

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Academic Policies and Procedures Handbook

Freshwater and Marine Sciences, MS & PhD

**2021-2022**

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## I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### **Intention/Role of Handbook**

This handbook is intended for graduate students pursuing M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in the Freshwater and Marine Sciences (FMS) program. The UW-Madison Graduate School is the ultimate authority for granting graduate degrees at the University. The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures provide essential information regarding general University requirements. Program authority to set degree requirements beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with FMS faculty. The policies described in this handbook have been approved by the program faculty as a whole. Degrees and course requirements may change over time; however, students must meet the degree and course requirements that are in effect when they entered the program. In addition, administrative procedures and processes can change over time. Students are required to follow the procedures and processes listed in the current handbook. The information in this handbook should also be supplemented by individual consultation with your advisor and advisory committee so that individual needs/interests and all degree requirements are met. Additional information is available via the FMS web page ([fms.wisc.edu](http://fms.wisc.edu)). Students may also wish to consult the Graduate School's Web page.

### **Key Individuals and Roles**

Graduate Program Coordinator – Kelin Boldiis [boldiis@wisc.edu](mailto:boldiis@wisc.edu)

Program chair – Trina McMahon- [trina.mcmahon@wisc.edu](mailto:trina.mcmahon@wisc.edu)

### **Program Vision/Mission statements**

#### **Mission:**

The mission of the Freshwater and Marine Sciences program is to educate graduate scholars to develop a capacity for scientific inquiry and an understanding of and appreciation for the complex dynamics of freshwater and/or marine environments. This includes promoting interdisciplinarity, flexibility, and a focus on promoting excellence in research and scholarship in the spirit of the Wisconsin Idea.

Each student's course of study is tailored to his or her individual interests, career goals, and needs, and we admit students with diverse academic backgrounds. The path taken by a student results from a deliberative process that involves discussions between the student and the student's advisor and advisory committee. A goal for our graduate program is to provide students in FMS with diverse training that will prepare them for a range of flexible and sustainable careers (e.g., academia, industry, government, science policy and administration, science-driven non-governmental organizations, or science education and outreach at all levels, etc.).

### **Learning Outcomes (aka "Learning Goals" or "Training Goals")**

#### **Goals for student learning -- Master's program**

1. **Knowledge:** We expect students to be able to:
  - Articulate, critique, or elaborate the theories, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or practice in the relevant area of freshwater and/or marine sciences.
  - Identify sources and assemble evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the relevant research field(s).
  - Understands the historical or global context of freshwater and/or marine sciences.
2. **Research:** Students will complete an original research project that generates new information relevant to freshwater and marine sciences. The quality and rigor of the research should ultimately be publishable in the peer-review scientific literature. This includes the following skills and abilities:
  - Retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information pertaining to questions or challenges in the students' area of specialization within the freshwater and marine sciences.
  - Conduct research, analyze, and interpret resulting data
  - Prepare a thesis describing the research project

3. **Communication:** Developing the capacity to communicate in writing and orally, to scientific and general audiences are essential skills to develop during the Master's program. Development of written skills culminates with a clear, scientifically and logically sound thesis. Further,
  - Students will present research activities and results articulately and informatively
  - Students will have opportunities and are strongly encouraged to engage in public outreach and formal and/or informal teaching activities.
4. **Ethical Conduct** Students will understand professional and ethical responsibilities and are expected to interact with their colleagues in a respectful and professional manner.
  - Students will be trained to use scientific rigor when designing experiments, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting and reporting results
  - Students will be trained in the ethics of publishing
  - Students will know and adhere to laws, regulations, needed permits and licenses, occupational health and safety standards
5. **Career Preparation** Students will be provided with diverse training that will prepare them for a range of flexible and sustainable careers (e.g., academia, industry, government, science policy and administration, science-driven non-governmental organizations, or science education and outreach at all levels science, etc.).
  - Students will develop broadly applicable skills in critical thinking and problem solving
  - Students will have opportunities for teamwork, communication skills, and collaboration

### Goals for student learning -- Doctoral program

Goals for doctoral students include, and extend upon those listed for the Master's program.

1. **Knowledge:** We expect students to be able to demonstrate mastery in a subject area within freshwater and/or marine science. Students will:
  - demonstrate a broad understanding of major current and past theories, research findings, and methodologies and techniques in their area of concentration both orally and in writing
  - Students will develop and demonstrate critical thinking skills. They will retrieve and examine scientific literature, evaluate evidence for and against ideas and theories, identify knowledge gaps, strengths and weaknesses in existing literature, synthesize knowledge, and develop conclusions
2. **Research:** Students will complete original research that advances a field in freshwater and marine sciences. This includes the following:
  - Students will retrieve, evaluate, and interpret professional scientific literature and use this information to develop theoretical/conceptual frameworks, testable hypotheses/models, and predictions for their own research projects
  - Students will design realistic and feasible research projects and present these plans in a written research proposal and oral presentation
  - Students will conduct independent research and analyze and interpret resulting data
  - Students will prepare and submit manuscripts resulting from their independent research for publication in professional, peer-reviewed journals
3. **Communication:** Developing the capacity to communicate in writing and orally, and to scientific and general audiences are essential skills to strengthen as part of the FMS doctoral program.
  - Students will write a dissertation proposal that places their proposed work within the context of the field, describes the rationale and logic for the proposed work, and presents a tractable plan to execute the research.
  - Students will write clear and concise research articles for publication in professional, peer-reviewed journals
  - Students will present at scientific conferences and in formal and informal seminars
  - Students will gain experience in communicating with professional colleagues beyond the University of Wisconsin campus through professional meetings and interacting with visiting scholars

Students will engage in public outreach and education to develop skills to communicate with general audiences about their research and about freshwater and marine sciences in general

4. **Teaching:** Regardless of professional aspirations, doctoral students will gain experience in formal and/or informal teaching. This includes an expectation that doctoral students will participate in one or more of the following activities:
  - Serve as a teaching assistant for at least one semester
  - Mentor undergraduate students seeking independent research experience
  - Participate in teaching and learning training opportunities offered through various UW-Madison programs (e.g., the Delta Program)
5. **Ethical Conduct** Students will understand professional and ethical responsibilities and conduct themselves according to these ethical standards, including interacting with their colleagues in a respectful and professional manner.
  - Students will be trained to use scientific rigor when designing experiments, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting and reporting results
  - Students will be trained in the ethics of publishing
  - Students will know and adhere to laws, regulations, needed permits and licenses, occupational health and safety standards
6. **Career Preparation** Students will be provided with diverse training that will prepare them for a range of flexible and sustainable careers (e.g., academia, industry, government, science policy and administration, science-driven non-governmental organizations, or science education and outreach at all levels science, etc.).
  - Students will develop and practice broadly applicable skills in critical thinking and problem solving, leadership, collaborative science, and project management
  - Students will have frequent opportunities to meet and interact with academic and non-academic professionals

#### **Program statistics/prospects**

The data profile for the Freshwater and Marine Sciences program can be found at <https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-programs/?program=G617&type=view>

#### **Program Structure**

The Freshwater and Marine Sciences program seeks to educate graduate scholars to develop a capacity for scientific inquiry and an understanding of, and appreciation for the complex dynamics of freshwater and/or marine environments. Hallmarks of the program include its interdisciplinarity, flexibility, and a focus on promoting excellence in research through attentive faculty mentorship. Research done by FMS faculty and graduate students frequently crosses disciplinary boundaries, as demonstrated by faculty expertise in topics such as biogeochemistry or ecohydrology. Similarly, FMS provides a venue for faculty and their graduate students to grow beyond traditional intellectual spheres of home departments and translate their skills and understanding to complex challenges offered by the study of aquatic environments. FMS faculty are active, well-funded researchers, and our voluntary affiliation with the program provides us with an avenue to pursue research and mentor students in new, interdisciplinary, and/or unconventional directions. The FMS program is also involved in several outreach activities that increase the broader significance of the graduate training experience.

Reflective of the interdisciplinary nature of the program, FMS faculty have affiliations with several different departments and colleges on the UW-Madison campus. There is no formal FMS curriculum, but instead, FMS students can enroll in classes relevant to their research interests in any department or college. However, as detailed below in Sections III and IV, we strongly encourage students to participate in the Limnology and Marine Sciences seminar and to participate in the “Problems in Oceanography” class. Faculty affiliated with the FMS program and links to their professional web pages are available at <https://fms.wisc.edu/faculty> .

The FMS program is administered through the Department of Integrative Biology (College of Letters and Sciences). This is an administrative arrangement only and is not related to the areas of study pursued by graduate students.

Reflective of the diverse interests of FMS faculty, graduate research in FMS spans the range of physical, chemical, biological, and social aspects of inland and marine aquatic environments.

## II. ADVISING

### **Overview**

Advising is central to FMS graduate training. Before applying to the FMS Graduate Program, prospective students must identify and contact potential faculty advisors. Prospective students should contact potential faculty advisors by email early in the application process to discuss mutual interests, funding availability, and to determine if the faculty member is actively recruiting graduate students. Co-advising is also possible. Because of the importance of advising and support provided by an advisor, only in extremely rare cases are students admitted without having an advisor identified and who wants to work with the student. Exceptional cases have occurred when there has been more than one possible faculty member interested in serving as an advisor and funds to support the student are available. In these cases, the advising arrangement can be finalized during the student's first 1-2 semesters. Faculty advisors must have an anticipated funding plan for each student they wish to admit.

Research advising, advice on classes and professional development, and general mentoring are done by the student's major advisor and the members of the student's advisory committee. Students meet with the primary advisor immediately upon joining the program, and routinely and frequently throughout the graduate program. The advisory committee is assembled in consultation with the primary advisor during the first semester of study for Master's students, and before the end of the second semester for Ph.D. students and consists of faculty with expertise in areas relevant to the student's planned course of study.

Advising related to administrative requirements of the Graduate School and FMS Graduate Program are done by the Graduate Coordinator, Kelin Boldiis.

Advising related to other non-research issues, including grievances and conflicts are available from the FMS program chair, Trina McMahon.

### **Advisor / Advisee Roles**

The advisor serves at least three roles: first, to assist the student in acquiring the highest level of knowledge and competence in the field that is possible; second, to provide the resources and logistical support needed to complete the degree program, including helping the student to secure financial support; and third, to chair the committee that will determine whether the student has performed acceptably at each of his / her degree milestones. The chair or co-chair (in the case of a co-advised student) of the committee must be a Graduate Faculty in FMS. Advisors track the student's progress toward degree completion, assist with course selection and academic planning, and work with students to identify committee members, and help identify and facilitate diverse professional opportunities.

Each faculty advisor has her/his own distinct approach and style of mentoring, and advisor-advisee interactions naturally change during the course of a graduate student's career. Since the advisor's role can vary and student expectations change as they progress through graduate school, students and advisors should discuss roles and expectations at least annually.

### **Advising Resources**

There are many advising resources available to students. Students can reference the program's website, the program's Graduate Handbook, the Graduate School's website ([grad.wisc.edu](http://grad.wisc.edu)), and the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures ([grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/)). However, when students still need clarification on



issues there are various faculty and staff resources also available (described below). Generally, faculty and staff are best able to assist students when they have researched a topic (using the resources mentioned above).

### **Advisor Selection**

Students in FMS identify an advisor prior to applying to the program (as detailed in the Overview section). A student who later decides that a different faculty advisor would be preferable should discuss this with the current advisor and then feel free to seek the change. However, it is solely the student's responsibility to contact other potential advisors, and the department cannot guarantee that another advisor will be available. Advising related to such a transition is provided by the Director of Graduate Studies. When a student has selected, or changed, advisors, they must contact the program's graduate coordinator to ensure that appropriate forms are completed.

### **Additional Advising Contacts**

Students should always reference the program's website, this Handbook, the Graduate School's website ([grad.wisc.edu](http://grad.wisc.edu)), and the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures ([grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/)) for answers to various program-related questions. However, when students need further clarification on any of these policies or procedures, they should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator. The Graduate Program Coordinator may play a role with issues including satisfactory academic progress, academic deadlines, graduation completion, program-related forms, advising/course holds and permissions, and course offerings.

## **III. MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Program Basics and Timeline**

Some students enter the program and stop after earning a master's (M.S.) degree. Others will first earn a M.S. degree and then enter the Ph.D. program. In each case the steps to earning the M.S. are identical.

During the first year, students need to identify two faculty members who will form the student's advisory committee along with their advisor. In some cases, there may be a compelling reason to include a fourth committee member. Identification of committee members is a joint decision with the major advisor, and following Graduate School [guidelines](#), at least two of the committee members must be UW–Madison graduate faculty or former UW–Madison graduate faculty up to one year after resignation or retirement. For FMS, committee members should be from at least two distinct disciplines. It is the student's responsibility to ask these faculty members if they are willing to serve on the student's committee, and once the committee is formed, to schedule an initial committee meeting. Students are expected to hold this initial committee meeting by early in the second semester to discuss and make recommendations regarding class choices, research plans, professional development, and career goals.

MS students must prepare a research proposal in the first year, and later, a thesis presenting the results of this research. The format and length of the proposal should be established in discussion with the faculty advisor. In some cases, the proposal may correspond to a relevant external fellowship or grant application. The student must present and defend the thesis research to the advisory committee. The defense is a pass/fail activity. If the defense is unsuccessful, the student may make one additional attempt at the defense. If the defense is successful, it is nonetheless common for the committee to request revisions and editorial changes to the thesis prior to final approval of the thesis. We encourage Master's students to complete and defend their thesis in two years, and the thesis must be completed within three years. Exceptions to this three-year limit are possible only in unusual cases and must be approved by all committee members and the FMS chair. No student may exceed five years in the M.S. program. The specific details of the research project and thesis are critiqued and approved by the student's committee and thesis research must be presented to the advisory committee and defended. As part of proposal and defense meetings the advisory committee completes the rubric available [here](#).

In addition to completing a research project, MS students must take courses and seminars to fulfill required class and research credits established by the Graduate School. To earn a master's degree, students must complete 30 credits. Fifteen of those 30 credits must come from courses designed for graduate students. The FMS program does not require specific classes, but instead courses are approved by the student's advisor or advisory committee and depend on the student's research area, interests, and professional goals. Many FMS students take [ATM OCN/BOTANY/CIV ENGR/ENVIR ST/GEOSCI/ZOOLOGY 911](#) Limnology and Marine Science Seminar and [ATM OCN/ENVIR ST/GEOSCI/ZOOLOGY 750](#) Problems in Oceanography. Students must be enrolled in 8-15 credits/semester to maintain full-time student status (for more details, see <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-requirements/>). In keeping with the diverse areas of research and training for students in FMS, we expect that students will consult with advisors and committee in developing a curriculum that provides both breadth and depth, preferably across multiple departments. MS students are also strongly encouraged to present their thesis research at an oral departmental seminar or the Limnology and Marine Sciences seminar prior to their defense.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of the graduate student to make sure that all requirements, time targets, and time limits are met. Scheduling committee meetings can be challenging, and we strongly encourage students to schedule these meetings well in advance of their occurrence. In rare cases, it may not be possible to identify a meeting time that includes all committee members. In these cases, a committee member can participate by video, or the student can meet separately with the committee member. The advisor must approve this latter arrangement. Students who experience persistent problems in setting up meetings should seek assistance from the departmental Graduate Student Coordinator or the Director of Graduate Studies.

FMS students must maintain an average record of B or better in all work taken as a Graduate Student (grades of P and S are for this purpose considered to be satisfactory at the B level; grades of Incomplete are considered for this purpose to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the following semester). For other requirements, such as residence and credit load, Graduate School rules apply.

A student may be placed on probation or suspended from the Graduate School for low grades or for failing to resolve incompletes in a timely fashion. [grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#probation](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#probation). In special cases the Graduate School permits students who do not meet these minimum standards to continue on probation upon recommendation and support of their advisor.

### **Continuing to Ph.D.**

Should a student wish to pursue a Ph.D. after earning a M.S., they should discuss this option with the advisor. Admission to the Ph.D. program is contingent upon being accepted by an individual faculty advisor.

### **Checklist for Thesis/Defense/Graduation**

A warrant is the program's recommendation that a student be granted a Master's degree and is the Graduate School's notification that a student has met both the Graduate School and the program requirements. Warrants must be requested by students at least 3 weeks prior to the defense meeting via this [FMS web page](#).

The Graduate Student Coordinator will notify the student to pick up the warrant in B154 Birge Hall when it is available. The warrant must be returned to the Graduate School with faculty signatures upon completion of the degree requirements.

FMS requires Master's students to deposit their thesis in Memorial Library. Information about formatting and depositing your thesis, along with Graduate School deadlines/time limits (including graduation deadlines) can be found here:

<https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/Master's-guide/> >.

Thesis and project guidelines and requirements are provided by the advisory committee and samples can be requested from the committee or found in the UW-Madison Library Catalog <https://www.library.wisc.edu/find/dissertations/>.

#### IV. DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

##### **Program Basics**

Students entering the FMS Ph.D. program arrive with a range of academic backgrounds and experiences and with diverse professional aspirations. This includes students who have and have not previously earned a M.S. degree. Program expectations and the timeline for completion are described below. As described earlier, incoming students have an advisor identified, and office space will be available through the advisor's home department or research group.

##### **Advisory Committee**

During the first year, students assemble an advisory committee in consultation with their major advisor. Ph.D. students must have 5 committee members, although 4 members are acceptable for the initial committee meeting held during the first year. Committee members should be from at least two distinct disciplines (i.e., at least two different graduate programs) and all committee members are dissertation "readers." If appropriate for a student's research and scholarship interests, a sixth member can be added to the committee. Further requirements for the composition of dissertation committees follow [Graduate School policies](#):

- The chair or one of the co-chairs of the committee must be graduate faculty from the student's program. The committee must have members from at least two University of Wisconsin—Madison graduate programs.
- Three of the committee members must be UW—Madison graduate faculty or former UW—Madison graduate faculty up to one year after resignation or retirement.
- Additional members may be from any of the following categories, as approved by the program executive committee (or its equivalent): graduate faculty, faculty from a department without a graduate program, academic staff (including emeritus faculty), visiting faculty, faculty from other institutions, scientists, research associates, and other individuals deemed qualified by the executive committee (or its equivalent).
- All committee members have voting rights. To receive a doctoral degree, students cannot receive more than one dissenting vote from their committee on the final degree warrant.

As with the M.S., identification of committee members is a joint decision with the major advisor. It is the student's responsibility to ask faculty members if they are willing to serve on the student's committee, and once the committee is formed, to schedule an initial committee meeting. Students are strongly encouraged to hold this initial committee meeting by early in the second semester to discuss and make recommendations regarding class choices, research plans, professional development, and career goals.

##### **Proposal and Preliminary Exam**

By the end of the third year at the latest, Ph.D. students must prepare a dissertation research proposal and successfully pass their preliminary exam (the "Prelim"). The proposal is prepared in consultation with their advisor and must be distributed to the advisory committee 2 weeks in advance of the start of the Prelim exam. Normally the proposal will contain preliminary data indicating feasibility of the project; however, the Prelim should be taken prior to completion of the bulk of the work so that the committee is able to critique, suggest modification to, and agree upon the proposed work. Specific guidelines and requirements are specified by the advisory committee.

The preliminary exam may be composed of written and oral phases, or only the oral phase. Students advised by faculty in the Center for Limnology go through the 2-phase version of the Prelim, while it is up to discretion of advisory committees chaired by non-CFL faculty whether to pursue the oral or combined prelim.

The two-phase preliminary exam- This approach to the Prelim involves a written exam, and following its successful completion, an oral defense of the research proposal. The written exam emphasizes broad knowledge in freshwater and marine sciences relevant to the student's research and scholarship interests, as well as general abilities in synthesizing knowledge, logic, and writing. Questions may also include opportunities to demonstrate expertise in other areas such as coding, statistics, or teaching. Each member of the student's committee composes questions specifically designed for the student, and the student dedicates one day to answer questions from each of the five committee members. Students have access to standard scholarly resources (e.g., books, internet resources) with the notable exception of consulting with other scholars. Specific time limits or other guidelines may be put forth by individual committee members, but writing must be completed by 5:00pm on the final day of the written exam. Students are encouraged to seek advice from each committee member about how best to prepare for the written exam.

Once completed, the advisor will distribute written answers to the advisory committee. Each member will read and evaluate student answers specific to their question (at a minimum) and communicate their assessment to the major professor. Possible outcomes for the written exam include: fail, partial pass, or pass. In the case of a failed exam, students have one opportunity to reschedule and re-take the exam sometime within the next two semesters. A second failure results in dismissal from the program. A partial pass indicates some insufficiencies in one or more of the written responses to questions. In these situations, a student may be asked to meet with the relevant committee member for further discussion, revise an answer, or conduct additional work prior to the oral phase.

Following satisfactory completion of the written exam, the student proceeds to the oral phase of the Prelim. For the two-phase exam, this meeting explicitly focuses on the proposed dissertation research. Students are asked to give a presentation that provides an overview of the written proposal. This is a pass/fail examination. Students who do not pass may re-schedule this exam once only within two semesters of the initial oral exam.

The one-phase preliminary exam- This version of the Prelim includes an oral exam only. Students must demonstrate sufficient background and understanding needed to complete the proposed research during this meeting, and thus may be asked general scientific questions as well as questions specific to the proposed research. Should a student perform poorly on this exam, the committee may fail the student. If a student fails they may retake the exam one more time within 2 semesters. A second failure results in dismissal from the program.

Prior to taking the Prelim exam, students must request a "warrant" available [here](#) and detailed below under Checklist for Dissertation/Defense/Graduation. As part of proposal and defense meetings the advisory committee completes the rubric available [here](#).

### **Dissertator Status**

Dissertator status is achieved in the semester following successful completion of the Preliminary Exam. Once students have achieved dissertator status, they must enroll continuously (every fall and spring semester) for exactly 3 credits (no more, no less). Dissertator is a unique fee status for students who have completed all requirements for a doctoral degree except for the dissertation. To be eligible for dissertator fee status, a student must:

- Pass the Preliminary Exam
- Satisfy the 32 credit minimum doctoral graduate residence requirement
- Complete all minor requirements

- Complete all program requirements except the dissertation
- Clear all Incomplete grades or Progress grades in non-research courses (progress grades in 990 research may remain)
- Earn at least a 3.0 cumulative graduate GPA
- Return the signed and dated Preliminary Exam warrant to the Graduate School

For more information on dissertator status visit: <https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#dissertationstatus>

### **Dissertation and Oral Defense**

Ph.D. students are expected to meet with their committees to defend a written dissertation during year four or five. Students are also required to present their dissertation research to the committee and are strongly encouraged to make a similar presentation as a formal seminar (e.g., the Wednesday noon Limnology seminar- ATM OCN/BOTANY/CIV ENGR/ENVIR ST/GEOSCI/ZOOLOGY 911). Students must defend the dissertation within 10 years (see Time to completion below). This is a pass/fail exam; students who do not successfully defend their dissertation research may be able to attempt a second defense, pending approval of the advisory committee. If the defense is successful, it is nonetheless normal for the committee to request revisions and editorial changes to the dissertation prior to its final approval.

Dissertation samples can be requested from the committee or found in the UW-Madison Library Catalog <<https://www.library.wisc.edu/find/dissertations/>>.

Graduate School Doctoral Dissertation Format Guidelines can be found at this link <<https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/doctoralguide/>>.

After completion the Dissertation must be deposited with the Graduate School <<https://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/doctoralguide/>>.

### **Evaluation and Assessment**

As part of proposal and defense meetings the advisory committee completes the rubric available at <<https://fms.wisc.edu/program-requirements/>> in the “Forms & Links” expandable menu.

### **Teaching Requirement**

There are no formal teaching requirements for Ph.D. students in the FMS program. Students should discuss teaching expectations with their advisors, as advisors may have their own expectations for teaching activities as part of graduate training.

### **Course Requirements**

Ph.D. students must take courses and seminars to fulfill required research credits established by the Graduate School. The FMS program does not require specific classes, but instead courses are approved by the student’s advisor or advisory committee and depend on the student’s research area, interests, and professional goals. Many FMS students take ATM OCN/BOTANY/CIV ENGR/ENVIR ST/GEOSCI/ZOOLOGY 911 Limnology and Marine Science Seminar and ATM OCN/ENVIR ST/GEOSCI/ZOOLOGY 750 Problems in Oceanography. To earn a doctoral degree students must complete 51 credits. 26 of those 51 credits must come from courses designed for graduate students. In keeping with the diverse areas of research and training for students in FMS, we expect that students will take classes from different departments, and not just the advisor’s home department.

### **Minor Options**

Students earning a Ph.D. are required to complete an “external” or “distributed” minor as a means of embracing the goal of obtaining breadth during graduate training at UW-Madison. Specific course credit information about minors is listed on [this](#) Grad School page. How the minor will be completed should be discussed during the initial committee meeting and during subsequent committee meetings as needed.

The Option A (“external”) minor requires 9 credits taken in a department that offers a formal minor option, as specified by that department. The Option A minor must be approved by the Minor Professor or the departmental chair of the minor department (see Graduate School Catalog). These are part of the total credits required to graduate (not in addition to those credits).

The Option B (“distributed”) minor requires 9 credits taken in one or more departments forming a coherent topic and can include course work done in a single department. The Option B minor requires approval of the advisory committee. These are part of the total credits required to graduate (not in addition to those credits).

### **Time to completion**

It is expected that a Ph.D. student will defend the dissertation by the end of the 5th academic year. If the dissertation is not successfully defended by the end of the summer following the 6th academic year, the student’s mentor must present a written statement to the Director of Graduate Studies that explains why the Ph.D. has not been completed and describes plans that the student and the student’s advisory committee have agreed upon to ensure completion, including specific expectations, dates for completion, and consequences should expectations not be met. Continuation in the program beyond 8 years will be at the discretion of the mentor and advisory committee. 10 years is the outside limit by which a student must complete the Ph.D. degree.

### **Student Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the graduate student to make sure that all requirements, time targets, and time limits are met. Scheduling committee meetings can be challenging, and we strongly encourage students to schedule these meetings well in advance of their occurrence. Students are expected to meet at least once a year with his or her Advisory Committee to review student progress and performance and provide guidance. In some cases, it may not be possible to identify a meeting time that includes all committee members. This situation is to be avoided if at all possible for the Preliminary exam and dissertation defense. If it is unavoidable, a committee member can participate by video, or the student can meet separately with the committee member who will then report back to the major professor. The advisor must approve this latter arrangement. Students who experience persistent problems in setting up meetings should seek assistance from the departmental Graduate Student Coordinator or the Director of Graduate Studies.

FMS students must maintain an average record of B or better in all work taken as a Graduate Student (grades of P and S are for this purpose considered to be satisfactory at the B level; grades of Incomplete are considered for this purpose to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the following semester). For other requirements, such as residence and credit load, Graduate School rules apply.

A student may be placed on probation or suspended from the Graduate School for low grades or for failing to resolve incompletes in a timely fashion. [grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#probation](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#probation). In special cases the Graduate School permits students who do not meet these minimum standards to continue on probation upon recommendation and support of their advisor.

An average record of B or better in all work taken as a Graduate Student is required by the Department of Integrative Biology (grades of P and S are for this purpose considered to be satisfactory at the B level; grades of Incomplete are considered for this purpose to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the following semester of residence). For other requirements, such as residence and credit load, the Graduate School rules apply.

A student may be placed on probation or suspended from the Graduate School for low grades or for failing to resolve incompletes in a timely fashion [grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#probation](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#probation).



In special cases the Graduate School permits students who do not meet these minimum standards to continue on probation upon recommendation and support of their advisor.

Graduate School deadlines/time limits (including graduation deadlines) can be found here [grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degreedeadlines/](http://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degreedeadlines/).

### **Additional Program Requirements/Opportunities**

A goal of the graduate program is to provide students with diverse training that will prepare them for a range of flexible and sustainable careers (e.g., academia, industry, government, science policy and administration, science education and outreach at all levels, etc.). UW-Madison is a large campus with many resources, including opportunities for students to gain training beyond research, including earning a Delta teaching certificate, earning a master's degree in another area (e.g., statistics, computer science), or collaborating with nonacademic partners. Students will also have opportunities to attend a diverse array of campus seminars and workshops, attend and present research at scientific conferences, publish research findings, interact with scholars visiting the UW-Madison campus, and engage in scientific outreach and educational activities. Students are welcome to seek such opportunities and should discuss them with the advisory committee to incorporate them into the overall graduate training plan.

### **Checklist for Dissertation/Defense/Graduation**

A warrant is a program's recommendation that a student be admitted to doctoral candidacy (a preliminary examination warrant) or be granted a PhD and is the Graduate School's notification that a student has met both the Graduate School and the program requirements. Warrants must be requested by students at least 3 weeks prior to the prelim exam and the dissertation defense meetings. To notify the Graduate Student Coordinator of intent to request a warrant follow this [link](#). The Graduate Student Coordinator will notify the student to pick up the warrant in B154 Birge Hall. The warrant must be returned to the Graduate School with faculty signatures upon completion of the degree requirements.

## **V. ENROLLMENT**

### **Enrollment Requirements**

The Graduate School considers full-time enrollment to be 8-15 graded credits taken at 300 or above, excluding pass/fail and audit, during the fall and spring semesters, and 4-12 credits during the summer term. If students elect not to enroll as full-time students as defined by the Graduate School, they are responsible for knowing about possible obligations that may require full-time status. Such obligations may include visa eligibility, fellowships, assistantships, financial aid, external funding agencies, and program satisfactory progress requirements. For more information on minimum credit requirements visit: [grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#enrollmentrequirements](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#enrollmentrequirements)

### **Residence for Tuition Purposes**

Residency is used to determine tuition rates on campus. The details of the Graduate School Residency for Tuition Purposes can be found [here](#) as well as the full Registrar's Office policy.

### **Transfer of Graduate Work from Other Institutions**

Master's Students- For those students with M.S. degree coursework from another institution, the committee may choose to count up to 14 credits of coursework from another institution. Typically, committees will choose to cap graduate coursework from another institution at a lower level than 14 credits, but this is a committee decision to be made on a case by case basis. Note that these courses will not appear on a UW transcript. Major advisors must sign off on credits and inform the Graduate Student Coordinator that outside credits intend to be used so the Graduate Coordinator can notify the Graduate School. Before you can transfer credits first you must complete the 16 credit residence requirements and any other requirement. Our program doesn't accept transfer credits from an undergraduate degree neither for MS or Ph.D. students.

PhD Students- With committee approval, students are allowed to count no more than 19 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions to complete their minimum PhD credit requirements. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree or earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. Typically, committees will choose to cap coursework from another institution at a lower level than 19 credits, but this is a committee decision to be made on a case by case basis. Note that these courses will not appear on a UW transcript. Major advisors must sign off on credits and inform the Graduate Student Coordinator that outside credits intend to be used so the Graduate Coordinator can notify the Graduate School. Before transferring credits you first must complete the 32 credit residence requirements and any other major or minor requirements.

Graduate School policy on Transfer of Graduate Work from Other Institutions may be found at: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/transfer-of-graduate-work-from-other-institutions/>

#### VI. SATISFACTORY PROGRESS – ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Requirements for satisfactory progress are detailed above in Sections III. MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS and IV. DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS. Also see <[grad.wisc.edu/catalog/degreq\\_criteria.htm](https://grad.wisc.edu/catalog/degreq_criteria.htm)> for the Graduate School's minimum requirements. Note that in some cases the FMS requirements exceed the Graduate School's minimum requirements.

A student's failure to comply with the above-mentioned expectations for satisfactory progress may result in disciplinary action or dismissal (also detailed in Sections III. and IV.). If students fail to make satisfactory progress (as identified during committee meetings, by the advisor, in the annual progress reports, or as reflected in grades or coursework), the student may be asked to leave the program immediately. Alternatively, a student's advisor may present a written statement to the FMS chair that explains why the student has not made satisfactory progress and describes plans that the student and the student's advisory committee have agreed upon to allow the student to remain in the program. This statement should include specific expectations, dates for completion and consequences should expectations not be met. Continuation in the Graduate School is at the discretion of a student's program, the Graduate School, and a student's faculty advisor.

#### VII. SATISFACTORY PROGRESS - CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

##### **Professional Conduct**

All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behavior and ethics. Students should avoid even an appearance of improper behavior or lack of ethical standards while in Graduate School at UW-Madison, in all professional settings, and in their personal lives. Students should conduct themselves according to the standards expected of members of the profession to which the student aspires. Concerns about infractions of Professional Conduct may be effectively handled informally between the instructor/advisor and the student. If a resolution is not achieved, a graduate program representative may be included in the discussion. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Students are responsible for reading the information here as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

1. Professional Ethics: Students shall show respect for a diversity of opinions, perspectives and cultures; accurately represent their work and acknowledge the contributions of others; participate in and commit to related opportunities; aim to gain knowledge and contribute to the knowledge base of others; understand the UW Student Code of Conduct; represent their profession and the program; and strive to incorporate and practice disciplinary ideals in their daily lives. Resumes/CVs must reflect accurate information.



2. **Honesty and Integrity:** Students shall demonstrate honesty and integrity as shown by their challenging of themselves in academic pursuits; honesty and ethics in research—including honesty in interpretation of data, commitment to an unbiased interpretation of academic and professional endeavors; and the need to document research activities, conduct research with approved licenses and/or protocols (e.g., from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, the Department of Natural Resources, or other agencies). Students shall follow-through and pull their weight in group activities and understand where collaboration among students is or is not allowed; not plagiarize others or past work (self-plagiarism), cheat, or purposefully undermine the work of others; and avoid conflicts of interest for the duration of their time in the program. As a professional, honesty and integrity also extends to personal behavior in life outside of the academic setting by realizing that students are representatives of the program, UW-Madison, and the profession as a whole.
3. **Interpersonal and Workplace Relationships:** Students shall interact with peers, faculty, staff, and those they encounter in their professional capacity in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and professional. This includes and is not limited to attending all scheduled meetings, honoring agreed upon work schedules, being on-time and prepared for work/meetings, contributing collaboratively to the team, keeping the lines of communication open, offering prompt response to inquiries, and employing respectful use of available equipment/technology/resources. Chronic or unexplained absences are unprofessional in the workplace and could be grounds for termination or removal of funding. To facilitate the free and open exchange of ideas, any criticism shall be offered in a constructive manner, and the right of others to hold different opinions shall be respected.
4. **Commitment to Learning:** Students are expected to meet their educational responsibilities at all times. Be actively prepared for class and be ready for questions and answers. Be on time for every class and always show courtesy during class or if you have to leave class early. If possible, students should notify the instructor in advance of a planned absence. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for finding out what occurred that day and should not expect instructors to give them individual instruction. Recognizing that the pursuit of knowledge is a continuous process, students shall show commitment to learning by persevering despite adversity and seeking guidance in order to adapt to change. Students shall strive for academic excellence and pursue and incorporate all critiques, both positive and negative, in the acquisition of knowledge in order to understand and respect the community in which they work.

This graduate program, the Graduate School, and the Division of Student Life all uphold the UW-System policies and procedures in place for academic and non-academic misconduct. In addition, graduate students are held to the same standards of responsible conduct of research as faculty and staff. Furthermore, unprofessional behavior towards clients/subjects, faculty, staff, peers, and public are significant issues in the evaluation and promotion of students. In turn, we hold expectations for the highest level of academic integrity and expect professional, ethical, and respectful conduct in all interactions. Students may be disciplined or dismissed from the graduate program for misconduct or disregard for professional conduct expectations regardless of their academic standing in the program. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Students are responsible for reading the information here as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is an act in which a student (UWS 14.03(1)):

1. seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
2. uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
3. forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
4. intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;

5. engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or
6. assists other students in any of these acts.

Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. cutting and pasting text from the Web without quotation marks or proper citation;
2. paraphrasing from the Web without crediting the source;
3. using notes or a programmable calculator in an exam when such use is not allowed;
4. using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own by not properly crediting the originator;
5. stealing examinations or course materials;
6. changing or creating data in a lab experiment;
7. altering a transcript;
8. signing another person's name to an attendance sheet;
9. hiding a book knowing that another student needs it to prepare for an assignment;
10. collaboration that is contrary to the stated rules of the course; or
11. tampering with a lab experiment or computer program of another student.

Additional information regarding Academic Misconduct:

Graduate School Policy & Procedure: Misconduct, Academic: [grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#misconductacademic](https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#misconductacademic)

Dean of Students Office: Information for Students: How to Avoid Academic Misconduct? What Happens If I engage in Academic Misconduct? What Should I do If I know a Classmate is Cheating?  
<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>

Dean of Students Office: Academic Misconduct Flowchart: [https://studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/274/2016/08/Academic\\_Integrity\\_Flowchart.png](https://studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/274/2016/08/Academic_Integrity_Flowchart.png)

University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 14: Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures:  
[https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/uws/14](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14)

Also see the academic integrity site at: <https://go.wisc.edu/6d78mn>

### **Non-Academic Misconduct**

The university may discipline a student in non-academic matters in the following situations:

1. for conduct which constitutes a serious danger to the personal safety of a member of the university community or guest;
2. for stalking or harassment;
3. for conduct that seriously damages or destroys university property or attempts to damage or destroy university property, or the property of a member of the university community or guest;
4. for conduct that obstructs or seriously impairs university-run or university-authorized activities, or that interferes with or impedes the ability of a member of the university community, or guest, to participate in university-run or university-authorized activities;
5. for unauthorized possession of university property or property of another member of the university community or guest;
6. for acts which violate the provisions of UWS 18, Conduct on University Lands;
7. for knowingly making a false statement to any university employee or agent on a university-related matter, or for refusing to identify oneself to such employee or agent;
8. for violating a standard of conduct, or other requirement or restriction imposed in connection with disciplinary action.

Examples of non-academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. engaging in conduct that is a crime involving danger to property or persons, as defined in UWS 18.06(22)(d);
2. attacking or otherwise physically abusing, threatening to physically injure, or physically intimidating a member of the university community or a guest;
3. attacking or throwing rocks or other dangerous objects at law enforcement personnel, or inciting others to do so;
4. selling or delivering a controlled substance, as defined in 161 Wis. Stats., or possessing a controlled substance with intent to sell or deliver;
5. removing, tampering with, or otherwise rendering useless university equipment or property intended for use in preserving or protecting the safety of members of the university community, such as fire alarms, fire extinguisher, fire exit signs, first aid equipment, or emergency telephones; or obstructing fire escape routes;
6. preventing or blocking physical entry to or exit from a university building, corridor, or room;
7. engaging in shouted interruptions, whistling, or similar means of interfering with a classroom presentation or a university-sponsored speech or program;
8. obstructing a university officer or employee engaged in the lawful performance of duties;
9. obstructing or interfering with a student engaged in attending classes or participating in university-run or university-authorized activities;
10. knowingly disrupting access to university computing resources or misusing university computing resources;
11. downloading inappropriate or pirated content onto university computers

#### Additional information regarding Non-Academic Misconduct

Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Non-Academic:  
<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-nonacademic/>

Dean of Students Office: Non-Academic Misconduct Process  
[http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/uws/17.pdf](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17.pdf)

University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 18: Conduct on University Lands:  
[http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin\\_code/uws/18.pdf](http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/18.pdf)

#### **Research Misconduct**

Much of graduate education is carried out not in classrooms, but in laboratories and other research venues, often supported by federal or other external funding sources. Indeed, it is often difficult to distinguish between academic misconduct and cases of research misconduct. Graduate students are held to the same standards of responsible conduct of research as faculty and staff. The Graduate School is responsible for investigating allegations of research misconduct. This is often done in consultation with the Division of Student Life as well as with federal and state agencies to monitor, investigate, determine sanctions, and train about the responsible conduct of research. For more information, contact the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Policy, 333 Bascom Hall, (608) 262-1044.

Please see section on “Grievance Procedures and Misconduct Reporting” for further information on reporting research misconduct of others. Here are links for additional information regarding Research Misconduct and

Responsible Conduct:

Graduate School Policies & Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research  
[grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#responsibleconductofresearch](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#responsibleconductofresearch)

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's - Office of Research Policy: Introduction & Guide to Resources on Research Ethics:  
[research.wisc.edu/respolcomp/resethics/](http://research.wisc.edu/respolcomp/resethics/)

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's Office of Research Policy: Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures: Reporting Research Misconduct  
[kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=34486](http://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=34486)

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's Office of Research Policy: Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research Resources  
<https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=34483>

#### VIII. DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND DISMISSAL

Failure to meet the program's academic or conduct expectations can result in disciplinary action including immediate dismissal from the program. If a student is not making satisfactory progress in regard to academic or conduct expectations, the advisor will consult with the student's advisory committee and the Program Chair to determine if disciplinary action or dismissal is recommended.

Students may be disciplined or dismissed from the graduate program for any type of misconduct (academic, non-academic, professional, or research) or failure to meet program expectations regardless of their academic standing in the program. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Concerns about infractions of the Professional Conduct may be effectively handled informally between the student and the advisor/faculty member. However, if a resolution is not achieved, the issue may be advanced for further review by the program.

Additional information on consequences for students that fail to make satisfactory progress is detailed in Sections III. MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS, IV. DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS, and VI SATISFACTORY PROGRESS above.

#### **Process / Committee / Possible Sanctions**

The FMS faculty administer the regulations for the program, with primary responsibility for this administration falling to the program chair. A student's advisory committee determines whether the quality of a student's work and conduct are satisfactory, while the program chair determines whether the student is satisfying the academic requirements in a timely fashion and meeting program conduct expectations. Following notification, students who are falling behind academically or not meeting conduct expectations develop a plan with the student's advisory committee to allow the student to remain in the program and to make adjustments to ensure timely progress going forward. This statement should include specific expectations, dates for completion and consequences should expectations not be met. Students are dropped from the program if they cannot complete the requirements or remedy their conduct. Within boundaries set by the faculty, the program chair is authorized to take account of individual circumstances and problems, and to grant extensions of deadlines and waivers of requirements.

#### **Disciplinary Actions**

Depending on the situation/program, the Graduate Program will consider one or more of the following as possible disciplinary action options (details in Sections III. MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS, IV. DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS, VI. SATISFACTORY PROGRESS, and VIII. DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND DISMISSAL above).

- Written reprimand
- Denial of specified privilege(s)
- Imposition of reasonable terms and conditions on continued student status
- Removal of funding
- Probation
- Restitution
- Removal of the student from the course(s) in progress
- Failure to promote
- Withdrawal of an offer of admission
- Placement on Leave of Absence for a determined amount of time
- Suspension from the program for up to one year with the stipulation that remedial activities may be prescribed as a condition of later readmission. Students who meet the readmission condition must apply for readmission and the student will be admitted only on a space available basis. See the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Readmission to Graduate School: [grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#readmission](http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#readmission)
- Suspension from the program. The suspensions may range from one semester to four years.
- Dismissal from the program
- Denial of a degree

Depending on the situation, the Division of Student Life could also advance or explore possible disciplinary action options. Depending on the type and nature of the misconduct, the Division of Student Life may also have grounds to do one or more of the following:

- Reprimand
- Probation
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Restitution
- A zero or failing grade on an assignment on an assignment/exam
- A lower grade or failure in the course
- Removal from course
- Enrollment restrictions in a course/program
- Conditions/terms of continuing as a student

## IX. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES & REPORTING MISCONDUCT AND CRIME

### **Grievance Procedures**

If a student in FMS feels unfairly treated or aggrieved by faculty, staff, or another student, the department follows the grievance procedures outlined by the Graduate School <http://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/> under Grievances and Appeals. The University offers several avenues to resolve a grievance. Students' concerns about unfair treatment are best handled directly with the person responsible for the objectionable action. If the student is uncomfortable making direct contact with the individual(s) involved, they should contact the advisor or the person in charge of the unit where the action occurred (program or department chair, section chair, lab manager, etc.). Students can also discuss concerns related to mentor-mentee relations, degree progress, or programmatic requirements to FMS Chair or the Graduate Program Coordinator. For more information see the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Grievances & Appeals: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>

Procedures for proper accounting of student grievances:

1. The student has the option of speaking first with the person toward whom the grievance is directed to see if a situation can be resolved at this level. We strongly recommend having an additional person join in this meeting to act as an objective mediator.
2. Should a satisfactory resolution not be achieved, or should the student prefer not to speak with the person toward whom the grievance is directed, the student should contact the program's Director of Graduate Studies or the Chair of the Department to discuss the grievance. The Director of Graduate Studies or Chair will facilitate problem resolution through informal channels and facilitate any complaints or issues of students. The first attempt is to help students informally address the grievance prior to any formal complaint. Students are also encouraged to talk with their faculty advisors regarding concerns or difficulties if necessary. University resources for sexual harassment, discrimination, disability accommodations, and other related concerns can be found on the UW Office of Equity and Diversity website: [oed.wisc.edu](http://oed.wisc.edu).
3. Other campus resources include
  - The Graduate School - [grad.wisc.edu](http://grad.wisc.edu)
  - McBurney Disability Resource Center - <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>
  - Employee Assistance Office - <https://hr.wisc.edu/employee-assistance-office/>
  - Ombuds Office - <https://ombuds.wisc.edu/>
  - University Health Services – <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/>
  - UW Office of Equity and Diversity - <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>
  - UW Employee Disability Resources - <https://employee disabilities.wisc.edu/>
4. If the issue is not resolved to the student's satisfaction the student can submit the grievance to the Director of Graduate Studies and Chair of the Department in writing, within 60 calendar days of the alleged unfair treatment.
5. On receipt of a written complaint, a faculty committee will be convened by the Director of Graduate Studies to manage the grievance. The Graduate Program Executive Committee will obtain a written response from the person toward whom the complaint is directed. This response will be shared with the person filing the grievance.
6. The Graduate Program Executive Committee will determine a decision regarding the grievance. The Director of Graduate Studies will report on the action taken by the committee in writing to both the student and the party toward whom the complaint was directed within 15 working days from the date the complaint was received.
7. At this point, if either party (the student or the person toward whom the grievance is directed) is unsatisfied with the decision of the Graduate Program Executive Committee, the party may file a written appeal. Either party has 10 working days to file a written appeal to the School/College.
8. Documentation of the grievance will be stored for at least 7 years. Significant grievances that set a precedent will be stored indefinitely.

The Graduate School has procedures for students wishing to appeal a grievance decision made at the school/college level. These policies are described in the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>

### **Reporting Misconduct and Crime**

The campus has established policies governing student conduct, academic dishonesty, discrimination, and harassment/abuse as well as specific reporting requirements in certain cases. If you have a grievance regarding unfair treatment towards yourself, please reference the procedures and resources identified above. If you learn about, observe, or witness misconduct or other wrongdoing you may be required to report that misconduct or abuse. Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate to consult with your advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Program Coordinator, the Chair of the Department or other campus resources (such as the [UW Office of Equity and Diversity](#), [Graduate School](#), [Mc Burney Disability Resource Center](#), [Employee Assistance Office](#), [Ombuds Office](#), and [University Health Services](#)).

### *Research Misconduct Reporting*

The University of Wisconsin-Madison strives to foster the highest scholarly and ethical standards among its students, faculty, and staff. Graduate students and research associates are among the most vulnerable groups when reporting misconduct because their source of financial support and the progress in their careers may be at risk by raising questions of wrongdoing. They are also often the closest witnesses to wrongdoing when it occurs and therefore must be appropriately protected from the consequences of reporting wrongdoing and be informed of their rights. Please find full details at [research.wisc.edu/respolcomp/resethics/](https://research.wisc.edu/respolcomp/resethics/)

### *Academic Misconduct Reporting*

If you know a classmate is cheating on an exam or other academic exercise, notify your professor, teaching assistant or proctor of the exam. As a part of the university community, you are expected to uphold the standards of the university. Also, consider how your classmate's dishonesty may affect the overall grading curve and integrity of the program.

### *Sexual Assault Reporting*

UW-Madison prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. These offenses violate UW-Madison policies and are subject to disciplinary action. Sanctions can range from reprimand to expulsion from UW-Madison. In many cases, these offenses also violate Wisconsin criminal law and could lead to arrest and criminal prosecution.

Students who experience sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking have many options and services available to them on and off campus, including mental health counseling, victim advocacy and access to the criminal and campus disciplinary systems. For a list of confidential support and reporting options, please visit <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/survivor-resources/>

Faculty, staff, teaching assistants, and others who work directly with students at UW-Madison are required by law to report first-hand knowledge or disclosures of sexual assault to university officials for statistical purposes. In addition, disclosures made to certain university employees, such as academic advisors or university administrators, may be forwarded to the campus Title IX coordinator for a response. For more information, please visit <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/sexual-assault-dating-and-domestic-violence/>

### *Child Abuse Reporting*

As a UW-Madison employee (under [Executive Order #54](#)), you are required to immediately report child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement if, in the course of employment, the employee observes an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, or learns of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, and the employee has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur. Volunteers working for UW-Madison sponsored programs or activities are also expected to report suspected abuse or neglect. Please find full details at <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-301>

### *Reporting and Response to Incidents of Bias/Hate*

The University of Wisconsin-Madison values a diverse community where all members are able to participate fully in the Wisconsin Experience. Incidents of Bias/Hate affecting a person or group create a hostile climate and negatively impact the quality of the Wisconsin Experience for community members. UW-Madison takes such incidents seriously and will investigate and respond to reported or observed incidents of bias/hate. <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/services/bias-reporting-process/>

## X. ACADEMIC EXCEPTION PETITION

Academic exceptions are considered on an individual case by case basis and should not be considered a precedent. Deviations from normal progress are highly discouraged, but the program recognizes that there are in



some cases extenuating academic and personal circumstances. Petitions for course exceptions/substitutions or exceptions to the Satisfactory Progress Expectations (academic or conduct) shall be directed to the Advisory Committee. Final approval is granted by the Graduate Program Executive Committee. The following procedures apply to all petitions:

1. The specific requirement/rule/expectation pertinent to the petition must be identified.
2. The student's academic advisor must provide written support for the petition.
3. All course work substitutions and equivalencies will be decided by the student's advisory committee and approved by the Graduate Program Executive Committee.

More generally, the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student's advisor, may grant extensions to normal progress requirements for students who face circumstances (similar to tenure extensions) as noted in university regulations, this includes childbirth, adoption, significant responsibilities with respect to elder or dependent care obligations, disability or chronic illness, or circumstances beyond one's personal control. Where warranted, the petition should provide good evidence of plans and ability to return to conformance with the standard and to acceptably complete the program. The normal extension will be one semester; anything beyond this will be granted *only in the event of highly extraordinary circumstances*. Extensions will be granted formally with a note of explanation to be placed in the student's file.

## XI. FUNDING AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### **Overview: Funding Landscape**

There is a long tradition and expectation that students in the FMS program will be supported throughout their graduate studies. This may be achieved by appointments as teaching assistants (typically in the advisor's home department), research assistants, traineeships, or through competitive fellowships from federal or internal sources. In rare cases, students may serve as project assistants. The high rate of student support has largely been possible because of the strength of FMS faculty and their ability to obtain research support, usually from state and federal agencies. Research funding can be ephemeral, however. If RA funding is threatened, FMS faculty will pursue all possible options to ensure continued support.

Graduate assistants are paid on a biweekly basis and stipends are usually deposited directly into student's bank accounts. If you have questions or problems related to your pay, see the payroll administrator in your advisor's home department for assistance.

FMS students can apply for summer research support through the Anna Grant Birge competition administered through the Center for Limnology, as well as other small grant opportunities that may be administered through an advisor's department. For example, students mentored by faculty in Integrative Biology are eligible for travel and research awards offered through this department.

### **Finding Funding**

If you are looking for other sources of funding to support your graduate studies, the Graduate School provides general information about funding opportunities at, and additional information may be available from the campus financial aid office.

<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/>

<https://financialaid.wisc.edu/>

To hold a teaching assistant appointment, you must enroll in classes. If you do not have to maintain full time status, minimum enrollment for TAs is 2 credits (3 credits for dissertators) during the fall and spring semesters. If



you are full time due to loan deferment or immigration status, etc. non-dissertator TAs with at least 33.33% must be enrolled for 6 credits, or those who hold an appointment of at least 50% must be enrolled for 4 credits. Dissertator TAs are considered full-time with 3 credits directly related to their dissertation. Maximum enrollment for PAs and TAs is 15 credits during the fall and spring semesters. All courses graduate students enroll must be 300-level or above and graded. For comprehensive information please see <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-requirements/>

A contract between the state and the Teaching Assistant's Association covering TAs and PAs is no longer in force; however, the university is continuing to use the terms of the contract until final university policies are adopted. Since the TAA no longer represents TAs and PAs, sections of the contract referring to "union" rights and responsibilities are no longer in effect. TAs and PAs can find policies in the contract related to: grievance procedures; appointments; orientation, training, and evaluation; non-discrimination; termination; health and safety; and benefits, including sick leave, vacation, and leave of absence. <http://taa-madison.org/>

### **Tuition Remission and Payment of Segregated Fees**

TAs, PAs, RA, and Lecturers (Students Assistants) with appointments of 33.3% or higher (approximately 13 hrs/week) receive remission of their full tuition (in- and out-of-state, as applicable). Students with these appointments are still responsible for paying segregated fees. The term Segregated University Fee(s) describes charges in addition to instructional fees assessed to all students for services, programs and facilities that support the primary mission of the university. Segregated fee information can be found at <https://bursar.wisc.edu/tuition-and-fees>

### **Health Insurance Benefits**

TAs, PAs, RAs, and Lecturers (Student Assistants) with appointments of 33.3% or higher (approximately 13 hrs/week) for at least the length of a semester are eligible to enroll in a health insurance program. Information about health insurance options can be found at [ohr.wisc.edu/benefits/new-emp/grad.aspx](http://ohr.wisc.edu/benefits/new-emp/grad.aspx). Current monthly premiums can be found at <https://www.wisconsin.edu/ohrwd/benefits/premiums/>. Questions about health insurance and other benefits should be directed to the payroll and benefits specialist in your advisor's department.

### **Funding for Study Abroad**

The Institute for Regional and International Studies provides information about opportunities for international research, grants, scholarships and other funding.

### **Loans**

The Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) ([finaid.wisc.edu/graduate-students.htm](http://finaid.wisc.edu/graduate-students.htm)) assists graduate students whose personal and family resources are not adequate to cover the expenses involved in attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The office also provides counseling to help students manage their money effectively, information on other potential sources of financial assistance (such as employment), debt management counseling, and small short-term loans for emergency situations.

## **XII. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER PLANNING**

### **Local Resources for Professional Development and Career Planning**

A goal of the FMS program is to provide students with diverse training that will prepare them for a range of flexible and sustainable careers (e.g., academia, industry, government, science policy and administration, science education and outreach at all levels, etc.). We encourage students to discuss options with their advisory committee to develop in areas most relevant to an individual student's career goals. Examples of development possibilities include teaching internships, earning a Delta teaching program certificate, earning M.S. degrees in areas that complement a student's FMS studies (e.g., statistics, computer science). Faculty also offer graduate

seminars that highlight themes such as communicating with the media, scientific writing, and application of disciplinary principles to environmental problem solving.

UW-Madison offers a wealth of resources intended to enrich your graduate studies and enhance your professional skills. Starting your very first year on campus, it is expected that you will take full advantage of the career and professional development resources that best fit your needs and support your goals. Since our alumni thrive not only in academia but also in industry, corporate, government, and non-profit arenas, we strive to be in-tune, holistic, and innovative our approach to meeting the diverse professional development needs of our students. By actively participating in these professional development opportunities, you will build the skills needed to succeed academically at UW-Madison and to thrive professionally in your chosen career.

### **Travel to Meetings and Conferences**

An important part of the professional development for graduate students is participation in professional meetings and conferences. Consult your advisor about the appropriate venues for you to attend. Students can request travel support from your advisor or advisor's home department. Students should also explore travel grant opportunities at conferences to offset registration costs. Students who have reached dissertator status are eligible to apply for Vilas Conference Presentation Funds from the Graduate School.

<https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/grantscomp/conference/>

Students should work with the department's financial specialist to register and request reimbursement for conferences well in advance as there are a remarkable array of byzantine rules and regulations regarding travel expenses.

### **Campus-wide Resources for Professional Development**

In addition to opportunities at the local level, the [Graduate School Professional Development](#) provides direct programming in the areas of career development and skill building, and also serves as a clearing house for professional development resources across campus. The best way to stay informed is to watch for the weekly newsletter from OPD, **GradConnections Weekly**, and to visit the webpage [grad.wisc.edu/pd/events](https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/events) for an up-to-date list of events. For example, typical topics covered throughout the year are:

- Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- Planning for academic success
- Dissertation writing support
- Communication skills
- Grant writing
- Teaching
- Mentoring
- Research ethics
- Community engagement
- Entrepreneurship
- Career exploration: academic, non-profit, industry, government, etc.
- Job search support
- Pursuing postdoctoral training

Be sure to keep a pulse on programs offered by the following campus services as well.

- Writing Center [writing.wisc.edu/](https://writing.wisc.edu/)
- Grants Information Collection [grants.library.wisc.edu/](https://grants.library.wisc.edu/)
- Student Technology Training (STS) <https://at.doit.wisc.edu/training/software-training-for-students/>
- Delta Program <https://delta.wisc.edu/>
- UW Teaching Academy <https://teachingacademy.wisc.edu/>
- UW Center for the Humanities [humanities.wisc.edu](https://humanities.wisc.edu)

- Morgridge Entrepreneurial Bootcamp (MEB) <https://wsb.wisc.edu/programs-degrees/programs-nonbusiness-majors/morgridge-entrepreneurial-bootcamp>

### Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

The Graduate School webpage [grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp](http://grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp) offers a collection of IDP resources to support graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, mentors, PIs, grants administrators, and graduate program coordinators. The university recommends the use of IDPs for all postdoctoral researchers and graduate students and [requires](#) their use for all postdoctoral researchers and graduate students supported by National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding.

As you begin your Graduate School career, an Individual Development Plan (IDP) is an essential tool to help you:

- 1) Assess your current skills and strengths
- 2) Make a plan for developing skills that will help you meet your academic and professional goals
- 3) Communicate with your advisors and mentors about your evolving goals and related skills.

The IDP you create is a document you will want to revisit again and again, to update and refine as your goals change and/or come into focus, and to record your progress and accomplishments. It also serves to start – and maintain – the conversation with your faculty advisor about your career goals and professional development needs.

The onus to engage in the IDP process is on you, although your mentor, PI, or others may encourage and support you in doing so. The IDP itself remains private to you, and you choose which parts to share with which mentors. Through the IDP process, you may decide to identify various mentors to whom you can go for expertise and advice. We recommend using one of the following two IDP tools. Each tool will include a self-assessment of skills, interests, and values; goal-setting guidelines; and reference to skill building and career exploration resources.

#### *IDP tool for all graduate students and postdocs*

UW-Madison IDP template, which includes instructions and examples, is flexible and appropriate for all disciplines. [grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp#mentees](http://grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp#mentees)

#### *IDP tool for sciences and engineering*

For graduate students in the natural sciences and engineering, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) online tool “myIDP” provides a comprehensive set of materials and exercises that will guide you through the process of self-assessment, career exploration, goal-setting, and implementation of your plan. Set up a free account and create and monitor your IDP at [myidp.sciencecareers.org](http://myidp.sciencecareers.org).

### XIII. STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Maintaining good health is extremely important to student success, and our campus provides a wealth of resources to support not only physical health but also mental health. UW-Madison has a holistic resource for all things wellness called “UWell”. The site includes information and opportunities for wellness for your work/school, financial, environmental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and community. Go to [uwell.wisc.edu/](http://uwell.wisc.edu/)

Students who pay segregated fees are eligible for University Health Services <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/>. There is no charge to students for many basic services including counseling sessions, because services are paid through tuition and fees. Personal health and wellness services are also available in addition to medical services.

### **Securing Health Insurance Coverage**

Graduate students who hold an appointment as an assistant of 33.33% or more or who have a fellowship may be eligible for health insurance and other benefits beyond University Health Services. Contact the staff benefits and payroll coordinator in the unit where you have been hired to select one of several health care-plans within 30 days of your hire date.

Graduate students without an assistantship or fellowship who are currently enrolled can use the University Health Services (UHS) campus health clinic. Many services are provided at no extra cost, including outpatient medical care during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. UHS is located in the Student Services Tower at 333 East Campus Mall, 608-265-5000. For more info, visit the UHS web site at [uhs.wisc.edu](https://uhs.wisc.edu).

Prescription medications, emergency room visits and hospitalization are not included in UHS benefits. Therefore, supplemental insurance covering these drugs and services is recommended for all students and is required for international students. The UHS Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) is an excellent option for many students. Contact the SHIP office at 608-265-5600 for more information.

### **Diversity and Inclusivity**

We are committed to a strong, conscious effort to build diversity across our community, so it can reflect the richness of the world around us in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, physical limitation, religious beliefs or cultural background.

Graduate students at UW–Madison benefit from our commitment not only through the welcoming environment we nurture but through programs such as the Advanced Opportunity Fellowship, Graduate Research Scholars communities and the Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society. <https://grad.wisc.edu/diversity/oid/>

### **Disability Information**

Students with disabilities have access to disability resources through UW-Madison’s McBurney Disability Resource Center. As an admitted student, you should first go through the steps to “Become a McBurney Client” at <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>

The UW-Madison Index for Campus Accessibility Resources can be found at <https://www.wisc.edu/accessibility/>

### **Mental Health Resources on and off Campus**

University Health Services (UHS) is the primary mental health provider for students on campus. UHS Counseling and Consultation Services offers a wide range of services to the diverse student population of UW-Madison. They offer [immediate crisis counseling](#), same day appointments and ongoing treatment. Go to <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/make-an-appointment/> or call 608-265-5600.

UHS service costs are covered for students through tuition and fees.

There are many mental health resources throughout the Madison community, but UHS Counseling and Consultation Services is the best resource for referrals to off-campus providers. Call 608-265-5600 for assistance in finding an off-campus provider.

## **XIV. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS**

### **Activate your NetID**

You will need your NetID and password to access the My UW-Madison portal at [my.wisc.edu](https://my.wisc.edu). To activate your NetID click on the ACTIVATE NETID button from the My UW Madison login screen. Enter your 10 digit student campus ID number and birthdate. The NetID you create and password you enter are keys to your access to the

MyUW portal, so make a record of it and keep it private. If you are unsure about your NetID and password, contact the [DoIT Help Desk](#) at 608-264-4357.

### **Get your UW Photo ID Card (Wiscard)**

Get your UW ID card - Wiscard - photo taken at the Wiscard Office ([wiscard.wisc.edu/contact.html](http://wiscard.wisc.edu/contact.html)) in Union South, room 149, M-F 8:30 am - 5:00 pm. You must be enrolled and have valid identification, such as a valid driver's license, passport, or state ID) to get your photo ID.

### **Enroll in classes**

A student's advisor and advisory committee will determine specific courses that the student should take.

Students usually need to get permission each semester to enroll in research credits (e.g., ZOO 990). Please note that the course will appear closed, but because of the permission the "closed course" will be overridden. Consult your advisor for the appropriate steps to get permission to enroll in research credits.

### **Pick up your free Madison Metro bus pass**

As a UW student, you can pick up a bus pass at no charge from the Memorial Union at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Visit the ASM Web site for more information on Madison Metro bus services:

<https://www.asm.wisc.edu/resources/buspass/>. Be sure to bring your UW Photo ID card.

Prerequisite: You must be enrolled.

### **Attend the New Graduate Student Welcome, hosted by the Graduate School**

This event provides a great opportunity to mingle with Graduate School deans and staff, hear from a panel of current students about grad student life, learn about the many campus and community resources available to you, and meet other new graduate students from across campus. Learn more and register here:

[grad.wisc.edu/newstudents/ngsw/](http://grad.wisc.edu/newstudents/ngsw/)

### **The Guide to Graduate Student Life**

*The Guide* is published annually by the Graduate School and contains a wealth of essential information for new graduate student. It covers information about the city of Madison, student services, finances, employment, housing, transportation, shopping, local services, recreation, and healthy living. Check it out at

<https://grad.wisc.edu/new-students/>.

### **Attend Program Orientation Events**

FMS hosts an orientation for new graduate students at the end of August in partnership with the Department of Integrative Biology. Orientation typically begins with a light breakfast, and topics covered include welcome and introductions, transition to graduate school, and program specific information. Guest speakers are also invited to share a variety of campus resources.

### **Get Involved in Related Organizations**

- [Water@UW-Madison](#) is an umbrella organization that connects water scholars across the UW-Madison campus. Our goal is to facilitate communication among members of the UW-Madison water community and to convey the scope and diversity of UW-Madison's water research to the UW community and beyond.
- Center for Ecology and the Environment is the umbrella organization for all ecologists at UW-Madison. Its goal is to facilitate the work of ecologists at the university, and to represent their interests. The center promotes interaction among ecologists at UW-Madison in order to foster research, instruction, and outreach; build connections and networks across the large and diverse community of UW-Madison ecologists; and provide a gateway to information about ecology at UW-Madison. The center conducts

many activities on campus, including a campus-wide symposium each semester, graduate student social events, and an undergraduate summer job fair. To learn about how to join the Center for Ecology and the Environment, visit <http://ecology.wisc.edu/>.

## XV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### **International Student Services (ISS)**

International Student Services (ISS) is your main resource on campus and has advisors who can assist you with visa, social and employment issues. Visit their website for more information at [iss.wisc.edu](http://iss.wisc.edu) or to schedule an appointment.

### **Student Visas**

Graduate Admissions issues the federal I-20 form for initial F-1 Visa procurement. Initial J-1 Visa document (DS-2019) is handled by [International Student Services](http://iss.wisc.edu) (ISS). The Graduate Admissions office sometimes must collect financial information for the DS-2019, which is then forwarded to ISS. After the student is enrolled, all Visa matters are handled by ISS.

### **Documents required of new international students**

Many students are admitted with a condition that they submit their final academic documents after arrival on campus. Please submit your documents to the admissions office at 232 Bascom Hall. The admissions requirements page [grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/](http://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/) has a drop down menu under “degrees” which lists the documents required for each country.

### **Students with ESL requirements**

Any student who was admitted with a TOEFL score below 92, or an IELTS score below 6.5 will be required to take the English as a Second Language Assessment Test (ESLAT) <https://esl.wisc.edu/international-students/> and any required English course during their first semester.

### **Funding for International Students**

International students are eligible for Teaching, Project, and Research Assistantships on campus as well as university fellowships through the Graduate School. They may not be employed more than 20 hours per week on campus while enrolled full-time.

New international students with assistantships should work with International Students Services to obtain a social security number ([iss.wisc.edu/employment/social-security](http://iss.wisc.edu/employment/social-security)). New students with fellowships and no other appointment types are not considered employees and are not eligible for social security numbers. These students should work with ISS to obtain an International Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN, [iss.wisc.edu/employment/itin](http://iss.wisc.edu/employment/itin)).