirements for all Graduate Faculty include an earned terminal degree and demonstrated performance in teaching and research. Graduate Faculty membership and status is determined on an individual basis. Requests for Graduate Faculty status are made by the COA Chair to the university's Graduate Council.

Regular Graduate Faculty are divided into three levels:

- Level 1 members may teach graduate courses and sit on M.S. Advisory Committees.
- Level 2 members may serve as the Major Professor for M.S. students and sit on Ph.D. committees.
- Level 3 members may serve as the Major Professor for Ph.D. students.

Associate Graduate Faculty status is typically held by individuals either outside the university or in non-tenure track positions who add value to graduate Advisory Committees. Associate Graduate Faculty may not serve as Major Professors. Likewise Emeritus/Emerita Professors may not serve as Major Professors, but they may sit on graduate committees pending approval by the COA Chair. Students may check with the COA Graduate Coordinator for a list of COA faculty and their graduate faculty status.

Major Professor

Graduate education in COA is implemented through the relationship between the student and a Major Professor, thus the choice of Major Professor is critical to the success of the graduate student. Students planning on enrolling in COA should familiarize themselves

with faculty members and then arrange a visit to discuss research interests and ideas, possible course work schedule, and financial support. After acceptance into COA, the Major Professor is the student's primary mentor and is responsible for advising the student and chairing the Advisory Committee. The Major Professor:

- Provides the student office and research space.
- Assists the student in selecting the Advisory Committee.
- Assists in the development in the student's program of study (POS).
- Works with student to formulate a research prospectus.
- Obtains the resources necessary for the chosen research project.

For students entering without a Major Professor, the COA Chair will serve as interim advisor for a period of up to 12 months after which time the student must have a Major Professor to be able to continue in the graduate program.

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee:

- Guides development and implementation of the student's graduate program.
- Approves the POS, the thesis or dissertation research prospectus, and the thesis or dissertation
- Administers the appropriate written and oral examinations.

It is the duty of the Advisory Committee to oversee the academic development of the student. To ensure that the student has educational experiences commensurate with the degree sought, the Advisory Committee may require a student to complete particular courses and meet specific competencies. The COA Chair is an ex officio non-voting member of all Advisory Committees.

Financial Support

A variety of mechanisms are in place to provide financial support to COA graduate students:

- **Project Research Assistantship (RA)**
Funding is provided by the Major Professor through an extramurally funded research program. Students on such an assistantship must work a minimum of 20 hours per week on research program related duties. The type of work and work load for project RAs is assigned by the Major Professor (or program PI). The vast majority of financial support for graduate students in COA comes as project RAs.
- **COA Research Assistantship**
Provided intermittently, but rarely, by COA.
- **COA Teaching Assistantship (TA)**
Currently not available through COA for Spring/Fall, but a limited number may be available during Summer terms, contact Summer Field Program Coordinator.
- **Fellowships from external sources**
Students should inquire with their Major Professor for such opportunities.

Recipients of any assistantships must enroll for 9-13 credit hours a semester if funded during the fall and spring semesters and at least 3 credit hours for each summer term. The assistantship monthly wage depends on student status and is determined by USM. Students on externally funded fellowships may receive a higher wage than that determined by USM. Tuition is generally waived for students on assistantships.

Recipients of student assistantships are considered employees and are subject to the expectations of attendance of the staff and faculty of USM. Allotted holidays are those of the staff and faculty of USM. All other personal time away from USM must be authorized by the Major Professor.

Additional financial support for student research and travel to meetings is available through a number of competitive awards and scholarships offered to students in COA. These include, but are not limited to: Lytle Coastal Sciences Scholarship, Baron Memorial Education Endowment, McIlwain Fisheries Endowment, Overstreet Coastal Sciences Endowment. Interested students should check the Student Funding link at http://gcr1.usm.edu/coastal_sciences/scholarships.php or contact the COA Chair for further information on how to apply.

Emphasis Area Program

COA offers an optional Emphasis Area program for the Coastal Sciences Graduate Degree. The four emphasis areas at the M.S. and Ph.D. level are Aquaculture, Fisheries and Fisheries Oceanography, Aquatic Health Sciences, and Coastal Ecology and Ecosystem Processes. The purpose of the Emphasis Area program for M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Coastal Sciences is to enable students to develop research, analytical, computational, and writing knowledge, skills, and abilities in preparation for occupations in academic, government, and private organizations concerned with fields relevant to scientific investigation of near shore, marine, and coastal environments. For specific Plans of Study see the Emphasis Area information found at the end of this document in Appendix 1.

Registration

It is the student's responsibility to consult with his or her Major Professor, select courses, and register in a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in late registration fees that are the student's responsibility.

First-time registration is handled by the GCRL Admissions Specialist (currently 2016), Margaret Firth. She may be contacted at Margaret.firth@usm.edu or (228) 818-8852 for details on course offerings, registration time and place, and registration materials that are needed following advisement. As soon as possible, it is recommended that you access USM's On-line Accessible Records (SOAR.usm.edu) to change your contact information to your (new) local address and phone number. This ensures all university correspondence will arrive as soon as possible. All university correspondence will be through the university email account issued by USM.

For continuing students, early registration may be accomplished by the use of SOAR. See the Class Schedule Guide for instructions for registration by SOAR or visit the Registrar's website at www.usm.edu/registrar/. Refer to the current academic calendar for important student-related deadlines and dates at: <http://www.usm.edu/registrar/calendars>. Course offerings for the Fall semester are distributed in March; course offerings for the Spring semester are distributed in October. Students should register for classes as soon as the class schedule is available. Failure to do so can be detrimental for students that receive an assistantship, as it can negatively impact stipends and tuition waivers. Students are encouraged to consult the USM class schedule for more information at: <http://www.usm.edu/registrar/class-schedule-guide>. Class schedule information can also be accessed through SOAR. A list of required books is provided in SOAR at the time of registration. Textbooks may be purchased from the University's Barnes and Noble online bookstore (<http://usm.bncollege.com>).

You are permitted, with the approval of your Major Professor, to take courses offered at the USM main campus in Hattiesburg or the Division of Marine Science teaching site at Stennis. Stennis is a federal facility and all students will be required to show identification prior to entry; foreign nationals will be required to have an escort while on Stennis grounds and may require additional security clearance that needs to be obtained prior to the beginning of semester.

Completion of Required University Courses:

The following courses are required to be completed by all graduate students by the end of the 1st Semester through the University's Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) available at <http://www.usm.edu/research/program-requirements>.

1. "Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program".
2. "Animal Subjects Research Course".
3. Plagiarism Tutorial (<http://lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag>).

Upon completion of these training, a record is sent to the University showing your completion and passing of the course.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) must approve research projects that use vertebrate animals in any way. Procedures for Institutional Animal Care and Use review are currently available at <http://www.usm.edu/research/iacuc-forms>. Research that involves human subjects in any way must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Procedures for Human Subjects Review are at <http://www.usm.edu/research/institutional-review-board>. Students will work in collaboration with their Major Professor to obtain these approvals.

Annual Progress Report

At the end of each calendar year, students will provide an annual report on research progress (see Appendix 2) to the Major Professor and meet with members of the Student Advisory Committee. The meeting provides an opportunity for the student to discuss with the committee on progress being made. The Committee will guide the student based on information received, and the Major Professor will file a copy of the annual report along with Advisory Committee recommendations with the COA Graduate Coordinator.

Progress to Degree Forms

All forms that are required for your degree can be found at USM's Graduate School Website: <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/progress-degree-and-graduation-forms>.

Ensure all forms submitted are current and typed. Handwritten forms will not be accepted by the Graduate School.

Forms that students have access to include:

1. Timeline for Submission of Graduate School Paperwork
2. Application for Graduation
3. Graduation Deferral Form
4. Graduate Committee Request Form
5. Official Name Change
6. Leave of Absence Form
7. Letter of Enrollment Verification
8. Replacement Diploma Request
9. Change of Address
10. Course Retake Form

Forms that faculty access on behalf of the student include:

1. Change of Status Form
2. Dismissal Form
3. Dissertation, Nursing Capstone, & Theses Proposal Approval Form
4. Results of Comprehensive & Qualifying Exams
5. Results of Oral Defense
6. Transfer Credit Approval Form
7. Revalidation Request Form
8. Revalidation Verification Form

and can be obtained here:

<https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/advisordepartment-completion-forms>

M.S. Degree

Suggested Timeline: Full-time students are expected to complete a Master of Science degree in three years or less. For part-time students, there may be up to an additional two years to complete the program (Semester here is defined as Fall/Spring academic semester).

Action	Date Completed
Completion of University courses	1 st Semester
Formation of faculty advisory committee	1 st Semester
Approval of Program of Study (POS)	1 st Semester
MS Thesis Prospectus approved	2 nd Semester
Comprehensive exam	3 rd Semester
Thesis Defense	End of 4 th Semester

A more detailed outline of the expected actions for an M.S. degree can be found on the Graduate Student Progress Form in Appendix 2. Failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress towards completion of degree requirements may result in the assistantship being revoked, and may ultimately entail termination of the graduate program.

Formation of faculty advisory committee:

The M.S. Advisory Committee must have a minimum of three members (including the Major Professor). A majority of the committee must be from the COA faculty. Each committee member must have at least Level 1 Associate or Level 1 Regular Graduate Faculty status. The chair of the committee (Major Professor) must be a member of the COA faculty and have Level 2 Regular Graduate Faculty status. Additional appropriate, non-voting members may be added to the committee with the approval of the COA Chair. An additional COA faculty member may be appointed by the COA Chair to attend the oral comprehensive examination and one to attend the thesis defense to observe the proceedings. The committee evaluates the prospectus, provides guidance on courses the student should take, administers the comprehensive exam, and evaluates the written and oral defense of the thesis. Successful completion of the prospectus, comprehensive exam and thesis defense requires the approval of a majority of the committee members.

Approval of Program of Study (POS)

By the end of the 1st semester in the COA graduate program, the student must file a Coastal Sciences MS Plan of Study (POS) with the Graduate School. The POS projects the coursework taken during the student's M.S. degree program (see Plans of Study link at the graduate school web site at <http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/plans-study-masters-programs>). The POS is formulated in consultation with the Major Professor and the Advisory Committee, and approved by the Advisory Committee and the COA Chair.

A minimum of 30 graduate credit hrs beyond the Baccalaureate is required for the MS in Coastal Sciences, including:

COA 691 Research in Coastal Sciences.....6 hrs
COA 698 Thesis.....6 hrs

Electives (Determined by Major Professor and Advisory Committee).....18 hrs
COA 691- Research, COA 697- Independent Study, and COA 698- Thesis do not count toward the 18 credit hours of electives for the M.S. degree. A minimum of 18 credit hrs must be earned at the 600 level or greater.

MS Thesis Prospectus Approval

Within **6 months** of approval of the Plan of Study (POS), the student is required to prepare a concise, yet detailed, written thesis prospectus. An approved prospectus is a research plan detailing the scope of work and associated deliverables that fulfills the thesis requirements of the M.S. degree. This written document must be presented to the Advisory Committee at least two weeks prior to the student making an oral slideshow presentation before a public audience on the prospectus.

Any subsequent revisions to the research prospectus must then be approved by the Advisory Committee within one (1) semester of the presentation and only after approval can the thesis research project be considered acceptable for earning the degree. Modifications to an approved prospectus during the implementation of the research is acceptable. Minor modifications need approval of the Major Professor only; however, major changes in scope or direction of the research must be approved by the Advisory Committee.

M.S. Comprehensive Examination

After completing all courses in the POS (typically in the third semester or at another time acceptable to the Advisory Committee) a written and/or oral comprehensive examination will be conducted by the Advisory Committee. The examination is passed by a majority vote of the Advisory Committee members and may be taken twice only. Failure to pass the M.S. comprehensive exam on the second attempt is grounds for termination from the program. Results of the M.S. comprehensive exam must be submitted to the COA Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate School.

Those students electing to pursue an optional Emphasis Area designation will also need to complete an additional, emphasis-specific evaluation, at the time of their comprehensive examination. The evaluation is a written exam to determine emphasis-specific skills and is used to help evaluate student learning outcomes in the Emphasis Area program.

Students advance to candidacy for the M.S. in Coastal Sciences by completing the POS coursework with at least a 3.0 GPA, completing an approved thesis prospectus, and successfully passing the comprehensive examination.

M.S. Thesis

The M.S. thesis research is designed to give the student experiences in the scientific process. The M.S. thesis must be the result of original investigation. The thesis research project is developed by the student under the direction of the Major Professor.

Thesis Defense

After the POS is completed and the comprehensive examinations passed, the M.S. candidate becomes qualified to defend the thesis in their next semester. At least two (2) weeks prior to the defense the student will present an acceptable copy of the thesis to all members of the Advisory Committee and have the work approved by the Graduate Reviewer.

The thesis defense includes (1) a public seminar followed by (2) an Advisory Committee oral examination. Student defenses must be publicly advertised at least two weeks prior to the defense date. It is the responsibility of the student and their Major Professor to determine the defense date and the responsibility of the student to reserve a venue. A majority vote of the Advisory Committee determines the outcome of the defense. The outcome must be reported to the COA Graduate Coordinator and Dean of CoST as soon as possible after the meeting. It is the responsibility of the students to adhere to the timelines set by the Graduate School at <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/application-graduate-degreecertificate>.

M.S. Time Limit

A Master's degree must be completed within five (5) academic years from the semester of initial enrollment in a Master's program. Five years is the maximum time allowed for graduate coursework toward a Master's degree for both full time and part time students. A student must meet the requirements and adhere to the policies described in the *Graduate Bulletin* that is current the first semester of enrollment through the fifth (5th) year in the program.

If a student's degree progress is slowed due to an extreme hardship, he/she may petition the COA Chair via the Major Professor for a limited extension which will then be reviewed by the Dean of the Graduate School. If an extension is granted, the student will become subject to the *Graduate Bulletin* that is current the semester the extension is granted and will be responsible for meeting any new requirements of the degree and/or departmental or university policies. Course revalidation will be required.

Continuance of assistantship support depends on good progress towards completion of a degree (as well as availability of funds). Therefore, full-time M.S. students will not be eligible for further support after their third year. Under extenuating circumstances, a student may, with the support of the student's advisor and committee, petition to be allowed to receive additional support beyond these limits. Such a request requires the approval of the COA Chair and a majority vote of the COA faculty in support of the request.

Ph.D. Degree

Suggested Timeline: Full-time students are expected to complete a Ph.D. from a master's degree in five years or less, and a Ph.D. from a bachelor's degree in six years or less. For part-time students, there may be up to an additional two to three years to complete the program. Part-time students especially should be aware of the university time limits discussed later in this section (Semester here is defined as Fall/Spring academic semester).

Action	Date Completed
Completion of University courses	1 st Semester
Formation of faculty advisory committee	2 nd Semester
Approval of Program of Study (POS)	2 nd Semester
Qualifying Exam	3 rd Semester
PhD Prospectus approved	4 th Semester
Formal coursework completed	3 rd Year
Comprehensive exam	3 rd Year
Dissertation Defense	End of 4 th Year

A more detailed outline of the expected actions for a Ph.D. degree can be found on the Graduate Student Progress Form in Appendix 2. Failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress towards completion of degree requirements may result in the assistantship being revoked, and may ultimately entail termination of the graduate program.

Formation of faculty advisory committee:

The Ph.D. Advisory Committee must have a minimum of four members (including the Major Professor). A majority of the committee must be from the COA faculty. Each committee member must have at least Level 2 Associate or Level 1 2 Regular Graduate Faculty Status. The chair of the Committee (Major Professor) must be a member of the COA faculty and have Level 3 Regular Graduate status. Only one committee member can be from outside the university. Additional appropriate, non-voting members may be added to the committee with the approval of the COA Chair. An additional COA faculty member may be appointed by the COA Chair to attend the oral comprehensive examination and one to attend the dissertation defense to observe the proceedings. The committee evaluates the prospectus, provides guidance on courses the student should take, administers the qualifying and comprehensive exams and evaluates the written and oral defense of the dissertation. Successful completion of the prospectus, comprehensive exam, and dissertation defense requires the approval of a majority of the committee members.

Approval of Program of Study (POS)

By the end of the 2nd semester in the COA graduate program, the student must file a Coastal Sciences PhD Plan of Study (POS) with the Graduate School. The POS projects the coursework taken during the student's Ph.D. program (see Plans of Study link at the graduate school web site at <http://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/plans-study-doctoral-programs>). The POS is formulated in consultation with the Major Professor and the Advisory Committee, and approved by the Advisory Committee and the COA Chair.

A minimum of 84 graduate credit hours beyond the Baccalaureate degree or a minimum of 54 graduate credit hours beyond the MS degree is required for the Ph.D. in Coastal Sciences, including:

Students entering with the MS degree are required to complete

COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences.....16 hrs
COA 898 Dissertation.....12 hrs
Research Tools.....15 hrs
Electives (Determined by Major Adviser and Advisory Committee)...11 hrs
COA 791– Research, COA 797- Independent Study, and COA 898- Dissertation do not count as electives or research tools for the Ph.D. A minimum of 30 credit hrs must be earned at the 600 level or greater.

Students entering with the B.S. degree are required to complete

COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences.....28 hrs
COA 898 Dissertation.....12 hrs
Research Tools.....15 hrs
Electives (Determined by major adviser and advisory committee).....29 hrs
COA 791– Research, COA 797- Independent Study, and COA 898- Dissertation do not count as electives or research tools for the Ph.D. A minimum of 50 credit hrs must be earned at the 600 level or greater.

Ph.D. Research Tools

The Ph.D. program requires the student and Advisory Committee include on the POS a minimum of 15 credit hours of research tools appropriate for the student’s goals. The research tools credit hours count toward the total coursework requirement of 54 or 84 credit hrs. Courses qualifying as research tools are those in which a student learns a technical skill that is useful and relevant to their scientific research. Examples include courses in which statistical analysis, computer programming, field or laboratory instrumentation, field or laboratory techniques are learned. Additional details on suggested research tools courses offered through the Emphasis Area program can be found in Appendix 1. The specific research tools courses are approved by the Advisory Committee and the COA Chair. The research tools must be listed on the POS and then submitted to the Graduate School for final approval. Evaluation of competency in research tools will be assessed through the student’s grades in relevant coursework, and by the Advisory Committee during the qualifying and comprehensive exams as well as the final dissertation defense.

Qualifying Exam

A Ph.D. qualifying exam serves two purposes: 1) The exam is intended to extend the discipline-specific knowledge successfully gained through the first year of coursework into an integrative context across the multiple disciplines of coastal sciences. 2) The exam is intended to be administered early enough in a Ph.D. student’s program that a required proficiency of coastal sciences may be adequately assessed. All Ph.D. students must successfully complete the qualifying exam within six months of the end of their

second semester. The exam will be interdisciplinary and is intended to extend discipline-specific knowledge into an integrative context across the multiple disciplines comprising coastal sciences.

The Qualifying Exam Committee will evaluate the Ph.D. student's written responses to assess the student's academic progress and to help evaluate student learning outcomes in the Emphasis Area program. If the majority of the Qualifying Exam Committee members determine that the student performs at a standard equivalent to a B or greater, the student will pass the exam. If a Ph.D. student fails the qualifying exam on the second attempt, then the student will be considered for an MS only. Results of the Ph.D. qualifying exam must be submitted to the COA Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate School.

Ph.D. Thesis Prospectus Approval

Within **12 months** of approval of the Plan of Study (POS), the student is required to prepare a concise, yet detailed, written dissertation prospectus. An approved prospectus is a research plan detailing the scope of work and associated deliverables that fulfills the dissertation requirements of the Ph.D. degree. This written document must be presented to the Advisory Committee at least two weeks prior to the student making an oral slideshow presentation before a public audience on the prospectus.

Any subsequent revisions to the research prospectus must then be approved by the Advisory Committee within one (1) semester of the presentation and only after approval can the dissertation research project be considered acceptable for earning the degree. Modification to an approved prospectus during the implementation of the research is acceptable. Minor modifications need approval of the Major Professor only; however, major changes in scope or direction of the research must be approved by the Advisory Committee.

Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination

After completing all courses in the POS (typically in the fourth semester or at another time acceptable to the Advisory Committee) a written and oral comprehensive examination will be conducted by the Advisory Committee. In most cases the written examination is taken and, pending the outcome of that examination, an oral examination is taken within 30 days of the decision of the written examination by the Advisory Committee. The examination will be passed by a majority vote of the Advisory Committee members and may be taken twice only. If a student fails the Ph.D. comprehensive exam on a second attempt, then the student will be considered for an M.S. degree only. Results of the Ph.D. comprehensive exam must be submitted to the COA Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate School.

Those students electing to pursue an optional Emphasis Area designation will also need to complete an additional, emphasis-specific evaluation, at the time of their comprehensive examination. The evaluation is a written exam to determine emphasis-specific skills and is used to help evaluate student learning outcomes in the Emphasis Area program.

Students advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. in Coastal Sciences by completing the POS coursework with at least a 3.0 GPA, completing an approved dissertation prospectus, and successfully passing the qualifying and comprehensive examinations.

Ph.D. Dissertation

The PhD dissertation research is an independent and original investigation that results in a significant contribution to science. The PhD dissertation must be the result of original investigation. The dissertation research project is developed by the student under the direction of the Major Professor.

Dissertation Defense

After the POS is completed, the comprehensive examinations passed, and the research tools requirement fulfilled, the Ph.D. candidate becomes qualified to defend the dissertation in their next semester. At least two (2) weeks prior to the defense the student will present an acceptable copy of the dissertation to all members of the Advisory Committee, and have the work approved by the Graduate Reviewer.

The dissertation defense includes (1) a public seminar followed by (2) an Advisory Committee oral examination. Student defenses must be publicly advertised at least two weeks prior to the defense date. It is the responsibility of the student and their Major Professor to determine the defense date and the responsibility of the student to reserve a venue. A majority vote of the Advisory Committee determines the outcome of the defense. The outcome must be reported to the COA Graduate Coordinator and Dean of CoST as soon as possible after the meeting. It is the responsibility of the students to adhere to the timelines set by the Graduate School at <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/application-graduate-degreecertificate>.

Ph.D. Residency

In order to be considered a student in good standing, the Division and University require that a period of on-site residency be maintained. Residency is structured as a full-time experience and provides doctoral students with significant time for extensive involvement with faculty, professional colleagues, and peers as well as concentrated study and course work on a campus of The University of Southern Mississippi. Options for satisfying the residency requirement are: (a) two consecutive academic semesters (Fall and Spring) of 12 credit hrs each, (b) 2 consecutive summer terms of 12 credit hrs each, or (c) 3 consecutive full-time semester of 9 credit hrs each.

Ph.D. Time Limit

A doctorate must be completed within eight (8) calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in a doctoral program. Eight (8) years is the maximum time allowed for graduate credits toward a doctoral degree for both full time and part time students. A student must meet the requirements and adhere to the policies described in the *Graduate Bulletin* that is current the first semester of enrollment through the eighth (8th) year in the program.

If a student's degree progress is slowed due to an extreme hardship, he/she may petition the COA Chair via the Major Professor for a limited extension which will then be reviewed by the Dean of the Graduate School. If an extension is granted, the student becomes subject to the *Graduate Bulletin* that is current the semester the extension is granted, including responsibility for any changes in the requirements of the degree and/or departmental or university policies. Course revalidation will be required.

Continuance of assistantship support depends on good progress towards completion of a degree (as well as availability of funds). Therefore, full-time Ph.D. students will not be eligible for further support after their sixth year. Under extenuating circumstances, a student may, with the support of the student's advisor and committee, petition to be allowed to receive additional support beyond these limits. Such a request requires the approval of the COA Chair and a majority vote of the COA faculty in support of the request.

M.S. and Ph.D. Student Continuous Enrollment

M.S. students must register for:

- At least 1 credit hr if they are using any university resource.
- At least 1 credit hr of thesis (COA 698) during the semester they expect to take the comprehensive exam or defend and complete the Master's thesis. The final version of the document, approved by both the graduate committee and Reviewer, must be deposited in The Graduate School no later than the specified deadline. If a student fails to meet the deadline for submission, he/she must register for one (1) hour of thesis (COA 698) each semester until graduation.

Ph.D. students must register for:

- At least 1 credit hr if they are using any university resource.
- At least 1 credit hr the semester the comprehensive exam is taken. Doctoral candidates should complete the comprehensive examination **at least** one (1) semester prior to the defense of the dissertation.
- At least 1 credit hr of dissertation (COA 898) during the semester they expect to defend and complete the dissertation. The final version of the document, approved by both the Advisory Committee and Graduate Reviewer, must be deposited in the Graduate School no later than the specified deadline. If a student fails to meet the deadline for submission, he/she must register for one (1) hour of dissertation (COA 898) each semester until graduation.

After completion of the comprehensive examinations, continuous enrollment in at least 1 credit hr must be maintained during each fall and spring semester until successful defense of the thesis or dissertation. Failure to enroll for at least one (1) hour during the Fall and Spring semesters will result in discontinuation from the university. A student who has been discontinued must apply for readmission, pay a readmission fee, and pay tuition for each semester he/she was not enrolled.

Students must enroll for one (1) hour in each Summer term if they are using university services, e.g., library and/or technology services.

Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines

All students are expected to show satisfactory research progress while enrolled in COA 698/898 thesis/dissertation. Each semester of enrollment, the Major Professor must develop a set of expectations for research progress in writing, discuss these expectations with the student no later than the first week of the semester, and collect the signature of the student acknowledging that he/she understand the expectations. The Major Professor will assess student progress throughout the semester or minimally at the end of the semester to determine whether the work was satisfactory. Failure to meet the minimal expectations of satisfactory performance articulated in the research expectations document will result in the student being awarded an Unsatisfactory (U) grade and being placed on probation by the Graduate School the next semester enrolled.

The student can return to good academic standing if satisfactory research progress is made during the probationary semester resulting in a Satisfactory (S) grade. One Unsatisfactory grade can be removed from the transcript by petition for a grade change by the Major Professor if the student earns two consecutive S grades. A second U grade in these courses at any point in the degree program will result in dismissal from the program.

Guidelines for formatting the thesis can be found at the Graduate Reviewer's web site, <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/theses-dissertations-and-nursing-capstone-projects>

All students should have the Graduate Reviewer check and approve their title pages before they ask the Advisory Committee members to sign them. Four title pages are required, each bearing the original signature of each committee member in black ink. The Graduate School will not accept final copies of theses or dissertations unless the Graduate Reviewer has first checked and approved them.

Application for Degree

Students should submit to the Graduate Degree Auditor a signed, completed application along with payment for the degree by the specified deadline the semester before they wish to graduate. The Graduate Degree Auditor will check the application and notify the student of any problems. See <https://www.usm.edu/graduate-school/application-graduate-degreecertificate> for specific instructions. Students who do not graduate the semester for which they applied should contact the Graduate Degree Auditor, a fee applies to defer graduation to the following semester (first deferment fee is waived).

Quality of Work

Conditional status

Students granted conditional admission to the Division of Coastal Sciences are not eligible for any assistantships regardless of source.

To obtain *Regular Status* a Master's student admitted conditionally must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 on the first nine (9) hours of coursework at or above the 600 level, not including research hours and not to include Special Problems. The 9 hour requirement must be met no later than the end of the first semester of the student's program for full time students; for part time students it must be met no later than the end of the second semester (Semester here is defined as Fall/Spring academic semester) If, prior to satisfying the requirements to have the conditional status removed, the student attempts more than 9 hours of coursework at or above the 600 level, he or she must achieve a 3.0 overall grade point average on all course work. Lower-level coursework (500 or lower) taken to remedy perceived deficiencies may not be counted toward the nine-hour requirement. All courses taken to remove conditional status must be taken on a campus of The University of Southern Mississippi. Failure to achieve these requirements is grounds for termination from the graduate program.

To obtain *Regular Status* a Ph.D. student admitted conditionally must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.5 on the first nine (9) hours of coursework at or above the 600 level, not including research hours and not to include Special Problems. The 9 hour requirement must be met no later than the end of the first semester of the student's program for full time students; for part time students it must be met no later than the end of the second semester (Semester here is defined as Fall/Spring academic semester). If, prior to satisfying the requirements to have the conditional status removed, the student attempts more than 9 hours of coursework at or above the 600 level, he or she must achieve a 3.5 overall grade point average. Lower-level coursework (600 or lower) taken to remedy perceived deficiencies may not be counted toward the nine-hour requirement. All courses taken to remove conditional status must be taken on a campus of The University of Southern Mississippi. Failure to achieve these requirements is grounds for termination from the graduate program.

To request reclassification as a regular graduate student, the student's advisor must write a memorandum and complete a change of status form, through the COA Chair, to the Graduate School requesting such a change.

Regular status

A minimum 3.0 GPA in coursework is required for graduation. If the student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student has 1 (one) probationary semester in which to elevate the cumulative GPA to 3.0 by taking coursework, not including research hours. Failure to elevate the cumulative GPA to 3.0 is grounds for termination from the graduate program.

No more than two (2) grades of "C+" or "C" across six (6) credit hours is allowable in any coursework attempted. Only courses with earned letter grades of C or better will be accepted for credit towards the degree. No grade below a "C-" is allowable in any coursework attempted, or the student is automatically put on probation until they can retake that same course and earn a better grade. In the case of Special Topics or Special Problems courses, the student is required to retake the course covering the same material and earn a better grade. A student on probation cannot apply for graduation until the probation is lifted. After the probationary period the student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 until graduation. Failure to do so is grounds for termination from the graduate program.

Failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress towards completion of degree requirements as determined by the Advisory Committee and COA Chair will result in the assistantship being revoked, and may ultimately entail termination of the graduate program.

Termination from the graduate program will be initiated as a recommendation from the student's Advisory Committee to the COA Chair. The Chair will act on this recommendation and forward the termination request to the Graduate School.

Additional Notes

Student Requests

Requests for funding to present at conferences or workshops will be based on the student's record of engagement with the Division, including but not limited to: academic performance, attendance at seminars and Division functions, and assistance with Divisional requests from the COA Chair. Assistance will also be based on availability of funds.

Changing from M.S. to Ph.D., or vice versa

M.S. track students may be reclassified as Ph.D. track students. Demonstrated excellence is required in coursework and a passing grade in the comprehensive examinations before a master's-track student can be officially reassigned to the doctoral program. The student must submit a new graduate application form declaring the student's intention. The student's Major Professor should write a memorandum to the COA Chair supporting such a change.

In contrast, if a Ph.D. student fails the qualifying exams on the second attempt, then the student will be considered for an M.S. only. The student's Major Professor will write a memorandum to the COA Chair indicating such a change, and the Chair will notify the Graduate School.

Outside Employment

Assistantships are designed to allow students to pursue their studies and research full-time. If a student engages in outside employment it is likely to interfere with his/her good progress. Therefore it is required that students discuss outside employment with their Major Professor prior to accepting any outside position. In the case of Divisional assistantships, both Major Professor and the COA Chair will need to give approval.

Grievance Procedure

Students may encounter problems in areas such as academics, student life and financial support. If a student feels a need to pursue grievance, the graduate student should first consult his/her Major Professor. However, if the student is uncomfortable or dissatisfied using this route, the student should meet with the COA Chair who will counsel the student on a confidential basis and will assist in selecting an appropriate grievance procedure. Students may also refer to the Division of Student Affairs and the Campus Action Referral and Evaluation System (CARES) for more details on grievances and appeals at <https://www.usm.edu/student-affairs/cares>

Campus Security Authority

A Campus Security Authority is any individual or organization specified in an institution's statement of campus security policy as an individual or organization to which students and employees should report criminal activity.

Campus Security Authorities include the following:

- A campus police department or campus security department of the university
- Any individual who has responsibility for campus security but who is not a member of the campus police department or the campus security department
- Any individual specified in the university's statement of campus security policy as an individual to which students and employees should report criminal offenses.
- Any individual of the university who has significant responsibility for student and campus activities

Campus Security Authority (CSA) Incident Report

Under Federal Law (The Clery Act), the University is required to report annual statistics for crime and safety on campus. If you have an emergency situation, please call 911. Persons designated as Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) are required to report certain illegal conduct. If you have an incident or behavior to that you want to report, please contact the GCRL CSA, Margaret Firth (margaret.firth@usm.edu; (228) 818-8852).

Leave of Absence

Under special circumstances such as illness, family hardship, or military service a student may request a leave of absence. Leaves of absence will be granted for one semester or longer as circumstances warrant. Requests for a leave of absences should be submitted in writing to the COA Chair, who will then forward their recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School for consideration. The Graduate Dean will notify the student and Chair of the decision. Normally, requests should be submitted at least one semester before the leave of absence.

Appendix 1: Emphasis Area Amendment

See page 4 for additional details. This program is optional and is selected by the student in their first semester, COA students are not required to pursue an Emphasis Area to obtain their degree.

The Division of Coastal Sciences offers an Emphasis Area program for the Coastal Sciences Graduate Degree. The four Emphasis Areas are:

- Coastal Sciences (Aquaculture) M.S.
- Coastal Sciences (Aquaculture) Ph.D.
-
- Coastal Sciences (Fisheries and Fisheries Oceanography) M.S.
- Coastal Sciences (Fisheries and Fisheries Oceanography) Ph.D.
-
- Coastal Sciences (Aquatic Health Sciences) M.S.
- Coastal Sciences (Aquatic Health Sciences) Ph.D.
-
- Coastal Sciences (Coastal Ecology and Ecosystem Processes) M.S.
- Coastal Sciences (Coastal Ecology and Ecosystem Processes) Ph.D.

The purpose of the optional Emphasis Area program for the MS and PhD in Coastal Sciences is to enable students to develop research, analytical, computational, and writing knowledge, skills, and abilities in preparation for occupations in academic, government, and private organizations concerned with fields relevant to scientific investigation of nearshore, marine, and coastal environments.

Requirements:

In addition to the course requirements listed in the sample plans of study below, students electing to pursue an optional Emphasis Area designation will complete an additional, emphasis-specific evaluation, at the time of their comprehensive examination. The evaluation is a written exam to determine emphasis-specific skills. The exam will consist of synthetic and critical thinking questions that are derived from the final exams in the each of the Emphasis Area's specific coursework.

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Aquaculture) M.S.

Hours required: 30

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:

Required:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Six (6) credit hours in a combination of:

- COA 690/790 Marine Aquaculture
- COA 608 Water Quality
- COA 690/790 Aquatic animal health
- COA 690/79 Aquaculture Genetics
- COA 690/790 Aquatic Physiology

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 691 Research in Coastal Sciences

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 698 Thesis

List Class	Grade	Hours	Substitute	Transfer

Milestones: Check Deadlines

- Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School
- Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)
- 18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher
- No Incomplete Grades
- 3.0 GPA Required for Graduation
- Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School
- Comprehensive Exam
- Exit Survey

SIGNATURES:

Student
Advisor
Chair

DATE

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Fisheries and Fisheries Oceanography) M.S.

Hours required: 30

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:
<hr/>				

Coursework:

Required:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Six (6) credit hours in a combination of:

- COA 746 Ecology of Fishes
- COA 605 Data Analysis in the Coastal Sciences
- COA 742 Topics in Fisheries Ecology
- COA 640 Quantitative Fisheries Management
- COA 709 Marine Conservation Genetics
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Early Life History of Fishes

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 691 Research in Coastal Sciences

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 698 Thesis

Milestones: Check Deadlines

- Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School
- Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)
- 18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher
- No Incomplete Grades
- 3.0 GPA Required for Graduation
- Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School
- Comprehensive Exam
- Exit Survey

SIGNATURES:

Student
Advisor
Chair

DATE

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Aquatic Health Sciences) M.S.

Hours required: 30

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:

Required:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Six (6) credit hours in a combination of:

- COA 610 Coastal and Marine Pollution
- COA 617 Marine Toxicology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Aquatic Physiology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Special Topics in Epidemiology & Pathology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Steroid Biochemistry

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 691 Research in Coastal Sciences

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 698 Thesis

Milestones: Check Deadlines

- Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School
- Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)
- 18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher
- No Incomplete Grades
- 3.0 GPA Required for Graduation
- Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School
- Comprehensive Exam
- Exit Survey

SIGNATURES:

Student
Advisor
Chair

DATE

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Coastal Ecology and Ecosystem Processes) M.S.

Hours required: 30

Name	Email & Telephone	Student ID	Admit Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:
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Coursework:

Required:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Six (6) credit hours in a combination of:

- COA 645 Benthic Ecology
- COA 746 Ecology of Fishes
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Marine Botany
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Stable Isotope Ecology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Historical Ecology and Foundations in Coastal Ecology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Ecological Data & Modeling

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 691 Research in Coastal Sciences

Six (6) credit hours in:

- COA 698 Thesis

Milestones: Check Deadlines

- Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School
- Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)
- 18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher
- No Incomplete Grades
- 3.0 GPA Required for Graduation
- Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School
- Comprehensive Exam
- Exit Survey

SIGNATURES:

Student
Advisor
Chair

DATE

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Aquaculture) PhD (candidate has a MS degree)

Hours required: 54

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:
<hr/>				

Coursework:	List Class	Grade	Hours	Substitute	Transfer	Milestones: Check Deadlines
Required: Sixteen (16) credit hours in: COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences						Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR) 18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher No Incomplete Grades
Twelve (12) credit hours in: COA 898 Dissertation						3.0 GPA Required for Graduation Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School Comprehensive Exam
Eleven (11) credit hours in Electives						Exit Survey

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"

COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 26 units):

Nine (9) credit hours taken in a combination of:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

- COA 690/790 Marine Aquaculture
- COA 608 Water Quality
- COA 690/790 Aquatic animal health
- COA 690/79 Aquaculture Genetics
- COA 690/790 Aquatic Physiology

SIGNATURES:

Student
Advisor
Chair

DATE

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Aquatic Health Sciences) PhD (candidate has a MS degree)

Hours required: 54

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:	List Class	Grade	Hours	Substitute	Transfer	Milestones: Check Deadlines
Required:						Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School
Sixteen (16) credit hours in:						Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)
COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences						18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher
						No Incomplete Grades
Twelve (12) credit hours in:						3.0 GPA Required for Graduation
COA 898 Dissertation						Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School
						Comprehensive Exam
Eleven (11) credit hours in Electives						Exit Survey

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"
 COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 26 units):

Nine (9) credit hours taken in a combination of:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

- COA 610 Coastal and Marine Pollution
- COA 617 Marine Toxicology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Aquatic Physiology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Special Topics in Epidemiology & Pathology
- COA 690/790 Special Topics in Steroid Biochemistry

SIGNATURES:

DATE

Student
 Advisor
 Chair

**Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Coastal Ecology and Ecosystem Processes) PhD
(candidate has a MS degree)**

Hours required: 54

Name	Email & Telephone	Student ID	Admit Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:

Required:

Sixteen (16) credit hours in:

COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences

Twelve (12) credit hours in:

COA 898 Dissertation

Eleven (11) credit hours in Electives

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"

COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 26 units):

Nine (9) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 606 Biometry

COA 603 Professional Skills

COA 601 Coastal Processes 1

COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 645 Benthic Ecology

COA 746 Ecology of Fishes

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Marine Botany

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Stable Isotope Ecology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Historical Ecology and Foundations in Coastal Ecology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Ecological Data & Modeling

SIGNATURES:

Student

Advisor

Chair

DATE

Milestones: Check Deadlines

Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School

Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)

18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher

No Incomplete Grades

3.0 GPA Required for Graduation

Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School

Comprehensive Exam

Exit Survey

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Aquaculture) PhD (candidate has a BS degree)

Hours required: 84

Name	Email & Telephone	Student ID	Admit Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:	List Class	Grade	Hours	Substitute	Transfer	Milestones: Check Deadlines
Required:						Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School
Twentyeight (28) credit hours in:						Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)
COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences						18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher
						No Incomplete Grades
Twelve (12) credit hours in:						3.0 GPA Required for Graduation
COA 898 Dissertation						Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School
						Comprehensive Exam
Twenty-nine (29) credit hours in Electives						Exit Survey

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"

COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 44 units):

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

- COA 606 Biometry
- COA 603 Professional Skills
- COA 601 Coastal Processes 1
- COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

- COA 690/790 Marine Aquaculture
- COA 608 Water Quality
- COA 690/790 Aquatic animal health
- COA 690/79 Aquaculture Genetics
- COA 690/790 Aquatic Physiology

SIGNATURES:

DATE

Student
Advisor
Chair

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Fisheries and Fisheries Oceanography) PhD (candidate has a BS degree)

Hours required: 84

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:

Required:

Twentyeight (28) credit hours in:

COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences

Twelve (12) credit hours in:

COA 898 Dissertation

Twentynine (29) credit hours in Electives

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"

COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 44 units):

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 606 Biometry

COA 603 Professional Skills

COA 601 Coastal Processes 1

COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 746 Ecology of Fishes

COA 605 Data Analysis in the Coastal Sciences

COA 742 Topics in Fisheries Ecology

COA 640 Quantitative Fisheries Management

COA 709 Marine Conservation Genetics

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Early Life History of Fishes

SIGNATURES:

DATE

Student

Advisor

Chair

Milestones: Check Deadlines

Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School

Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)

18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher

No Incomplete Grades

3.0 GPA Required for Graduation

Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School

Comprehensive Exam

Exit Survey

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Aquatic Health Sciences) PhD (candidate has a BS degree)

Hours required: 84

Name	Email & Telephone	Admit Student ID Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:

Required:

Twentyeight (28) credit hours in:

COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences

Twelve (12) credit hours in:

COA 898 Dissertation

Twentynine (29) credit hours in Electives

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"

COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 44 units):

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 606 Biometry

COA 603 Professional Skills

COA 601 Coastal Processes 1

COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 610 Coastal and Marine Pollution

COA 617 Marine Toxicology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Aquatic Physiology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Special Topics in Epidemiology & Pathology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Steroid Biochemistry

SIGNATURES:

DATE

Student
 Advisor
 Chair

Milestones: Check Deadlines

Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School

Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)

18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher

No Incomplete Grades

3.0 GPA Required for Graduation

Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School

Comprehensive Exam

Exit Survey

Plan of Study: Coastal Sciences (Coastal Ecology and Ecosystem Processes) PhD
(candidate has a BS degree)

Hours required: 84

Name	Email & Telephone	Student ID	Admit Term	Intended Graduation Semester	Advisor:

Coursework:

Required:

Twentyeight (28) credit hours in:

COA 791 Research in Coastal Sciences

Twelve (12) credit hours in:

COA 898 Dissertation

Twentynine (29) credit hours in Electives

Fifteen (15) credit hours must be taken in "Research Tools"

COA 791 Research, COA 797 Independent Study, and COA 898 Dissertation **do not count** as electives or research tools for the Ph.D.

Of the Electives and Research Tools (total 44 units):

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 606 Biometry

COA 603 Professional Skills

COA 601 Coastal Processes 1

COA 602 Coastal Processes 2

Twelve (12) credit hours taken in a combination of:

COA 645 Benthic Ecology

COA 746 Ecology of Fishes

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Marine Botany

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Stable Isotope Ecology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Historical Ecology and Foundations in Coastal Ecology

COA 690/790 Special Topics in Ecological Data & Modeling

SIGNATURES:

DATE

Student

Advisor

Chair

Milestones: Check Deadlines

Plan of Study Form Submitted to Graduate School

Research & Scholarly Integrity Education (RCR)

18 hrs of Coursework at 600 Level of Higher

No Incomplete Grades

3.0 GPA Required for Graduation

Application for Degree Forms filed in Graduate School

Comprehensive Exam

Exit Survey

Appendix 2: Annual Report on Research Progress Form:
See page 5 for additional details.

Division of Coastal Sciences Graduate Student Progress Form

Please type directly on this form and email to your academic advisor. Your advisor then needs to sign the form and send via email to Darcie Graham (darcie.graham@usm.edu).

Student Name: _____ **Email:** _____

Advisory Committee

- 1) _____ (Major Professor)
 2) _____
 3) _____
 4) _____
 5) _____
 6) _____

Progress Towards Degree

Date you entered the program: _____

Expected graduation date: _____

IACUC (Necessary and Date Approved)? _____

M.S. Checklist

Action	When?	Completed ?	Date Completed
Formation of faculty advisory committee	1 st Semester		
Approval of Program of Study (POS)	1 st Semester		
Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program	1 st Semester		
Animal subjects resource course	1 st Semester		
Prospectus approved	2 nd Semester		
Date formal coursework completed	1 st -2 nd Year		
Comprehensive exam	After completing POS		
Anticipated thesis defense date	Any year		
Committee Meetings (indicate <u>specific</u> dates of each meeting within the last year)	Variable		

Ph.D. Checklist

Action	When?	Completed ?	Date Completed
Research and Scholarly Integrity Assurance Program	1 st Semester		
Animal subjects resource course	1 st Semester		
Formation of faculty advisory committee	2 nd Semester		
Approval of Program of Study (POS)	2 nd Semester		
Qualifying exam	3 rd Semester		
Prospectus approved	4 th Semester		
Date formal coursework completed	3 rd -4 th Year		
Comprehensive exam	After completing POS		
Anticipated thesis defense date	Any year		
Committee Meetings (indicate <u>specific</u> dates of each meeting within the last year)	Variable		

Research and Professional Activities: Please BRIEFLY describe your research and professional activity during the past 12 months and your goals over the next 12 months. Include information on successful completion of projects, papers, grants, awards.

Assistantship recipient is making satisfactory progress (Review committee checks if "yes"):

Advisor: _____
Faculty Reviewer: _____
Faculty Reviewer: _____