



S  
M  
S

Handbook

September 2006



**SMS**  
**HANDBOOK**

School of Marine Science  
Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
College of William and Mary

September 2006

FORMS DISPLAYED IN THIS HANDBOOK ARE PROVIDED FOR REFERENCE.  
The most current forms for documenting completed milestones may be obtained from the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, or by printing copies from the following URL

**<http://www.vims.edu/sms/documents/forms.html>**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROVISIONS .....	2
A. GRADUATE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION .....	2
Master of Science Program Students .....	2
Doctor of Philosophy Program Students .....	3
B. RESIDENCY AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS .....	4
C. EXEMPTION FROM REQUIRED COURSES .....	5
Form: <i>Application for Core Course Exemption</i> .....	6
D. TRANSFER OF ACADEMIC CREDIT .....	7
Form: <i>Application for Transfer of Academic Credit</i> .....	8
E. WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSES .....	9
Form: <i>Change in Graduate Student's Registration</i> .....	10
F. BYPASS OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE .....	11
Form: <i>Application to Bypass Master of Science Degree</i> .....	12
G. TIME LIMITS FOR DEGREE PROGRAM .....	13
Time Extension .....	13
Form: <i>Application for Extension of Time Limit for Degree Program</i> .....	14
H. LEAVE OF ABSENCE .....	15
Forms: <i>Application for Leave of Absence</i> .....	16
<i>Student Check-Out Sheet</i> .....	17
I. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM .....	18
Reinstatement After Withdrawal .....	18
Forms: <i>Change in Graduate Student's Registration</i> .....	19
<i>Withdrawal Form</i> .....	20
<i>Student Check-Out Sheet</i> .....	21

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

	Page
III. GRADUATE STUDENT STATUS .....	22
A. REGULAR AND PROVISIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS .....	22
Form: <i>Application for Change of Student Status</i> .....	23
B. RESEARCH GRADUATE STUDENT STATUS .....	24
Form: <i>Application for Research Graduate Student Status for</i> <i>Final Semester of Enrollment</i> .....	25
IV. FINANCIAL AND TUITION INFORMATION .....	26
A. DESCRIPTION OF FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM .....	26
B. ASSISTANTSHIP TIME LIMITS .....	27
C. ELIGIBILITY OF OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS FOR IN-STATE TUITION RATES .....	28
Forms: <i>Application for Virginia In-State Tuition Privileges (Domicile)</i> .....	29
<i>Application for Privilege of Paying In-State Tuition as an Assistantship</i> <i>Holder</i> .....	30
V. PROGRESS WITHIN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM .....	31
A. ACADEMIC PROGRESS .....	31
B. PROGRAM MILESTONES.....	32
Form: <i>Milestone Progress Check Sheet</i> .....	33
1. Major Professor and Committee Selection .....	34
Forms: <i>Notification of Selection of Major Professor and</i> <i>Declaration of Department</i> .....	35
..... <i>Notification of Selection of Advisory Committee</i>	36
.....	
<i>Request for a Change in Advisory Committee</i> .....	37
2. Pre-Qualifying Interview .....	38
Form: <i>Pre-qualifying Interview</i> .....	39
3. Prospectus .....	40
Format of Prospectus .....	41
Form: <i>Notification of Acceptance of Prospectus</i> .....	42

TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

	Page
4. Qualifying Examination for Doctor of Philosophy Degree and the and the Master of Science Degree .....	43
Qualifying Examination Format .....	44
Forms: <i>Scheduling of Qualifying Examination</i> .....	46
<i>Qualifying Examination Grade Form</i> .....	47
5. Admission to Candidacy .....	48
Form: <i>Application for Admission to Candidacy</i> .....	49
6. Preparation of Thesis or Dissertation .....	50
Forms: <i>Final Draft Distribution Form</i> .....	52
<i>Approval Sheet</i> .....	53
<i>Binding Form for SMS Theses and Dissertations</i> .....	54
7. Thesis or Dissertation Defense .....	55
Forms: <i>Scheduling of Seminar and Defense</i> .....	56
<i>Seminar Scheduling - Audiovisual request</i> .....	57
<i>Thesis/Dissertation Defense Acceptance Form</i> .....	58
8. Graduation .....	59
Commencement, Participation in .....	59
Form: <i>Notice of Candidacy for Graduation</i> .....	60
VI. GRADUATE STUDENT CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES .....	61
Forms: <i>Verification of Receipt of Thesis/Dissertation by Swem Library</i> .....	62
<i>Graduate Survey Form</i> .....	63
<i>Student Check-Out Sheet</i> .....	64
<i>Agreement Form</i> .....	65
<i>Survey of Earned Doctorates</i> .....	66

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This Handbook is intended to supplement the graduate catalog of the School of Marine Science and to serve as a working reference for students and their advisors in the School's graduate studies program. The Handbook provides brief descriptions of the provisions and requirements that are associated with the student's career as a graduate student. The Handbook also contains examples of forms necessary to effect the provisions and requirements and to document a student's progress and achievements in the course of their career.

The material contained in the Handbook is a compilation of current information available from the most recent graduate catalog, administrative policy/procedure memos and Academic Council minutes. (The dates of administrative or Academic Council action on a given policy are noted in parentheses throughout the Handbook.) Because this material will be updated as needed, students or advisors should consult with the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies periodically for the most recent revisions.

Some of the information contained in this Handbook is not a matter of policy. Specifically, the guidelines for preparation of a Prospectus are simply suggestions that may be modified by individual faculty members. Students should consult with their advisors to achieve a clear understanding of what will be expected of them.

## II. GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROVISIONS

### A. GRADUATE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

By the end of a student's second year in the School, he/she must either be granted an exemption from or have passed the following core courses with a B- or better: MSCI 501A-D, 501L, MSCI 502, 502L, MSCI 504.

Additional courses are required as follows:

- Students in Biological Sciences: MSCI 526 and Spring semester seminar 515A (or as specified by the Department)
- Students in Environmental and Aquatic Animal Health must take at least two departmental offerings as well as MSCI 515B (Fall and Spring semesters).
- Students in Fisheries Science: MSCI 528 and 515C (Spring semester or as specified by Department) and one of the following: MSCI 625, MSCI 667, 670, 671, or MSCI 672
- Students in Physical Sciences: Students must take one course in his or her discipline as follows:
  - Physical Oceanography: MSCI 520
  - Geological Oceanography: MSCI 522
  - Marine Chemistry: MSCI 524

In addition, all students in Physical Sciences must take at least one advanced course (550-level or higher) appropriate to the student's specialty and seminar MSCI 515D (Fall and Spring semesters or as specified by Department).

- Students should check with their major advisor to determine additional required courses for their discipline.

Degree credit is granted only for non-core coursework in which a student earns a grade of "C" or above. A graduate student may repeat one non-core course in which a grade of "C" or lower is received. In the case of core courses a student must receive a grade of B- or above. Students will be allowed to make up for a core class deficiency either by taking a comprehensive exam or by repeating the course. When a course is repeated the initial grade earned remains a part of the student's record and is included in computations of quality point requirements. Any student receiving more than one "D" or "F" in a program of study will not be permitted to continue in the School of Marine Science. (16 May 90)

#### **Master of Science Program Students**

At least one year of each student's program must be spent as a full-time resident student as defined in the general degree requirements in the current catalog.

At least thirty-six (36) semester credits of advanced work, of which at least nine (9) hours must have been earned in courses numbered 550 or above, with a grade average of 3.0 or better, are required for the M.S. degree. In addition, a student must have registered for thesis credit (MSCI 599) for at least one semester (the student may have repeated this registration). No more than six (6) hours of thesis credit may be counted toward the minimum 36 hours required for the M.S.

Students also will be expected to register for Seminar as required by their respective departments; however, only two (2) credits will be applicable to the degree.

Credits more than seven (7) years old and earned in the program in which the student is currently enrolled will be deleted from the accumulation of credits required for a degree. Credits acquired while enrolled in previous programs here or elsewhere generally are not be subject to this limitation.

### **Doctor of Philosophy Program Students**

A minimum of three years of graduate study beyond the baccalaureate is required. At least one academic year must be spent in residence at SMS/VIMS as defined in the general degree requirements.

At least 42 credit hours of advanced work, of which at least 15 credit hours must have been earned in courses numbered 550 or above with a grade point average of 3.0 or better, are required for the Ph.D. degree. In addition, a student must have registered for dissertation (MSCI 699) at least one semester. At least nine (9) but no more than 12 dissertation credits may be counted toward the minimum 42 credits for the Ph.D. degree. Students will be expected to register for seminar as required by their respective departments; however, only two (2) credits will be applicable to the degree. Credits more than seven (7) years old and earned in the program in which the student is currently enrolled will be deleted from the accumulation of credits required for a degree. Credits acquired while enrolled in previous programs here or elsewhere generally are not subject to this limitation.

## **B. RESIDENCY AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **General**

Students generally are bound by the requirements stated in the School of Marine Science graduate catalog which is in effect when they enter the School. The following are the minimum requirements. The separate disciplines and individual advisory committees may prescribe additional requirements for their students.

### **Residency**

To fulfill the full-time academic residency requirement of the School of Marine Science, students must:

1. Successfully complete the core course requirements;
2. Be a full-time student in good standing for two consecutive semesters.

### **Registration Requirement**

All active students (i.e. those working toward completion of a degree program who have not been granted leave) are expected to be full-time students, that is, registered for a minimum of nine (9) credit hours each semester during the academic year, and one (1) credit hour for each of two 5-week terms of the Summer Session or two(2) credits for one 10-week term. Students must be registered in the semester during which they graduate.

Through permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies upon favorable recommendation of the Academic Status & Degrees Committee, students may be allowed a single semester of Research Graduate Status. Students in RG Status are allowed to pay part-time tuition (3-credit minimum) in their final semester (i.e., the semester in which they complete their thesis/dissertation and graduate).

## C. EXEMPTION FROM REQUIRED COURSES

### General

Students may petition for exemption from any of the required core courses (MSCI 501, MSCI 501L, MSCI 502, MSCI 504) if they have already completed similar courses elsewhere. Because examinations and final grades in the core classes form the basis for the comprehensive examination requirements, grades from other schools must be B or higher. In addition, exemption from modules of MSCI 501 (physical, chemical, geological, and biological oceanography) requires the student to successfully pass an examination for each pertinent module. Similarly, a written exam is required of students who want to exempt the core lab, MSCI 501L. Depending upon the recommendation of the core class instructors, students may also be required to pass a final examination in MS502 and 504.

### Determining Core Course Equivalency

Core course materials can be viewed using the web-based Blackboard© program. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, the incoming student can access Blackboard© from <http://blackboard.wm.edu> to review core course information. (The interim user name for students entering Fall 2005 is *imgrad*, and the temporary password, *new2005*. Both the user name and password are case sensitive.) If after reviewing the materials a student feels that she/he has taken similar course work elsewhere that is equivalent to a module of MSCI 501 or another core course, she/he may apply for an exemption from the class as described below.

### Core Course MSCI 501 Modules

Incoming students who have had comparable coursework in one or more of the four sub-disciplines of this course (biological, chemical, geological and physical oceanography) may take a bypass examination to place out of the respective module covering that subject in the course. If all modules are successfully by-passed, then the student will be exempted from the course in its entirety. After successful examination, the student is still required to process the proper exemption form request through the Academic Status and Degrees Committee as described below under "Petition for Exemptions from Core Classes."

Prior to taking a bypass examination in any of the modules of MSCI 501 (MSCI 501A, MSCI 501B, MSCI 501C or MSCI 501D), the student can review MS501 course material using the web-based Blackboard software as aforementioned. Typically, the bypass examination is comprehensive and designed to test the overall knowledge of the student in the subject area of that module. In addition, it tests the student's ability to write clearly and synthesize information. As MSCI 501 is designed to be an interdisciplinary synthesis course (6 total credit hours) and to serve as a *de facto* comprehensive exam, the bypass examination for each subject module can be expected to be a rigorous examination of the student's knowledge of the area subject (biological, chemical, geological or physical oceanography).

Module bypass examinations are written and administered by the module instructors. The exams will be given in August, approximately one week prior to the start of classes. A student desiring to take a module exam or exams must submit "Notification of Intent to Take By-Pass Examination(s) in MS 501" to the Dean of Graduate Studies by **August 14**. Results will be available as close to the beginning of the class as possible to allow students to prepare their final class schedules.

### Petition for Exemptions from Core Classes

The petition for exemption must be sent to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee c/o the Graduate Registrar, Waterman's Hall 233. With the exception of MS501L, the petition must include documentation for the course(s) proposed to supplant the core course(s) and a statement from each School of Marine Science faculty teaching the course for which exemption is sought. The faculty member's statement must indicate that he/she has reviewed the student's previous studies and is satisfied that those studies are sufficient to permit exemption from the core requirement. MS501L requires a successful written examination and demonstration of equivalent field and/or laboratory experience. Because of the unique character of these courses, the exempted student may still want to audit or formally take some or all of the courses.

**Applicable Form(s):** Application for Core Course Exemption

## **D. TRANSFER OF ACADEMIC CREDIT**

On the recommendation of the Academic Status and Degrees Committee and the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies, a regular student may apply up to 15 hours of graduate credit for courses equivalent to the SMS core courses (MSCI 501A-D to 504) earned at another accredited institution. Command of material in the core courses must still be demonstrated. In the case of MSCI 501, A-D, the student requesting transfer credits for any of the modules must successfully pass an examination for the applicable modules before applying to the AS&DC. A written examination in MSCI 501L also is required of students applying for transfer credit in that course. Depending upon the recommendation of the core class instructors, students may also be required to pass a final examination in MSCI 502 and MSCI 502L.

Incoming students can petition for up to six (6) hours of other graduate work not already applied to ward another degree, but the total transfer cannot exceed 15 hours. The credits must have been earned in courses appropriate to the student's program in the School and must fall within the time specified by the general college requirements for degrees. Credit may be transferred only for courses in which the student received a grade of "B" or better and may not be counted in compiling his or her quality point average at William and Mary. (22 June 99)

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application for Transfer of Academic Credit*

**E. WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSES**

A student who desires to withdraw from a course should apply to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies. If the withdrawal occurs before mid-semester, a grade of “W” will be automatically assigned for each course for which the student is registered. If the withdrawal occurs after the end of the 10th week of classes (mid-semester), the student will be awarded a “W” or “F” by the instructor of each course for which the student is registered, depending upon the student’s grade at the time of withdrawal. ( 16 May 90)

A student wishing to withdraw from a course (or courses) because of medical reasons after mid-semester may apply to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee for approval. If the Committee verifies the legitimacy of the medical reason for withdrawal, grades of “W” will appear on the transcript. (16 May 90)

**Applicable Form(s):** *Change in Graduate Student’s Registration*

## F. BYPASS OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE

A superior student originally accepted to the master's program and who has demonstrated potential to conduct Ph.D level research may petition to bypass the Master of Science degree and proceed directly toward the doctorate. A petition should be submitted to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee (AS&DC), demonstrating that the student has met the following requirements:

- Completion of the core course requirements for the M.S. degree (MSCI 501A-D, MSCI 501L, MSCI 502, MSCI 502L, MSCI 504).
- A student must be in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of B or better with no core course grade lower than B-). There will be no exceptions to this requirement.
- Submission of a CV and 1-2 page statement by the student describing the student's achievements and *demonstrated* potential to conduct independent research.
- Submission of a 1-2 page statement by the student's advisor describing the student's achievements and *demonstrated* potential to conduct independent research.
- Recommended by the student's Advisory Committee to bypass the Master's degree.
- Formal acceptance of a **Ph.D.** prospectus by the student's committee. Successful completion of the qualifying exam **at the Ph.D. level.**

Evidence of scholarly potential in the form of independent research, professional presentations, submitted or accepted manuscripts and research proposals will strengthen a student's petition for the bypass. The AS&DC will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies whether or not permission to bypass should be granted. Appeals of an adverse decision of the Academic Status and Degrees Committee may be made in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Bylaws of the School of Marine Science. It is important that a student submit the bypass form in a timely fashion; typically, no later than the start of the third year. In order to apply the doctoral program milestones equitably, the AS&DC will determine an "effective completion date" of the doctoral program, which normally will be designated as 72 months from date of matriculating at SMS/VIMS.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application to Bypass Master of Science Degree*

## **G. TIME LIMITS FOR DEGREE PROGRAM**

All requirements for the Master of Science degree must be completed within three (3) calendar years after commencing graduate study. For the Doctor of Philosophy degree, all requirements should be completed within four (4) to six (6) calendar years after commencing study for the degree, the required time depending on the previous degree and experience of the candidate. (Refer to time limits table below.) (29 September 93)

### **Time Limits for Completion of Degree**

#### **Master of Science**

**36 months**

#### **Doctor of Philosophy**

**48 months --**

for student entering with SMS master's degree

**60 months--**

for student entering with outside M.A. or M.S. degree

**72 months--**

for student entering with B.A. or B.S. or bypassing the master's

### **Time Extension**

Extensions of the time limits for completion of degree requirements can be obtained in exceptional cases by petitioning the Committee on Academic Status and Degrees. Upon favorable recommendation of that Committee, the Dean of Graduate Studies may grant an extension. Students who have exceeded their time limits for completion of their degree programs and who are not on approved time extensions will not be allowed to register in the School of Marine Science. (20 November 85)

Applications for time extensions should include: 1) explanation of the necessity for an extension; 2) letter from the student's advisor; 3) endorsement of the student's Advisory Committee; and 4) a time table for completion of the degree. The time table for completion should identify specific steps that can be judged by the student's Advisory Committee and/or the Academic Status and Degrees Committee.

As a matter of practice, only six-month time extensions are recommended by the Academic Status and Degrees Committee, even when longer periods of time are needed to complete degree requirements. Subsequent extensions will normally be granted only if identifiable progress, in conformance with the time table, is accomplished and if the request is endorsed by the student's Advisory Committee.

**Applicable Forms:**     *Application for Extension of Time Limit for Degree Program*

## **H. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A student may request a leave of absence from the program for a specific period of time. Leaves of absence will relieve the student of the obligation of paying tuition while still remaining as a student in good standing. Normally leaves of absence are granted for up to one year, although in some circumstances these can be extended. A student must terminate the leave of absence and be a registered student in the semester he/she completes degree requirements or graduates. (16 May 90)

It is understood that a student on a leave of absence will not be present at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, utilizing any of the facilities, or requiring any faculty involvement in his/her activities.

A leave of absence does not automatically extend the time limit for completion of degree requirements.

Students applying for a leave of absence must obtain appropriate faculty signatures on an Application for Leave of Absence form and return it to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Once the leave is approved, the student must obtain signatures on the Student Check-Out Sheet to ensure proper documentation of his or her absence from the School.

**Applicable Forms:**     *Application for Leave of Absence*  
                                  *Student Check-Out Sheet*

## **I. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Withdrawal from the program constitutes termination of the student's program of study in the School of Marine Science. Withdrawal may be voluntary on the part of the student or be imposed by the School of Marine Science for reasons of academic deficiency. A student who fails to register for a regular semester (fall or spring) once the student has begun his/her graduate study, and who has not requested a leave of absence or permission to withdraw, will be placed on a leave of absence for one semester by the Dean of Graduate Studies. If the student has not applied for a leave of absence prior to the end of registration for the next regular semester, or if the Dean of Graduate Studies is not able to justify continuing the leave of absence, the student's record will be marked withdrawn unofficially.

Students withdrawing from the program after the beginning of the school year should obtain appropriate faculty signatures on a "Change in Graduate Student's Registration" form, a "withdrawal" form and a "Student Check-out Sheet." All forms should be returned to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### **Reinstatement After Withdrawal**

A student wishing reinstatement after withdrawal must reapply to the School of Marine Science under the procedures in effect at the time of reapplication.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Change in Graduate Student's Registration*  
*Withdrawal Form*  
*Student Check-Out Sheet*

### **III. GRADUATE STUDENT STATUS**

#### **A. REGULAR AND PROVISIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Students are admitted as regular or provisional graduate students in either the M.S. or Ph.D. Programs. For matriculation as a regular graduate student, an applicant must have completed the requirements for a bachelor's degree at an accredited college, with a record of high performance, and must have the recommendations of the faculty and officials of the School of Marine Science.

Students may be admitted to either the Master of Science or Doctor of Philosophy programs. Direct admission into the Doctor of Philosophy program is available to qualified applicants with a Master's degree. Students without a Master's degree, except in exceptional cases as identified by the Dean of Graduate Studies, must enter the program as a Master's student; however, students wishing to continue directly to a Ph.D. degree can apply to by-pass the M.S. degree, provided they meet the criteria for the bypass (see Masters of Science bypass option). By-pass requires approval of the student's advisory committee, the Academic Status and Degrees Committee, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Applicants judged deficient in preparatory studies or other areas may be admitted as provisional students. A provisional student may petition for regular student status after successful completion of those requirements stipulated in his/her notification of admission. Petition for change in status shall be reviewed by the Academic Status and Degrees Committee, using as criteria overall academic performance and performance standards previously specified on the student's notification of admission. Graduate credit earned by a provisional student will be applied toward the graduate degree upon conversion to regular student status.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application for Change of Student Status*

## **B. RESEARCH GRADUATE STUDENT STATUS**

Upon the recommendation of a student's major professor, advisory committee, and the Academic Status and Degrees Committee, the Dean of Graduate Studies may approve a student obtaining part-time enrollment **for a single semester**. This generally would be the semester in which the student completes the thesis and graduates.

The following conditions must be met:

1. The student has completed all required coursework.
2. The student is not employed significantly in any activity other than research and writing in fulfillment of degree requirements.
3. The student is present on the campus or is engaged in approved field work related to his or her thesis or dissertation.

While classified as a Research Graduate Status, a student may register for a maximum of nine (9) credits of thesis or dissertation per regular semester upon payment of the part-time rate for only three (3) credit hours of thesis/dissertation. The student may elect to utilize up to two (2) of the three paid credits hours for formal course work.

A Research Graduate student may register for additional course credit only upon payment of the generally applicable additional part-time tuition.

A Research Graduate student is eligible for services (e.g., student health and athletic events) only if required fees are paid.

**Students who are approved for RG Status should check with the SMS Registrar about proper registration procedures.**

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application for Research Graduate Student Status for Final Semester of Enrollment*

## **IV. FINANCIAL AID AND TUITION INFORMATION**

### **A. DESCRIPTION OF FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM**

Financial aid in the form of graduate research assistantships, teaching assistantships, workshops and fellowships is made available to a large portion of the student body. An important aspect of the School of Marine Science financial aid program is to provide experiences that are important to the professional training of marine scientists while at the same time ensuring that such experience does not substantially compromise their educational program toward completion of the degree.

The graduate research assistantship and fellowships permit students to give part-time (i.e. twenty hours per week) assistance to the conduct of a faculty member's research that may (or may not) be used as a basis for their own thesis or dissertation research. Fellowships are awarded for one year, and are renewable for an additional year for master's students and two years for Ph.D. students who maintain satisfactory performance in their programs. In addition to providing the same stipend support as for graduate research and teaching assistantships, graduate fellowships provide for a full-time tuition and fee waiver.

Teaching assistantships provide part-time student assistance to the classroom or laboratory activities of SMS faculty. It is generally assumed that the time commitment for all assistantships is approximately the same (i.e. twenty hours per week).

Funding for assistantships is obtained from both state and contract or grant funds. Every effort is made to continue funding once a student has been assigned to an assistantship, but support is not guaranteed throughout a student's tenure. All students on assistantships are eligible for consideration for resident or in-state tuition (see Section IV C, Eligibility of Out-of-State Students for In-State Tuition Rates). Students holding a full-time graduate assistantship may not hold any other employment of a remunerative nature without the advisor's and Dean of Graduate Studies approval.

Graduate workshops are used as a vehicle to allow SMS students to be hired on an hourly basis to satisfy the operational needs of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. A particular workshop assignment may be recurring but is generally considered to be short-term in duration.

In order to ensure that fulfillment of workshop duties will not slow progress on accomplishment of graduate milestones and progress toward degree and so that faculty advisors are fully aware of a student's workshop commitment, limitations on workshop hours apply. (15 Aug 06)

With the approval of his or her advisor, a student will be allowed to work up to 100 workshop hours per fiscal year. This limit is intended to apply to all students holding a full research assistantship or its equivalent. Students will be allowed to petition for additional workshop hours with the provisos that (1) such a variance is approved by the student's advisor, and (2) workshop hours never exceed 200 per fiscal year. (15 Aug 06)

Accounting of workshop hours will be maintained by the Dean of Graduate Studies' Office. (15 Aug 06)

In the case of students not holding a full research assistantship or its equivalent in a given fiscal year, or for those with no financial support from SMS/VIMS, the 100- and 200-hour limitations do not apply. In such cases, the workshop limits will be waived and workshop hours will be adjusted to allow a given student to receive, in a given fiscal year, compensation from the Institute totaling the equivalent of a twelve-month full research assistantship. Students who might qualify for such a waiver must petition the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval.

**B. ASSISTANTSHIP TIME LIMITS**

No student will be permitted to hold an assistantship indefinitely. Maximum number of months allowed to complete degree requirements are:

36 months	Master of Science
48 months	Doctor of Philosophy --student entering with SMS master's
60 months	Doctor of Philosophy --student entering with outside M.A or M.S.
72 months	Doctor of Philosophy --student entering with B.A or B.S., or bypassing the SMS master's

Students who do not complete degree requirements in the time allowed and who wish to maintain their assistantships beyond these time limits must secure the approval of their major professor and Advisory Committee, and submit a request for a waiver from this rule to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee.

If recommended by the Academic Status and Degrees Committee, extensions may be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

[NOTE: Assistantship funding includes student support from both general institutional funds and grants/contracts awarded to the institution.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application for Extension of Time Limit for Degree Program*

## C. ELIGIBILITY OF OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS FOR IN-STATE TUITION RATES

### **Applying for Legal Domiciliary Status**

Students who are residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia pay approximately one-third the tuition of out-of-state students. To obtain legal domiciliary status, a person must be domiciled for at least one year in Virginia. An application and a list of other factors used to determine Virginia domicile are available at <http://www.wm.edu/registrar/forms.php>. These forms are also available under “tuition helps” in the Current Students’ information on the VIMS website.

### **Applying for the Privilege of In-State Tuition as an Out-of-State Student Working Assistantship.**

The School of Marine Science, following the State Council of Higher Education’s guidelines, permits eligible out-of-state students to pay in-state tuition. Under these guidelines, non-resident graduate students who are employed by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in the context of having teaching, research, or other graduate assistantships that pay an annual rate of at least \$4,000 or more (at least \$2,000 per semester) are eligible for a waiver of out-of-state tuition. In addition to the eligibility requirements stated in the State Council of Higher Education’s guidelines, the following Institute policy must be reiterated:

1. The privilege is contingent upon the finances of the Institute as well as upon the approval of the Provost of the College of William and Mary. It is granted for only one semester at a time. It may be cancelled or withdrawn at any time the Dean feels it is fiscally responsible to do so.
2. Payment of in-state tuition by out-of-state students is a privilege which must be applied for every semester by the student who wishes to qualify. In order to qualify, a non-resident student of the School of Marine Science must meet the guidelines of the State Council of Higher Education and additional standards set by the School as follows:
  - a. A student must be in good standing academically with a “B” average or better.
  - b. A student must be in good standing financially, having paid all fees and having received no more than the maximum tenure for assistantship support at the beginning of the semester for which a waiver of out-of-state tuition is granted unless an extension of the limit on assistantship support has been obtained from the Academic Status and Degrees Committee. The maximum tenure for assistantship support is three (3) years for a master’s student, four (4) years for a Ph.D. student who entered with a SMS master’s, five (5) years for a Ph.D. student who entered with an outside master’s degree, and six (6) years for a Ph.D. student who entered with a bachelor’s degree.
3. Before an out-of-state student will be allowed to pay in-state tuition, he or she must have his or her application approved by the Dean or his designee which, in addition to institutional policy, is contingent upon approval by the Provost. (Please use the applicable form, returning it when registration is completed).
4. Students holding fellowships or internships may not be eligible for waivers of out-of-state tuition if (a) funds are provided from non-Institute sources or (b) the research activities carried out under the fellowship or internship are independent of, and unrelated to, the educational activities of the Institute.
5. All faculty should be extremely careful that these policies be adhered to when talking to prospective students or when counseling their own students and make no unqualified promises involving this privilege.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application for Virginia In-State Privileges (for students seeking Virginia domicile)*  
*Application for Privilege of Paying In-State Tuition as an Assistantship Holder*

## V. PROGRESS WITHIN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

### A. ACADEMIC PROGRESS

To continue in a degree program, a student must make satisfactory progress towards the degree. Appeal of a determination of lack of satisfactory progress may be made to the Academic Status & Degrees Committee (16 May 90). The Dean of Graduate Studies monitors the progress of all students toward their degree milestones, reviewing recommendations by faculty advisors, the Academic Status & Degrees Committee and the Academic Council.

#### **Academic Probation**

Students will be placed on probation if their cumulative average for all courses is less than B (< 3.0). In the case of a grade deficiency in a core course, the student must retake the course and receive a grade of B- or better, or successfully pass a comprehensive exam. The grade of any retaken course will not be counted in the student's cumulative average. Probation will last until a student's cumulative average is raised to at least a B (3.0) and will in no circumstances last longer than one calendar year. Failure to raise their cumulative grade average to B within one calendar year will result in dismissal from the School of Marine Science. Reinstatement is possible only after successful appeal to the Academic Status & Degrees Committee.

#### **Retaking a Non-core Course**

Degree credit is granted only for non-core course work in which a student earns a grade of C or above. A graduate student may repeat one non-core course in which a grade of C or lower is received. Any student receiving more than one D or F in a program of study will not be permitted to continue in the School of Marine Science. (16 May 1990)

#### **Retaking a Core Course**

In the case of a grade deficiency in a core course, the following policy applies:

1. Students receiving a D or F in a core course must retake the course and receive a grade of B- or better.
2. Students receiving a C+, C or C- must either retake the course or take an exam as defined by a remedial plan.
3. A Remedial Plan will be formulated for students receiving a grade lower than B- in a core course.
  - a. The remedial plan will be designed and approved by the relevant core course instructor(s), the student's advisor and the Dean of Graduate Studies.
  - b. The remedial plan will specify the exam or the course-retake option required.
  - c. The exam will be in written form & administered in August of each year, prior to the Fall semester.
  - d. The exam will be formulated and graded by the core course instructors and will consist of questions focusing on specific weakness(es) of the student, as determined by the core course instructors and detailed in the remedial plan.
  - e. The plan will be discussed with the student.
  - f. The plan must be approved prior to the Add/Drop deadline of the semester following the unsatisfactory course performance.
4. Student will be on probation until satisfactory completion of the approved remedial plan but in no case will probation last longer than one year.
5. Failure to satisfactorily complete the remedial plan within one year (defined as less than a B- in the core course or on the exam) will result in dismissal of the student from the graduate program. (13 Sep 2000)

## B. PROGRAM MILESTONES

In addition to course and credit-hour requirements, the student must complete and **document** program milestones. The Academic Status and Degrees Committee completes periodic review of the progress of all students to insure that they have completed milestones toward fulfillment of degree requirements in a timely fashion. Recommendations are made by the Committee to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The milestone requirements of the School of Marine Science are as follows.

**Selection of Major Professor** - approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies

**Selection of Committee & Research Topic** - Approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies

**Pre-Qualifying Interview** - Approved by the student's Advisory Committee

**Qualifying Examination** - Approved by the student's Advisory Committee

**Prospectus Acceptance** - Approved by the student's Advisory Committee

**Admission to Candidacy** - Approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies upon Recommendation of the Academic Status & Degrees Committee (AS&DC) and the Academic Council (AC)

*Prerequisites to candidacy:*

- Core Course Requirement satisfactorily completed
- Department Courses satisfactorily completed
- Pre-qualifying Interview completed
- Qualifying Exam Passed
- Prospectus Accepted
- Grade Point average of B (3.0) or better, averaged over all courses taken at time of application for admission to candidacy.

**Seminar Presentation** - Approved by the student's Advisory Committee

**Defense of Thesis** - Approved by the student's Advisory Committee

**Acceptance of Approved Thesis/Dissertation by Swem/SMS Libraries** - Approved by the student's Advisory Committee

Forms for documenting completed milestones are available from the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies or may be printed from the following URL: <http://www.vims.edu/sms/documents/forms.html>

Completed forms should be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies, c/o the SMS Graduate Registrar. In addition, applications for Admission to Candidacy should be addressed to the AS&DC and submitted to the SMS Graduate Registrar by the applicable deadline for an announced AS&DC meeting.

Students are expected to complete all degree work within the following time lines established by the faculty:

- 36 months - students pursuing a master's degree
- 48 months - students pursuing a Ph.D. who entered the program with an SMS master's degree
- 60 months - students pursuing a Ph.D. who entered the program and an outside master's degree
- 72 months - students pursuing a Ph.D. who bypass completion of a master's degree

A student exceeding his or her program time limit, must apply to the Academic Status & Degrees Committee for a degree program time extension. In exceptional cases, if recommended by the AS&DC, time extensions may be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Milestone Progress Check Sheet (pages 33a-d)*

## 1. MAJOR PROFESSOR AND COMMITTEE SELECTION

### Master of Science Degree

The Advisory Committee are chosen by the student and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies must consist of at least **four** members. A majority of the Committee must be members of the faculty of the SMS/VIMS, although persons with appropriate qualifications from outside the SMS/VIMS may serve on the Committee. In addition, the Committee should provide breadth both within the student's field of study as well as within the larger field of marine sciences. **Students are required to have representation from faculty with strong backgrounds in both the life and physical sciences on each Committee.** For students with a specialty in biology or fisheries science, at least one member must be from the discipline of physical or environmental science. For students with a specialty in physical or environmental science, at least one member must be from the discipline of biological or fisheries science.

It is important for all students to have the benefit of an on-campus advisor to provide them with scientific, logistical and financial support. Should a student's major advisor retire or leave VIMS before the student completes his or her degree, the student is required to select an appropriate on-campus co-advisor. The selection of a co-advisor should be made in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Chair of the student's home department, and the student's advisory committee. (March 06)

### Doctor of Philosophy Degree

The Advisory Committee, chosen by the student and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, must consist of at least five members, at least one of whom must be from outside the College of William and Mary. A majority of the Committee's members must be members of the faculty of the School of Marine Science, although persons with appropriate qualifications from outside the School of Marine Science may serve on the Committee. In addition, the Committee should provide breadth both within the student's field of study as well as within the larger field of marine sciences. **Students are required to have representation from faculty with strong backgrounds in both the life and physical sciences on each Committee.** For students with a specialty in biology or fisheries science, at least one member must be from the discipline of physical or environmental science. For students with a specialty in physical or environmental science, at least one member must be from the discipline of biological or fisheries science.

It is important for all students to have the benefit of an on-campus advisor to provide them with scientific, logistical and financial support. Should a student's major advisor retire or leave VIMS before the student completes his or her degree, the student is required to select an appropriate on-campus co-advisor. The selection of a co-advisor should be made in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Chair of the student's home department, and the student's advisory committee. (March 06)

**Applicable Form(s):** *Notification of Selection of Major Professor and Declaration of Department*

*Notification of Selection of Advisory Committee (Master of Science)  
(Doctor of Philosophy)*

*Request for A Change in Advisory Committee*

## 2. PRE-QUALIFYING INTERVIEW

Every student is required to have a pre-qualifying interview with his/her committee prior to his/her qualifying exam (in most cases, the pre-qualifying interview should take place at least six months prior to the student's qualifying exam. The "interview" gives the committee members a chance to find out what the student is thinking about for a thesis/dissertation topic as well as possible areas of deficiency in the student's background (i.e., what further courses or reading the student might need). In turn, the student gains better insight as to what his/her committee expects in terms of a prospectus and background knowledge.

The student should provide committee members with a brief statement (2-3 pages) describing his/her research interests and goals. In addition, the student will be asked to give a 5-10 minute oral presentation describing his/her interests and goals. The committee will then discuss with the student the knowledge required to meet these goals. In most cases, the interview should not last more than one hour or so.

The interview is not an exam; one does not pass or fail the interview. Rather, the pre-qualifying interview provides useful information for both the student and the committee. Recommendations by the committee will be summarized in writing on the *Pre-Qualifying Interview* form.

Master of Science students should have their pre-qualifying interview before the end of their first year at SMS/VIMS, i.e., before the beginning of their second fall semester. Ph.D. students should have the interview before the end of the second fall semester. In most cases, the qualifying exam will be taken within six months after the pre-qualifying interview.

**Applicable Form:** *Pre-Qualifying Interview*

### 3. PROSPECTUS

Every student in the School of Marine Science is required to prepare a Thesis or Dissertation Prospective for approval by his or her Advisory committee. (17 February 82)

The prospectus should be a formal presentation of the selected research hypothesis. Its purpose is to present the rationale for selection of the hypotheses and methodology to be used in testing the hypotheses. It must include a problem statement, review of current literature in the area of study, and a detailed plan of study, as well as a summary of preliminary research conducted by the student. The prospectus must also provide a detailed rationale for the proposed work, clearly stated objectives, and testable hypothesis(es) when appropriate, consistent with the problem statement, and a description of research design, field studies, methods and data analysis intended to test the hypothesis. (7 Jan 05)

The prospectus will be reviewed by the student's Advisory committee for 1) appropriateness to the degree sought; 2) scientific merit; and 3) soundness of the research approach. Fifteen (15) pages is the typical length of a prospectus.

If the prospectus is properly written, and if it is accepted by the student's Committee, it should be useable (with minor modifications) as the corresponding sections of the final thesis or dissertation. Care and attention to the preparation of the prospectus will both eliminate misunderstanding between student and Committee about the research project, and significantly reduce the effort required for final preparation of the thesis or dissertation.

#### **Time Requirement for Distributing Prospectus to Advisory Committee Prior to the Qualifying Examination.**

**At least three weeks prior to the student's qualifying examination**, s/he must distribute a prospectus to members of her/his Advisory Committee and the faculty member who has agreed to be the Moderator of the examination. (7 Jan 05)

**At least one week prior to the qualifying examination**, the student should communicate with the Moderator and confirm that the student has met with and received comments on the prospectus from each of her/his Committee members. (7 Jan 05)

## **Prospectus Format**

The prospectus will be reviewed by the student's Advisory committee for 1) appropriateness to the degree sought; 2) scientific merit; and 3) soundness of the research approach. Fifteen (15) pages is the typical length of a prospectus.

**Introduction.** The introduction should provide a general overview of the field of study in which the research will be conducted. It should identify the current status of the field and indicate how the study hypotheses related to topics of interest in the field. As appropriate, the introduction should also indicate how the methodology utilized in the study compares to other research efforts in the general field.

In general, the introduction should answer the questions, "What is the study?" and "Why is this study being done?"

**Literature Review.** The literature review should be as complete as possible, but need not be exhaustive. The review should establish the background for the selection of both the hypotheses and the methodology. To that end, the review should include: 1) significant works that have advanced understanding of the field to its current state; 2) works that identify information needs (particularly ones to be met by the proposed study); 3) results of similar studies on the same or related subjects; 4) examples of all methodologies applicable to the study subject; and 5) works that indicate most appropriate or potential new methodologies for the proposed study.

In general, the review should support the material contained in the introduction and provide the setting (in terms of already available data) for discussion and analysis of the study results. It is important that the literature review be compiled and presented in logical sections (similar to those enumerated above). It is not acceptable to present an abstract of each pertinent reference located without respect to what aspect of the citation is significant (i.e., results, methodology, discussion, etc.)

Most students have some difficulty deciding what should be included in a literature review. While the decision is not always easy, if you concentrate on the purpose of the review and remember that an exhaustive annotated bibliography is not the objective, preparation is usually simplified.

**Methods.** This section should detail both the sampling design and the data analysis. The single greatest problem encountered in the conduct of research projects is the collection of vast quantities of data without definite plans for analysis. The data collected must be pertinent to the hypotheses and must be adequate to test the hypotheses. The sampling program and the data requirements must be flexible enough to accommodate minor unforeseen problems or delays without crippling the project.

Specific attention should be paid to data analysis. Forethought in this area can prevent collection of needless information or failure to collect crucial data. Failure to identify data analysis methods could be a major flaw in a prospectus that would prevent its acceptance.

**Bibliography.** The bibliography should include all citations from the literature review or elsewhere in the prospectus. It should be prepared in the format required for the thesis or dissertation.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Notification of Acceptance of Prospectus*

#### 4. QUALIFYING EXAMINATION FOR THE DEGREES OF MASTER OF SCIENCE AND DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**Philosophy and Goals.** The qualifying examination is an oral examination designed to test a student's scientific competence and ability to pursue her/his graduate research project. It will be administered by the student's Advisory Committee and chaired by a Moderator who is not a member of the Student's Committee (19 May 95). The Moderator must be identified at least three weeks prior to the examination. (A list of current Moderators is available on the web at <http://www.vims.edu/sms/documents/moderators.html>.)

The exam consists of two components: (1) questions that address knowledge specific to the proposed research project and (2) questions concerning the general knowledge in the student's field of study.

**Distribution of the Prospectus in Preparation for the Qualifying Examination.** The student must distribute a prospectus to her/his Advisory Committee and the Moderator for the qualifying examination **at least three weeks prior to the examination.** The Advisory Committee should review the prospectus and provide comments to the student prior to the date of the examination. (04 Feb 05)

At least one week prior to the examination, the student should communicate with the Moderator and confirm that the student has met with and received comments on the prospectus from each of her/his Committee members. (Refer also to Prospectus, pages 40, 41.)

**Scheduling and Announcement of Examination.** The qualifying examination should be taken by the end of the third semester (M.S.), or fifth semester (Ph.D.), and should in every case occur well before the final defense in order to be consistent with the SMS Milestones. (07 Jan 05)

Consistent with SMS procedures, the examination will be advertised and opened to all interested faculty members. **Two weeks ahead of the examination,** the student should schedule the examination with the assistance of her/his department's administrative assistant and then provide information for the announcement to the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies (Information on the day/date/time/location of the exam as well as the student's research title may be emailed to Fonda Powell or Sue Presson in lieu of formal paper work.)

**Satisfactory Performance.** The student must satisfactorily demonstrate competence and facility with the established facts, theory, and frontiers in her/his field of specialization and in other subject areas as required by the student's Advisory Committee. It is the responsibility of the Moderator to ensure that questions are sufficiently broad in scope that they cover the core knowledge expected of the student at her/his respective level of training.

A solid foundation in the fundamentals of Marine Science as it pertains to her/his research is expected of a M.S. student. Required of the Ph.D. student is a comprehensive understanding of her/his chosen field of study and of how the proposed research represents a unique contribution to that field within the context of Marine Science. If questions are considered deficient in the afore-

## QUALIFYING EXAMINATION FORMAT

**Introduction.** The major advisor introduces each committee member and the Moderator. After introductions, the Moderator explains the ground rules of the examination to the student and the Committee. At this time, it should be made clear to the Committee and the student that the student is being evaluated only on her/his performance in the oral exam and not on any prior coursework or interactions with the Committee members. The student is then excused from the room, and the Moderator facilitates a brief discussion among Committee members regarding the student's prospectus. If a Committee member has severe reservations about the prospectus, s/he should have contacted the student and major advisor prior to the examination. If major disagreements exist among Committee members regarding the proposed research, the Moderator will attempt to facilitate a consensus decision prior to the student's presentation.

**Student Presentation.** The examination begins with a presentation of the student's research proposal, lasting 20 minutes. The Committee should refrain from asking questions during the presentation except for the purpose of clarification. The Moderator controls the time of the presentation and should ensure, within reason, that it does not substantially exceed the twenty-minute restriction.

**Questioning.** It is the Moderator's responsibility to maintain a professional atmosphere and decorum during the examination. Usually there are two rounds of questioning, with each Committee member allotted ~ 10 minutes during each round. Questions in the first round are typically related directly to the proposed research while those of the second round are broader in scope, including general knowledge of Marine Science and of the student's area of specialty. Questioning starts with a Committee member from the School of Marine Science, with the outside Committee member and major advisor ending the questioning in each round. It is permissible for a Committee member to build on another's line of questioning during that individual's turn provided it is acceptable to the Committee. The Moderator (not a Committee member) should ensure that the student answers each question. Committee members will have an opportunity for discussion after the exam. If necessary, the Moderator may call for an intermission during the course of questioning to provide the student or Committee an opportunity to regroup.

**Deliberation.** Once the questioning has been completed, the Moderator asks the student to leave the room and requests that the Committee members refrain from speaking. The Moderator distributes a ballot to members for a straw poll of the student's performance on the examination and reminds the Committee that their votes should be based on performance during the examination period. This pass/not-pass vote is non-binding and simply provides a starting point for discussions of the student's performance. The Moderator then facilitates discussion towards a consensus decision. (04 Feb 05)

One negative vote is sufficient for a conditional pass. Two negative votes constitute a no-pass. A conditional pass generally means that the student is required to complete additional reading and/or coursework determined by the Committee, followed by a discussion or oral examination with one or more Committee members.

**Outcome.** Once a decision has been reached, the student is called back to the room. The Moderator informs the student of the outcome and summarizes the Committee's decision. The Moderator formally validates the examination with her/his signature, attesting that the examination has included questions both specific to the proposed work and from the student's general field, and that the decision is based on performance during the examination period. After the examination has been validated, the moderator then turns the discussion of the examination to the advisor and Committee members, who provide feedback to the student and establish a timeline if remedial action is needed. In mentioned areas, the Moderator has the prerogative to recess the examination and advise the Committee that they should broaden the scope of their questioning.

If the student does not pass the Qualifying Examination, s/he must retake the examination within six months. A no-pass on the second examination is grounds for dismissal from the graduate program. In cases of conditional passes or no-passes, it is the Moderator's responsibility to notify the Dean of Graduate Studies of the outcome as soon as possible following the conclusion of the examination.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Scheduling of Qualifying Examination*

*Qualifying Examination Grade Form*

COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY  
School of Marine Science/Virginia Institute of Marine Science

**SCHEDULING OF QUALIFYING EXAMINATION**

**To the Student:**

Remember: The Qualifying Examination should be announced to the faculty approximately two weeks prior to school date.

- (1) Arrange the date and time with all members of your Advisory Committee
- (2) Arrange for a Moderator of the examination. The list of faculty who serve as Moderators is available at the following URL:  
<http://www.vims.edu/sms/documents/moderators.html>
- (3) Contact the secretary of your department to reserve and schedule a room for the exam and prospectus presentation.
- (4) No less than 1-1/2 to 2 weeks prior to the examination, return this form to the SMS Graduate Registrar (Watermen's 233)  
**OR**  
Email the information to the SMS Graduate Registrar.  
(Be certain to include the title of your research.)

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ DEGREE PROGRAM \_\_\_\_\_  
(PRINT NAME)

DISSERTATION OR  
THESIS TITLE (Please  
Print) \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINT FULL FIRST NAME, INITIAL AND LAST NAME OF EACH COMMITTEE MEMBER (NO NICK NAMES PLEASE):**

*Moderator*

_____ Major Advisor	_____ Committee Member
_____ Committee Member	_____ Committee Member
_____ Committee Member	_____ Committee Member (if applicable)

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Day of Week Month/Day/Year

\_\_\_\_\_  
Location Hour

Return this form to the Graduate Dean's Office, Watermen's Hall

**COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY**  
*School of Marine Science/Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences*

**Qualifying Examination Grade Form**

**STUDENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Print Name in Full)

**DISSERTATION or  
THESIS  
RESEARCH:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We have administered a qualifying examination for the degree of

\_\_\_\_\_

to \_\_\_\_\_ on

\_\_\_\_\_

He / she has received a **PASS / FAIL** grade

**COMMENTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Minorator*

**COMMITTEE:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Major Professor*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*This form is a supporting document for graduation. Please return original form to:  
Dean of Graduate Studies/Office, c/o SMS Graduate Registrar  
Watermen's Hall 233*

## 5. ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

Application for admission to candidacy for either the Master of Science or Doctor of Philosophy degree must be made on the approved form to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee.

*Provisional graduate students cannot be admitted to candidacy.* The requirements for admission to candidacy for both the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees are as follows:

Upon a favorable recommendation of the student's Advisory Committee and the Academic Status and Degrees Committee, followed by a majority vote of the faculty of the School of Marine Science and the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies, a student may be admitted to candidacy after completion of the following requirements:

1. The student must have achieved a grade point average of B (3.0) or better, averaged over all courses taken for credit at the time of application for admission to candidacy.
2. All core courses required by the School of Marine Science, including MSCI 501A-D, 501L, MSCI 502, MSCI 502L, MSCI 504, must be passed with a grade of B- or better (or successful completion of a comprehensive examination administered by core class instructor) or officially exempted based on prior coursework, and all other courses specifically required by the student's Advisory Committee or department must be completed (18 Sept 1996).
3. The qualifying examination and prospectus must be completed.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Application for Admission to Candidacy*

## 6. PREPARATION OF THESIS OR DISSERTATION

A student's thesis or dissertation should be prepared in draft form for review by all members of his/her Advisory Committee well in advance of the proposed date for the defense. The document should be prepared in the required format (see appended Guide and/or refer to recently accepted theses and dissertations from the School of Marine Science). The draft should include all intended artwork in as close to final form as possible. The student should allow at least two to three weeks for the Committee to review the draft and should anticipate at least two iterations prior to preparation of a final draft. In other words, the first draft should be prepared a minimum of two and one half months prior to the proposed date for the defense. Following a timely review by a student's major advisor, **a complete and final draft should be submitted to all committee members no less than thirty (30) days prior to the dissertation or thesis defense.** The committee members are responsible for a timely review of all drafts.

The thesis or dissertation in final form with signed approval sheets must be presented to the College approximately two weeks prior to the date of commencement. Each dissertation, when submitted, must be accompanied by two copies of an abstract of not more than 350 words. This abstract, or summary, will be published in Microfilm Abstracts for national distribution. No dissertation will be accepted without this abstract.

### **Submitting Copies of the Dissertation or Thesis for Binding**

Information for submitting to the Swem and VIMS libraries copies of the approved dissertation or thesis for binding is available from the SMS Graduate Registrar. In general, however, the following applies:

A minimum of five (5) copies of the student's dissertation or thesis are required by the College and/or School, which includes:

- One (1) copy for Swem Library (acid-free paper required)
- Two (2) copies for Hargis Library(VIMS) (acid-free paper required)
- One (1) copy for Major Professor
- One (1) copy for student (Students also may have additional copies bound by the VIMS library)

One **additional acid-free copy** increasing the total of all copies to **six(6)**, is requested for the library of the Fisheries Science Department. (Students whose major professors are members of the Fisheries Science Department should contact the department's chairperson regarding the extra copy and the possibility of departmental coverage for the costs of printing and binding the FS copy.)

Contact the SMS Graduate Registrar for detailed instructions for submitting final copies to the respective libraries.

Prior to submitting copies of their dissertations or theses for binding, students may pay appropriate binding fees and, if required, microfilming fees to the VIMS Cashier's window. Receipts must be presented or shown to appropriate staff member of the Swem and VIMS libraries when submitting the unbound copies of the dissertations or theses.

Xeroxed copies of binding fee receipts must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies Office, c/o the SMS Graduate Registrar, Watermen's 233.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Final Draft Distribution Form*

*Approval Sheet Format*

*Agreement Form* (actual form is a four page, two sided document available from the Graduate Registrar's Office, Watermen's 233)

*Binding Form for VIMS Theses and Dissertations*

*Memo and Application for Electronic copies of theses and dissertations*

## 7. THESIS OR DISSERTATION DEFENSE

A **final draft** of the thesis or dissertation must be submitted by the student to all members of her/his Advisory committee a **minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the date of the seminar and defense**. The seminar and defense will not be scheduled and announced until the student has certified adherence to this policy by submitting the Final Draft Distribution form to the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, c/o SMS Graduate Registrar.

The defense of a thesis or dissertation will consist of two parts. First, all students are required to present a seminar to the marine science faculty, staff and students on their thesis or dissertation research. (21 May 86) The seminar will be advertised and open to any interested individuals.

Second, immediately following the seminar, the student will undergo an oral examination (i.e., the defense of his or her thesis or dissertation). The defense will be chaired by a Moderator who is not a member of the student's committee (19 May 95) and administered by the student's Advisory Committee. Any interested faculty members of the College are invited to attend. The examination will focus on the student's research project.

At the conclusion of the defense, the student's Advisory Committee will vote to accept or reject the document by indicating their decision on the Thesis/Dissertation Defense Acceptance Form.

This form must be signed by all Committee members and submitted to the SMS Graduate Registrar's office, Watermene's 233.

If the thesis or dissertation is acceptable, all Advisory Committee members also will sign the **approval sheets** to be included in the bound copies of the finished document. At least three of the five required copies of the approval sheet should be prepared on acid free bond paper and available for committee signatures at the conclusion of the defense. (Original signatures are required on the three library copies: 1 copy for Swem Library; 2 copies, SMS library.) Approval sheets for the remaining copies of the thesis or dissertation may be photocopied.

Unanimous committee approval is necessary for satisfactory completion of a student's thesis or dissertation defense and the final version of the thesis or dissertation. In the event that unanimity has not been achieved following the defense or after at least the second reading or a revised thesis or dissertation by one dissenting committee member, the student may appeal to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee for an independent review. At its discretion, the AS&DC may appoint an independent reader from the SMS faculty to render a substitute opinion which, if in agreement with the majority, will signify the acceptance and permit the independent reader to sign the approval form(s) in lieu of the dissenting committee member. Only one substitution of approval shall be permitted through appeal to the Academic Status and Degrees Committee. (25 February 91)

### **Scheduling and Announcement of Seminar and Defense**

Announcement of both the student's seminar and defense should be made to the faculty at least two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled date.

The student may use the applicable form to provide information to the Dean of Graduate Studies' Office for the preparation and distribution of the announcement to the faculty. In lieu of the paper work, however, information for the seminar and defense announcements may be provided by email to Fonda Powell ([fonda@vims.edu](mailto:fonda@vims.edu)) or Sue Presson ([snpres@vims.edu](mailto:snpres@vims.edu)). Please remember to include the day/date/time/location **and** the title of your thesis or dissertation research.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Scheduling of Seminar and Defense*  
*Seminar Scheduling*  
*Thesis/Dissertation Defense Acceptance Form*

## 8. GRADUATION

All students must be registered for the semester in which they graduate. A Notice of Candidacy for Graduation form must be filed with the Graduate School Registrar (Watermen's 233) on the following schedule:

May Graduation	-	1st Friday in October
August Graduation	-	2nd Friday in April
December Graduation	-	1st Friday in July

Students must refile to graduate if they do not meet degree requirements for the graduation date for which they originally filed. (In other words, forms of intent to graduate do not automatically roll from one graduation period of another).

Diplomas for the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees will be issued to May degree recipients at the School of Marine Science reception following the spring commencement exercises. August and December degree recipients will be contacted regarding the distribution of their diplomas within two weeks following their graduation date. Before leaving campus, degree recipients should assure that the SMS Graduate Registrar has an updated mailing address.

**Commencement Participation:** Degrees are conferred by the College in May, August or December of each year. Commencement Exercises are held each year in May; therefore, students graduating in either August or December traditionally are invited to the following spring's ceremonies.

Students in the School of Marine Science may be granted permission to participate in commencement exercises prior to completion of their degree requirements if they meet certain eligibility criteria. For instance, a student planning to finish all degree requirements during the summer for graduation in August may petition the Dean of Graduate Studies for permission to attend the prior May's ceremonies. The student must (1) advance to candidacy in his or her degree program no later than April 1 and (2) forward a letter from his or her advisor to the Graduate Dean stating the reasonableness of completion of all degree requirements by August. (23 June 1998)

In cases where a student is given permission to "walk" in May commencement prior to completing his or her degree the following August, the student should check with the SMS Graduate Registrar regarding specific deadlines. A follow-up with the Graduate Registrar will help to assure the inclusion of the student's name on the printed program of the applicable May commencement.

**Applicable Form(s):** *Notice of Candidacy for Graduation/Diploma Distribution Form*

## VI. GRADUATE STUDENT CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

The following forms are part of the final check-out paper work required by the School of Marine Science. Return all completed, signed forms to the SMS Graduate Registrar, Watermen's Hall.

### Agreement Form (required of Ph.D. Candidates)

The Agreement Form is included in the University Microfilms brochure, *Publishing Your Dissertation*. The form should be completed and turned in to the Swem Library (W&M) with one copy of the student's dissertation and an additional abstract for University Microfilms International.

### Verification of Receipt of Thesis/Dissertation by Swem and VIMS Hargis Library

#### For the SMS/VIMS campus

Prior to paying the SMS/VIMS Cashier, obtain a binding charges form from a Hargis librarian. Take the form to the SMS/VIMS Cashier and pay applicable fees. Return a copy of the form—marked paid—to a Hargis librarian. Additional paperwork is requested by the Hargis Library should a student choose to make available electronic copies of his or her thesis or dissertation. Students are encouraged to pursue this option with a Hargis librarian. (See samples of the Memo to All Graduating Students and the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Project Report Approval Form (p 54a, 54b of this handbook).

#### For the W&M campus

After paying the appropriate fee(s) to the SMS/VIMS Cashier, a SMS graduate student must present a copy of his or her receipt of payment and a copy of the "Verification of Receipt of Thesis/Dissertation by Swem Library" to Swem Library when submitting a copy of his or her dissertation or thesis to Swem for binding. A Swem staff member authorized to accept the dissertation or thesis copy for binding must sign the verification form (referred to as "the pink library form" because of its color).

The library verification slip must be returned to the SMS Graduate Registrar.

### Graduate Survey Form

The information requested in the Graduate Survey Form is pertinent to the accurate compilation of statistical reports of the School of Marine Science. A survey form will be mailed to each candidate for graduation prior to each semester's deadline for graduation. It should be returned to the SMS Graduate Registrar (Watermen's 233) with other completion papers.

### Student Check-Out Sheet

This form is required of all students leaving the School, whether temporarily (leave of absence) or permanently (graduation or withdrawal). Failure to obtain proper signatures and turn in the form to the Graduate Registrar (Watermen's 233) may result in delays in the finalization of paper work associated with a student's assistantship or degree program status.

### Survey of Earned Doctorates (required of Ph.D. candidates)

The purpose of the *Survey of Earned Doctorates* is to gather national data about doctoral recipients. All doctoral candidates should complete the Survey and return it to the SMS Graduate Registrar. It will be forwarded to the National Opinion Research Council.

Applicable Form(s):      *Verification of Receipt of Thesis/Dissertation by Swem Library*  
                                     *Graduate Survey Form*  
                                     *Student Check-Out Sheet*  
                                     *Agreement Form* (available only from the Graduate Registrar's  
                                     office, Watermen's 233)  
                                     *Survey of Earned Doctorates* (available only from the Graduate  
                                     Registrar's Office, Watermen's 233)