

**Master of Science in Marine Science  
Graduate Student Handbook**



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University of North Carolina Wilmington**

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## WELCOME TO UNCW

Welcome to the Master of Science in Marine Science program at UNCW! We are glad that you have chosen this program for your graduate work. This handbook is packed with essential information about the organization of the program and its requirements as well as a wealth of useful tips to help make your graduate school experience much smoother. Use this guide as a reference throughout your graduate career. See what opportunities are available to you as well as what is expected of you during your graduate work. Additional information can be found on the program website at [uncw.edu/mms](http://uncw.edu/mms) and at the Graduate School website at [uncw.edu/gradschool](http://uncw.edu/gradschool). The current graduate school catalog, which includes all rules, regulations, and information, including graduate course descriptions, can be accessed via the Graduate School website.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or suggestions at any stage of your graduate career. Best wishes for success in your studies.



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*August 2014 Edition*

## Getting Started

### REGISTRATION

Students must first register for classes before they can obtain their student identification card or apply for a parking permit. Students should meet with Dr. Skrabal to discuss a preliminary timeline of courses and then register for their first semester online. Student accounts and registration access can be obtained through the UNCW SeaNet at [seanet.uncw.edu](http://seanet.uncw.edu). The registrar is located on the first floor of James Hall ([uncw.edu/reg](http://uncw.edu/reg)); the Graduate School offices are located on the second floor ([uncw.edu/gradschool](http://uncw.edu/gradschool)). The cashier's office is located in room 144 in the Warwick Center ([uncw.edu/studentaccounts](http://uncw.edu/studentaccounts)).

### STUDENT ID CARD

The **UNCW One Card** is the official UNCW student identification card. This card is obtained at Auxiliary Services (Parking Office) in the Warwick Center. Auxiliary Services will issue the card, but CMS door & gate access will be activated by the CMS program assistant. This card also gives students access to university buildings, the bookstore, the copy center, student recreation center, pools, health center, pharmacy, laundry, UNCW postal services, student copiers, vending machines, and various student events. The UNCW graduate computer lab, located on the second floor of the library, is also accessed with the One Card. Many local restaurants and venues provide discounts to students who simply show their One Card. A number of eateries and vending machines on campus accept flex dollars which students can add to their account through the One Card website at [uncw.edu/onecard](http://uncw.edu/onecard).

## PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

The Parking and Transportation Office is also located in the Warwick Center. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students are allowed to obtain a parking permit even if they live within the 1-mile radius of campus. Before getting a parking permit, students must be registered for classes. A valid parking permit is required to park at CMS and to obtain after-hours gate access at CMS. Students enrolled in GRC 600 may be eligible for a discounted parking permit.

[www.uncw.edu/parking](http://www.uncw.edu/parking)

## STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

The Abrons Student Health Center is located on the second floor of DePaolo Hall. All students are required to complete the “Immunization & Medical History Form” which can be found on the Student Health Services website. A “Certificate of Immunization” must be presented **within thirty days of registration**. Health insurance is required for all UNCW students. Students may choose to have their own (complete online waiver) or they can purchase the health insurance provided by UNCW. Refer to the Student Health Services website for any questions regarding forms or health insurance requirement.

[www.uncw.edu/stuaff/healthservices](http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/healthservices)

## MAILBOXES AND OFFICES

Mailboxes and student desks are available at the Center for Marine Science. Many MS marine science students are not based at CMS; these students can obtain desks and mailboxes through the academic department of their advisors. Please confirm with the CMS program assistant if you would like a mailbox or desk.

## BOAT USAGE POLICY

UNCW maintains a fleet of small boats that can be used by students for research purposes. Contact the Marine Operations Manager, Jay Styron, for boat reservations.

A university boat certification is required for anyone operating a university vessel. This requires successful completion of university-sponsored short course in boat handling and water safety. Other boating courses may be acceptable if approved by the boating safety officer. Consult the boating safety officer Ken Johns for certification information. All students that use small boats (whether as operator or passenger) for their research must have health insurance. Further information is provided on CMS website.

[uncw.edu/cms/FacilitiesDivingSafety.htm](http://uncw.edu/cms/FacilitiesDivingSafety.htm)

## MARINE SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MSGSA)

The MSGSA is a student led organization designed to promote and enhance the graduate student experience through planned social activities, community service events, and research luncheons. Members are generally marine science graduate students, students doing marine science related research in any department are also eligible to join.

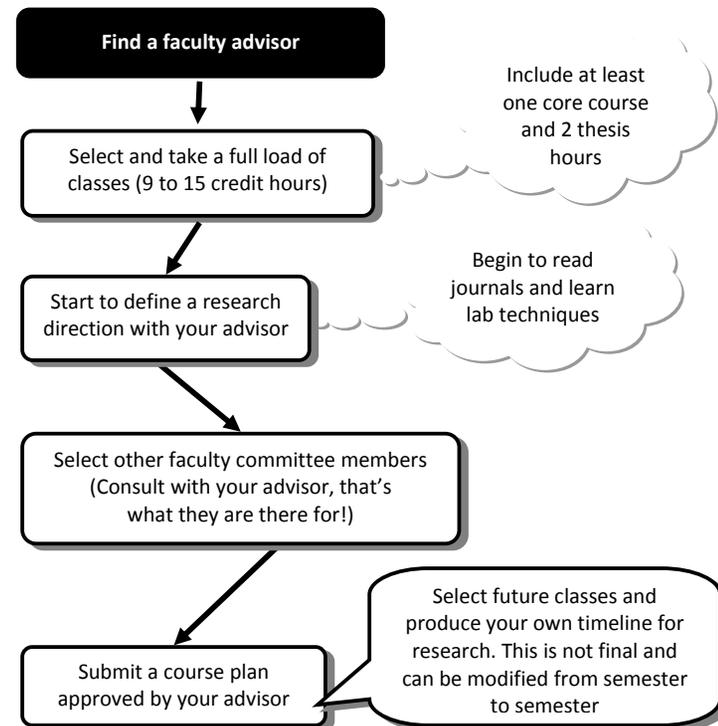
### Mentoring Program

Each new graduate student will be paired up with a veteran graduate student in the Marine Science Program to aid in their adjustment at UNCW. The mentors should contact their mentees prior to beginning classes to welcome them and provide them with their contact information. New graduate students should utilize their mentors as much as possible. They will be the best guide for any questions a new student might have, or for any advice a new student might need while at UNCW.

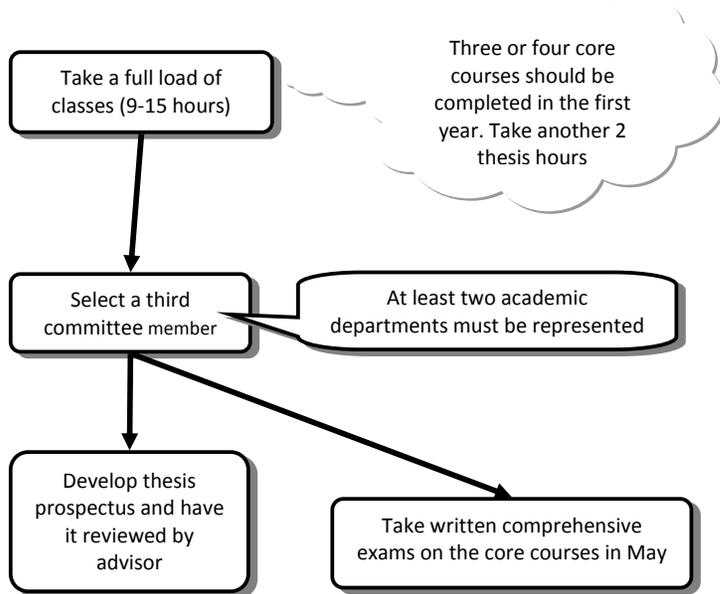
## The Time Line

Stay one step ahead. It is important for you to know what you are expected to do, and it makes life a lot easier if you know when that all-important deadline is coming up.

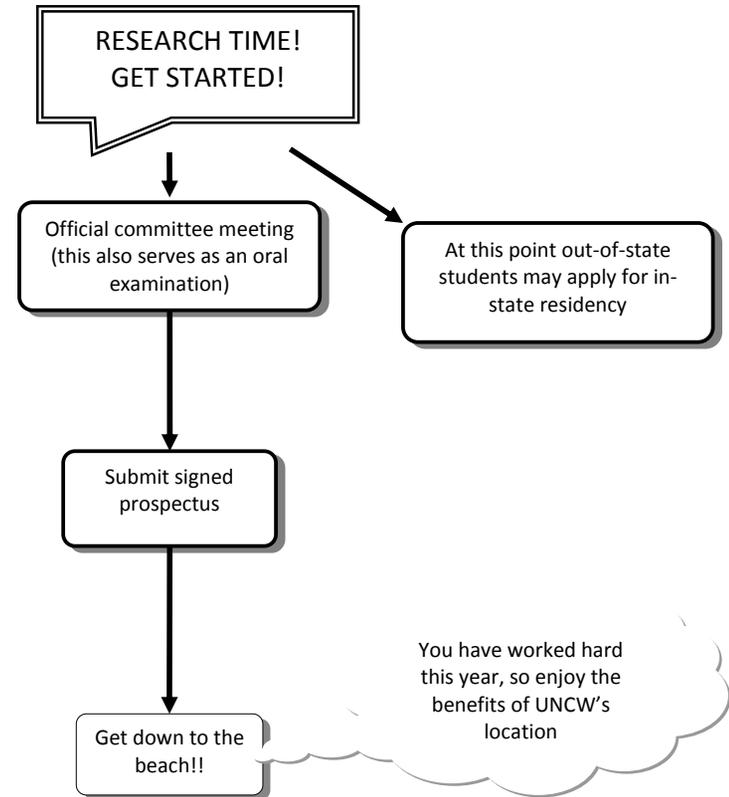
### *First Semester*



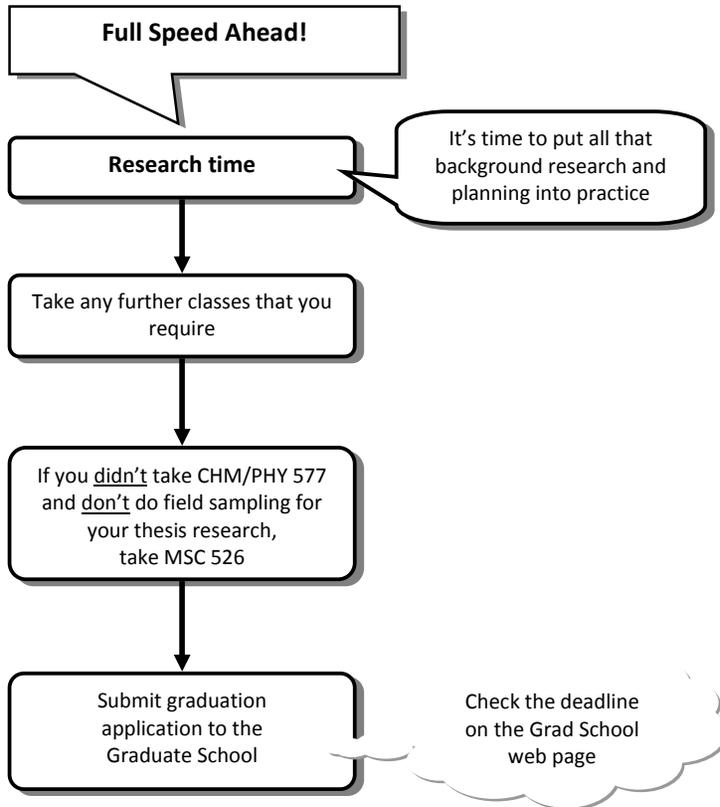
*Second Semester*



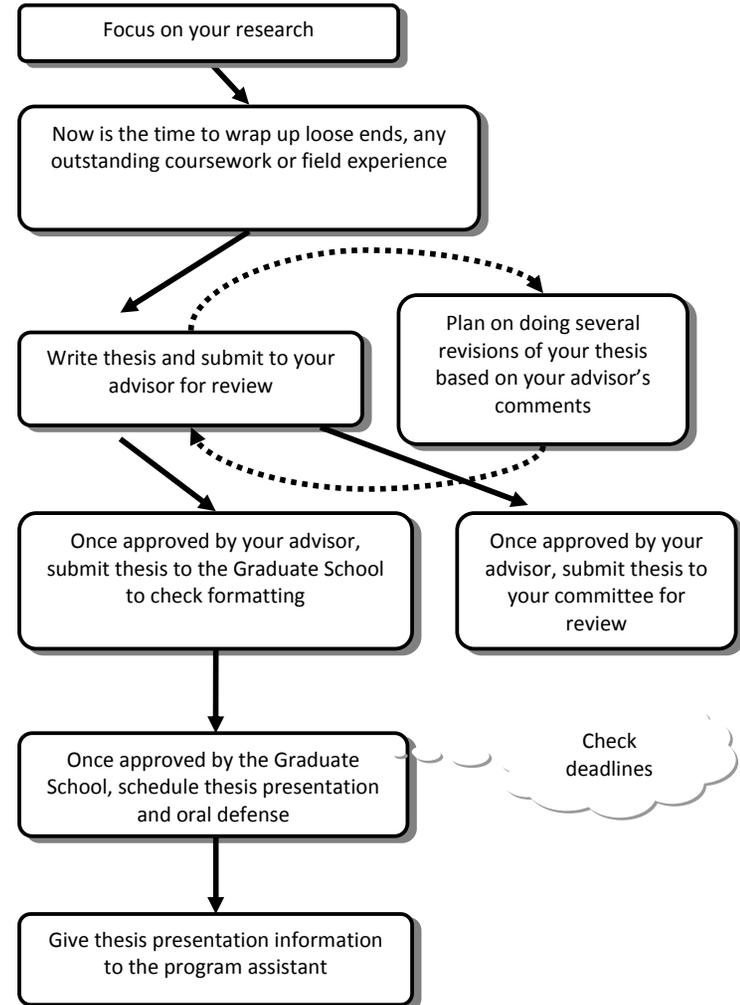
*First Summer*

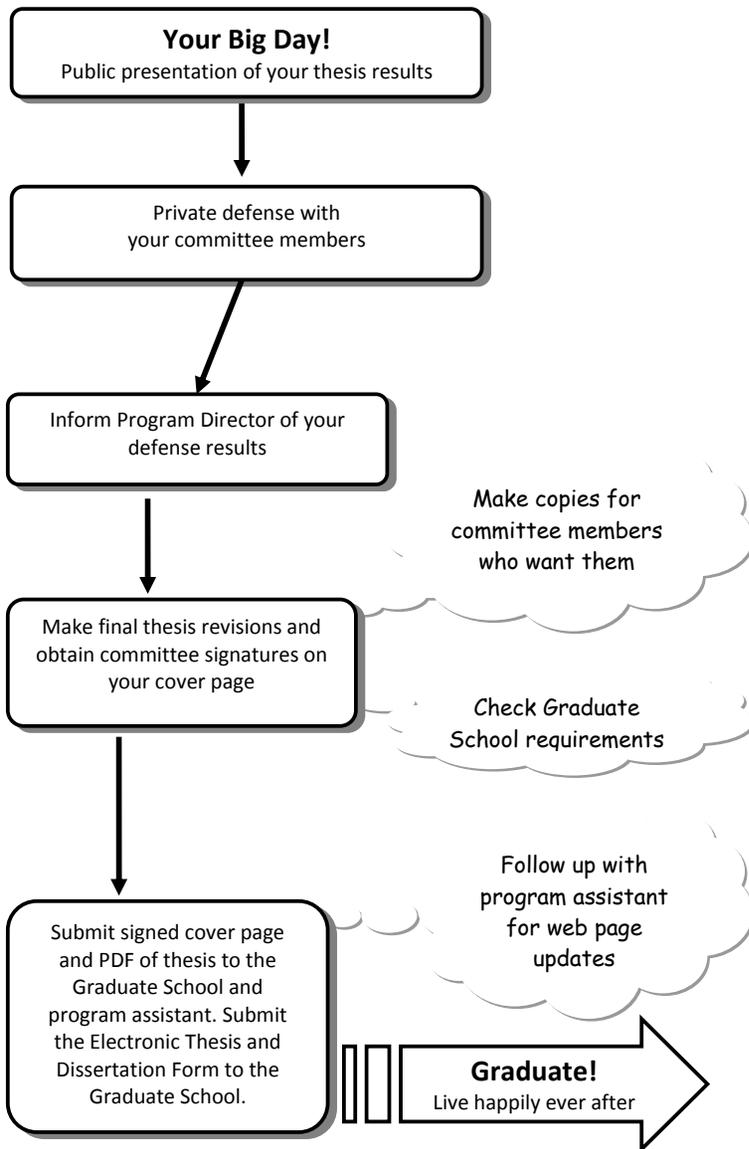


### Third Semester



### Fourth Semester





## Master of Science in Marine Science Requirements

- A minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate study are required. Certain courses, including core courses, are required. Additional courses may come from the student's major area of study as well as graduate courses offered by other departments as approved by the student's advisory committee.
- Generally, no more than 12 credit hours from courses cross-listed as 400/500 will be applied to the degree.
- A maximum of six semester hours of credit may be transferred from another accredited institution. Grades must be equivalent to a "B" or better, and courses must be acceptable to the student's advisory committee. A minimum of 24 semester hours of graduate study must be completed in residence.
- The student's advisory committee should include a minimum of three faculty members from at least two departments. Students are encouraged to include faculty from other universities on their committees as appropriate; these may be ex officio.
- The student must successfully complete a written comprehensive examination based on the core courses. This exam will normally be taken in May at the end of the student's first academic year.
- The student must complete a prospectus and an oral exam on the subject area of the thesis research. The oral

exam can take the form of a committee meeting. This should be completed by the end of the first summer.

- The student must acquire expertise in conducting sampling in the field. In some cases, this will be an essential part of the thesis research. If the thesis research does not include fieldwork, experience can be acquired by taking field-oriented course such as CHM 576, “Chemical and Physical Analysis of Seawater” or PHY 577, “Observational Methods and Data Analysis in Physical Oceanography.” Students who need field experience and are not taking a field-oriented course and do not have significant field work associated with their thesis projects can register for MSC 526, “Field and Cruise Sampling.” This is not a formal course but is a vehicle for the instructor to find opportunities for students by having them work with other students and/or faculty on field work.
- The student must complete a thesis, based on original research that is acceptable to the student’s advisory committee and to the Graduate School.
- The student must give a public seminar on the research project. This seminar will be followed by a private oral defense conducted by the student’s advisory committee.
- Each student must complete an approved course of study within five years of the date of initial registration for graduate study. The average time frame for completion of this degree by a full-time student at UNCW is 32 months (five semesters including two summers). This is slightly less than the national average for a Masters in Marine Science (35 months).

## Choosing Classes

The following are required of all students seeking a Master of Science in marine science:

- MSC 595 - Graduate Seminar (1)
- BIO, CHM, GLY or PHY 599 - Thesis (3-6)

## Core Courses

At least three of the following core courses are required for graduation. Students planning on continuing for a Ph.D. in marine science should take all four courses.

- BIO 564 - Biological Oceanography (3)
- CHM 575 - Chemical Oceanography (3)
- GLY 550 - Marine Geology (3)
- PHY 575 - Physical Oceanography (3)

After consultation with their faculty advisors, students select additional courses according to their backgrounds and research interests. A statistics course will be useful if the planned research will generate a lot of numbers.

## Optional Courses

- BIO, CHM or GLY 501- Introduction to Research (2)

## Marine Policy Concentration

Students may choose to include a concentration in marine policy, in addition to the required courses for a Master of

Science in marine science. For requirement information and available courses, refer to the Graduate Catalogue.

### Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs

1. Department of Mathematics and Statistics
2. Environmental Education and Interpretation  
(Department of Environmental Studies)
3. Geographical Information Systems  
(Geography and Geology)

### **Additional Information**

#### Directed Individual Study (MSC 591)

Directed Independent Study courses (591) provide the opportunity for students to pursue topics that are not covered in regular courses. These courses must have approval of the instructor, and the department chair (for departmental DIS courses) or program director (for MSC 591). Forms are available on-line at the Graduate School website.

#### Course Waiver or Substitution

A student can request a waiver of a required course with good reason. He/she can also request the substitution of a course for another degree requirement. All requests must

be approved by the student's faculty advisor and the program director.

### Continuous Graduate Enrollment GRC 600

After a student has completed all 30 credit hours including all required coursework, the student can sign up for Continuous Graduate Enrollment GRC 600, which gives the student full-time status and access to all university resources and facilities at a lower tuition cost. GCR 600 carries no credit hours and is not graded. GRC 600 can be repeated for three semesters. Forms for enrolling are available online at the Graduate School website.

#### Full Time Status

Full-time status for a graduate student requires a minimum enrollment of nine credit hours. However, a graduate student may also be considered full-time when enrolled for less than nine hours if the student: 1) holds a full (20 hour) teaching or research assistantship and is enrolled in five or more hours, or 2) holds a partial (less than 20 hours) teaching or research assistantship and is enrolled for seven or more hours, or 3) is enrolled in thesis hours (599), research internship (598), or GRC 600. The UNCW Graduate Catalogue is the final authority for this definition.

## **Fellowship Support and Awards**

For information about university fellowships and awards, refer to the Graduate Catalogue. The following opportunities exist within the marine science program:

### **CMS Summer Research Stipend**

The UNCW Center for Marine Science has a program of competitive summer research awards for graduate students conducting research in any area of marine science. These students can be MS students in marine science, biology, marine biology, chemistry or geology. The funds are solely for student stipends; travel, equipment, and other operational expenses are not covered. For proposal information and guidelines, refer to the MS in marine science homepage.

[www.uncw.edu/mms/forms.html](http://www.uncw.edu/mms/forms.html)

The Graduate School also offers summer research awards. For more information visit the “Fellowships and Scholarships” section of the Graduate School website.

### **CMS Master of Science in Marine Science Travel Award**

CMS will fund travel opportunities for graduate students in the Master of Science in marine science program. Travel grants can be used to support student presentations (poster or oral) of thesis research at a professional conference, or in special cases, to support travel necessary to conduct

thesis research. A student is eligible for only one travel award per academic year.

[www.uncw.edu/mms/forms.html](http://www.uncw.edu/mms/forms.html)

The Graduate School also offers travel awards. For more information visit the “Forms for Students” section of the Graduate School website.

The MSGSA offers travel awards as well but only to members. Any marine science graduate student is eligible to join the MSGSA.

### **CMS Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award**

One or two graduate teaching assistants are selected each year based upon nominations by the faculty, and the student’s statement of philosophy of teaching. Award recipients have demonstrated exceptional competence in teaching and mentoring of undergraduates. They must have clearly mastered their subject material and communicated it with enthusiasm and clarity to undergraduates.

[www.uncw.edu/mms/cms.awards.htm](http://www.uncw.edu/mms/cms.awards.htm)

### **Teaching Assistantships**

Graduate Teaching Assistantships are available for Marine Science graduate students. You may inquire with your advisor or the program director for more details. Duties will generally involve helping in the teaching of 100, 200 or

300 level laboratories and/or performing preparation work for the laboratory. Teaching assistantships are awarded for one or two semesters. You may normally expect to be continued for a second year if your performance is satisfactory. Not continued more than usually five semesters.

### **Research Assistantships**

Graduate Research Assistantships are sometimes available for Marine Science graduate students through research grants to their faculty advisors. Communicate with your advisor for more details.

## **Academic Program**

### **The Advisor**

The primary role of the faculty advisor is to provide guidance in the selection of a thesis topic and in the design of the research project as well as supervision as the research is conducted. The advisor will give advice and edit the thesis. The student and the advisor must therefore have common interests in research, and the research topic must be within the area of expertise of the advisor.

One of the biggest keys to having a successful student-advisor relationship is communication. While daily communication may not be practical with some advisors, students should strive to keep their advisor updated on their progression and future plans. The student and advisor should have an agreed upon timetable for courses and research, but it is ultimately the student's responsibility to follow through on their work.

The graduate advisor will help in the selection of at least two additional faculty members to serve on the graduate committee. One of these faculty members must be from a different academic department than that of the primary advisor. At least one faculty member besides the primary advisor should be selected during your first semester in residence. The graduate committee should be chosen to provide you with additional expertise in the design and execution of the thesis research. Any graduate faculty member at UNCW is eligible to serve as a committee

member if he/she has expertise in an appropriate field of research. Faculty from other universities may also be invited to serve as committee members; these can be ex officio members to facilitate the scheduling of committee meetings.

### **The Graduate Committee**

The advisory committee must approve the student's course plan. They will also assist with the development of the research proposal and must approve the research project. The committee will be prepared to offer advice and counseling on any aspect of the degree program including the oral comprehensive examination. The committee will evaluate performance, and determine whether the student passes or fails. Each committee member will read, edit, and evaluate the thesis and must approve the final draft.

It is very important to carefully select the graduate committee members. Close contact with each member should be maintained throughout the degree program. It is especially important to keep them informed of progress on research and the thesis preparation. If they do not know what is being done, the committee might assume that nothing is happening. In order to assure the committee is kept informed, it should be convened at least once each semester.

The working relationship between the student, advisor and graduate committee should be a close relationship. If the relationship becomes too distant, you will lose the opportunity to make the most of your master's program.

### **Research Prospectus**

A prospectus prepared early in the academic program is essential to promote a firm and mutual understanding of expectations for educational and research activities. The prospectus should be completed before the end of the first summer. It will consist of a cover sheet, the program of course work, a literature review and the research proposal. Learn how to use a reference program like Endnote. This will make the prospectus a first step toward writing a thesis.

Students are required to present their prospectuses orally, and as posters in MSC 595 Graduate Seminar, which is usually taken in the second semester. Once approved by your committee, the cover page will be signed by your committee members. This document does not go to the Graduate School, and the Graduate Dean's signature is not required. A sample cover page follows.

The prospectus is a research proposal or plan. However, scientific research rarely proceeds completely as expected; do not be surprised if your research goes in a different direction from your prospectus plan. Once approved by the faculty committee, the prospectus does not have to be revised even if the research changes direction.

The sample prospectus cover page, below, is available on the Masters in Marine Science website:

**<http://www.uncw.edu/mms/forms.html>**

**The effect of wave height at Wrightsville Beach on the graduation rate of marine science students**

**Marina A. Student**

A Prospectus submitted to the University of North Carolina Wilmington in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Marine Science.

Center for Marine Science  
University of North Carolina Wilmington  
2014

Approved by

Advisory Committee:

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**Dr. H. A. Bloom, Chair**  
Department of Biology and  
Marine Biology

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**Dr. I. M. Salty**  
Department of Chemistry and  
Biochemistry

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**Dr. Rose Fish**  
Department of Geography and  
Geology

## **The Comprehensive Examination**

The comprehensive examination consists of two parts, one written and one oral. The written comprehensive exam is designed to provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate competence in marine science. This exam covers material from the core courses selected, and in preparation for this exam, students should see how the various areas of marine science overlap and complement each other. This exam should be taken during the first May of residence after the completion of three core courses. The exam will be prepared and graded (pass or fail) by the instructors of the core courses. If a student does not pass a section of the exam, he/she will be given an assignment and must retake that section of the exam. If a student does not pass a second time, the exam will be reviewed by the program director, and if the instructor and program director agree that the work is not acceptable, the student will be ineligible to continue in the program.

The oral comprehensive exam covers the research topic only. It is intended to serve as a checkpoint for the student's course of action in their research. It will be conducted by members of the thesis advisory committee in the format of a committee meeting. This exam should occur before the end of the first summer of residence. The student and the committee members should know in advance that this committee meeting is the oral comprehensive exam, and the committee members should receive a prospectus copy one week before the exam. The student will give a brief presentation of the research plan, then, committee members can ask questions and make suggestions about the proposed research. The student

should take copies of important journal articles to the meeting. The committee assigns a grade of pass, or requires a second exam. Failure of the exam for a second time will result in dismissal from the program. This exam should provide an opportunity for committee members to have input into the project while it is still in the early stages, with the goal of making the project the best possible research. During this meeting, the student and the committee members should come to an agreement that the proposed research will, in all probability, produce a good thesis. After this meeting, the student will make the prospectus revisions requested, and then the committee members should sign the prospectus cover sheet. A copy of the signed prospectus should be given to the program director.

## The Thesis

### Philosophy

Although course work is important, conducting research and writing the thesis are the essential experiences of graduate study. The design of a realistic and well-defined research project should be considered the highest priority. A detailed prospectus outline helps the student achieve this goal by explaining the steps in developing a review of the pertinent literature and a written narrative of the direction the thesis will take. This prospectus can be used by both student and graduate committee for evaluating and overseeing research progress.

Research provides an opportunity to make a contribution to science. Thesis writing is an important step to that contribution. The thesis should present research findings evaluated within the context of previously published works. It is usually a common goal of student and advisor to publish results of the thesis research. There are several possible arrangements between the student and advisor concerning authorship of a manuscript to be submitted for publication. Different labs have different policies for authorship. The student should learn their lab's policy as the research progresses.

### Thesis Credit

Students must complete at least three (3) credit hours of thesis research (BIO, CHM, GLY, or PHY 599) and can take a maximum of six thesis credit hours. Registration is

completed online at the Graduate School web page. The student must be registered during any semester in which the work on the thesis occurs, and he/she must be enrolled during the semester in which graduation occurs. After completing 30 credit hours, a student can enroll for Continuous Graduate Enrollment, GRC 600, which has lower tuition costs.

### Thesis Format

The UNCW Graduate School provides formatting guidelines for preparation of the thesis. The student should contact the Graduate School early in the thesis writing process to obtain thesis guidelines and relevant deadlines.

### Defense of Thesis

Approximately one month before the desired date for the thesis presentation and defense, the student should submit a thesis draft (including figures and tables) to his/her advisor. The advisor will read and edit the draft and return it for revisions. After these revisions are made to the draft, it is submitted to the Graduate School and to other members of the committee. Each committee member will study and edit the thesis before the defense. The Graduate School will review the thesis for formatting, and after approval, the student can schedule the public presentation and private defense. The presentation and defense of the thesis will be conducted at a date and time mutually agreed upon by the student and examining committee. Normally, the defense of thesis will immediately follow the public presentation; however, under appropriate circumstances and with prior committee approval of your committee, the

defense date may be delayed. The public seminar must precede the examination before the committee.

At the conclusion of the defense, copies of the thesis containing each member's suggestions for changes will be returned to the student. After committee deliberation on the quality of responses to questions, oral performance, and condition of thesis, the student will be notified of whether he/she passed or failed.

If the defense is passed, the student must prepare a final copy of the thesis based on the written and oral comments provided by the committee. Should he/she fail the defense, the committee will schedule a second defense allowing for further study or revision.

### Graduation

The candidate may graduate in August, December or May. UNCW Commencement exercises are held in December and May. December and May graduates are encouraged to participate in Commencement exercises; summer graduates are encouraged to participate in the December graduation. All graduates participating in the UNCW Commencement exercise must order academic regalia. The Center for Marine Science holds a Graduation Celebration to honor graduates before the official UNCW graduations, and all graduates are strongly encouraged to attend this special ceremony. Academic regalia is not required for the CMS Graduation Celebration.

## Essential Forms and Responsibilities

Task	Reporting Responsibilities		
	Student	Advisor	Program Director
<b>Written Comprehensive Exam</b>	None	None	Keep record in student file
<b>Oral Comprehensive Exam</b>	1. Prepare prospectus 2. Submit signed prospectus to Program Dir with 2 copies of cover page	Email Program Dir with result and date of oral exam	Keep record in student file
<b>Field Experience</b>	Submit info to Program Dir about how this was accomplished	None	Keep record in student file
<b>Candidacy for Graduation</b>	Submit to Grad School before deadline “ <b>one semester before graduation</b> ”	Sign	Sign. Check degree audit upon notice of intent to graduate. Send to Graduate School
<b>Prior to Defense Scheduling</b>	Submit thesis draft and Format Approval Sheet to Graduate School	Sign	None
<b>Post Thesis Defense</b>	Submit a signed cover page and PDF of the final version of your thesis to the Graduate School and program assistant. Submit the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Form to the Graduate School.	Sign thesis cover to denote passage of thesis defense	Keep record in student file

## Thesis Checklist

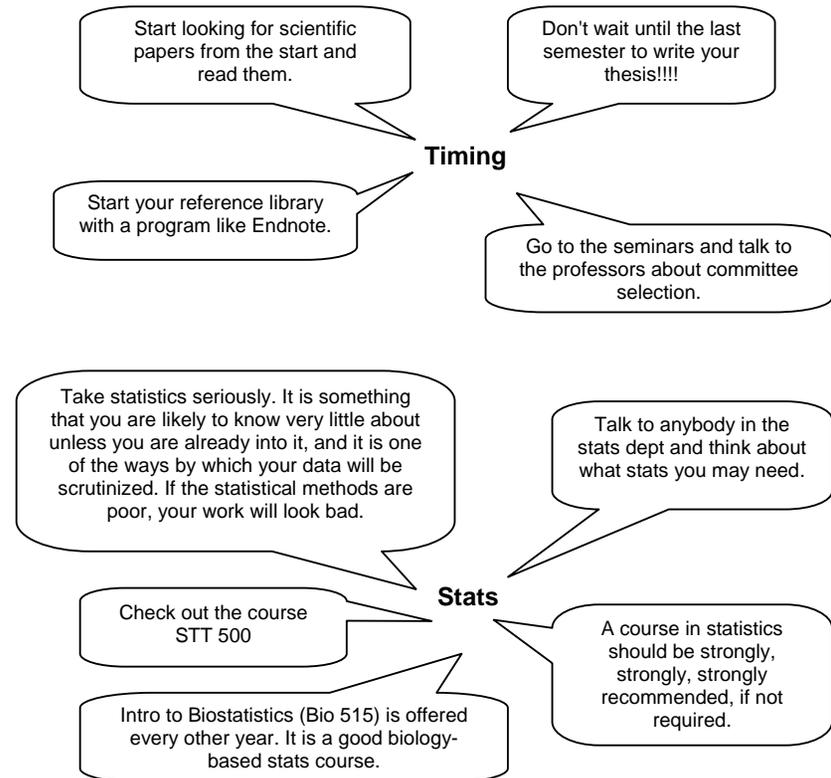
1. Check all thesis deadlines on the Graduate School website.
2. Have your advisor review your completed thesis draft.
3. E-mail a copy of your advisor-approved thesis draft to the Graduate School for format approval.
4. Mail or hand-deliver a “Format Approval Sheet”, signed by your committee chair, to the Graduate School.
5. Provide copies of thesis to all committee members.
6. Schedule thesis presentation and oral defense after your thesis formatting is approved by the Graduate School.
7. Create a flyer for public notification of your thesis defense to the program assistant including the title, time, and room number of your presentation, and submit this to the program assistant 10 days before the presentation.
8. Present and defend thesis.
9. Revise thesis based upon committee input.
10. Obtain signatures from committee members on the thesis cover page. Prepare thesis copies for committee members in the format they prefer.
11. Email a final electronic thesis in PDF format and submit a signed cover sheet to the Graduate School, and the program assistant. Follow up with the Program Assistant to update the program website.
12. Mail or hand-deliver Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) form to the Graduate School by the posted date.

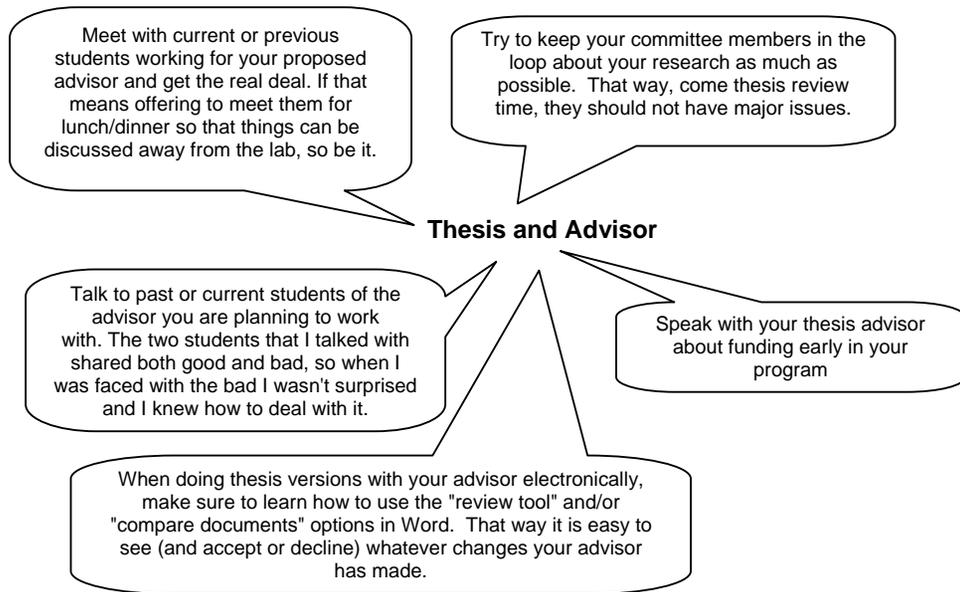
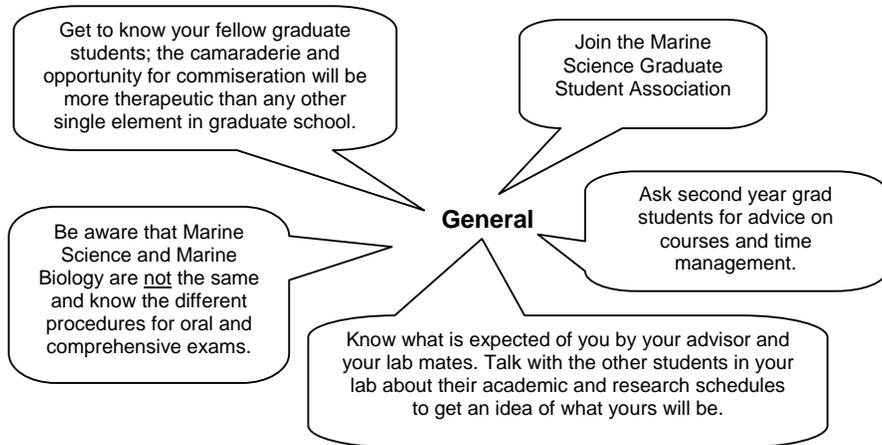
## UNCW Marine Science Student – Mentor Philosophy

Each new graduate student will be paired up with a veteran graduate student in the Marine Science Program to aid in their adjustment at UNCW. The mentors should contact their mentees prior to beginning classes to welcome them and provide them with their contact information. New graduate students should utilize their mentors as much as possible. They will be the best guide for any questions a new student might have, or for any advice a new student might need while at UNCW.

## Why didn't anybody tell me!!

Why do you always find out that all important detail, which would have made your life so much easier, when it's too late? This section of the marine science handbook was compiled to give you a "heads up". Current students of UNCW were asked for the life saving suggestion they wish they had been given on their first day of class.





## Center for Marine Science Checklist for a Two Year Timeline Master of Science in Marine Science

### Date or check mark

#### First Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ Find a faculty advisor if you don't already have one.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enroll in 12 – 15 credit hours (include a minimum of one core course, a 501 course and thesis hours).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take steps to achieve in-state residency if you plan to take courses in your second year.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend departmental seminars as appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Define a research direction with the help of your advisor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin reading journal articles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin learning laboratory methods and techniques.
- \_\_\_\_\_ With your advisor's input, select a second member for your faculty committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit course plan for your entire time at UNCW to your committee. This plan must be approved by your two committee members, but can be modified as needed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Note: Students who take CHM 501 will be required to have a prospectus completed and signed by three committee members this semester.

## Second Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ Enroll in 12 – 15 credit hours (include a minimum of one core course so you will have completed at least three core courses by the end of the second semester, MSC 595, and thesis hours).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend departmental seminars as appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Become active in laboratory.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Select a third committee member (two academic departments must be represented).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Write prospectus, have it reviewed by your advisor as you write.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Present prospectus at the poster symposium in MSC 595, usually in April.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take the written comprehensive examination in May.

## Summer

- \_\_\_\_\_ Become active in research.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take the oral examination. Read the marine science handbook for a description. Have your advisor notify the program director of the result.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Revise prospectus; get approval from all committee members. The prospectus is a research plan.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit signed prospectus to program director.

## Third Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ Focus on Research.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enroll in any remaining mandatory course work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend departmental seminars as appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit the Graduation Application Form to Graduate School before deadline posted on the Graduate School web page.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Document to the program director that you have had field experience either through your research, CHM/PHY 576/PHY 577 or MSC 526.

## Fourth Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ Focus on Research.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Enroll in any remaining mandatory coursework.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend departmental seminars as appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Write thesis; several revisions will be necessary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit advisor-approved thesis draft to Graduate School by their deadline along with the Graduate School's Format Approval Sheet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Provide copies of thesis to all committee members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule thesis presentation and oral defense after the thesis is approved by the Graduate School.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create a flyer for public notification of your thesis presentation, including the title, time, and room number of presentation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit this flyer to the program assistant, at least ten days before your presentation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Present and defend thesis research.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Have the advisor report the result to the program director.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Revise thesis after obtaining committee input.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get signatures from faculty committee members for the cover page.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make thesis copies for committee members in the format of their choice.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit to the Graduate School a final electronic thesis in PDF format, one title page signed by all committee members, and the “Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Submission Form”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate!

The average time for completion of this degree for a full time student at UNCW is 32 months (five semesters including two summers). This is slightly less than the national average Master in Marine Science (35 months).

## Useful Names, Numbers and Websites

Remember that a good source for information is the Master of Science in marine science website:

**[www.uncw.edu/mms](http://www.uncw.edu/mms)**

Here you will find a comprehensive database of classes available to you, faculty lists and links to other department websites, a useful resource when looking for committee members. It has a wide range of external links from academic points of interest, such as the Lower Cape Fear River Program, marine career advice and guidance, and much more.

Dr. Steve Skrabal, Associate Director for Education, Center for Marine Science, is a good point of reference for questions. If he can't help you, he will probably know someone who can ([skrabals@uncw.edu](mailto:skrabals@uncw.edu)). The Program Assistant, Ms. Jennifer French ([frenchj@uncw.edu](mailto:frenchj@uncw.edu)), is also a valuable resource.

Questions about your course plan, prospectus and thesis should be directed to your committee. General program questions and suggestions should be directed to Dr. Skrabal.

The Graduate School is a useful resource for much more than simply arranging classes and graduation. They can help you with many of the problems you may encounter during your graduate program. Visit their website to see what they can do for you.

**[www.uncw.edu/gradschool](http://www.uncw.edu/gradschool)**

The main university website ([www.uncw.edu](http://www.uncw.edu)) provides a wealth of information and links, most importantly on-line access to the graduate catalogue, the “official line” on all graduate program issues that you may encounter. It is your responsibility as a graduate student to be well informed. Remember, everything does not always go as planned; your best defense against possible problems is to be informed and to address problems quickly.

The academic calendar is accessible from the university website and contains important dates, such as start and end of semesters, registration dates and holidays.

**Some important telephone numbers are:**

<b>UNCW</b>	<b>910 / 962-3000</b>
<b>CMS</b>	<b>910 / 962-2301</b>
<b>Severe Weather Hotline</b>	<b>888 / 657-5751</b> <b>or 910/962-3991</b>
	<b><u><a href="http://uncw.edu">http://uncw.edu</a></u></b>