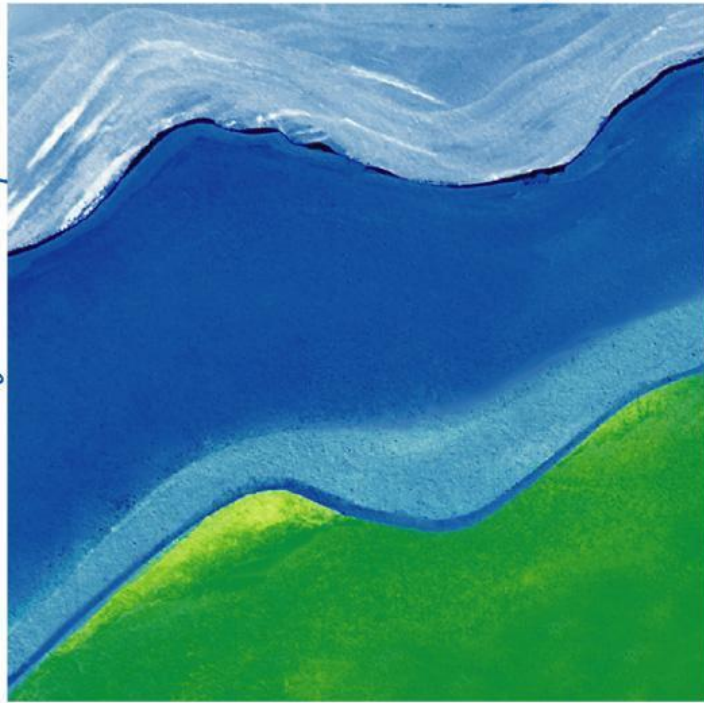


MEEES MARINE ESTUARINE
ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM

ions ■ atoms ■ molecules ■ proteins ■

habitats ■ ecosystems ■ planets ■



membranes ■ cells ■ tissues ■ organisms ■

populations ■ niches ■ communities ■

Student Handbook 2022-2023

Disclaimer

The MEES Graduate Program Handbook is a helpful tool in assisting graduate students to navigate through the USM program. Please note that policies and procedures set forth by the governing bodies may change outside of the parameters of this guide without notice. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor changes that are communicated by the MEES Program Office and beyond.

The primary means by which the MEES Graduate Program communicates with students, including notifying students of changes described in this handbook is by email communication: MEES-ListServ (mees@umd.edu). Students can self-subscribe to this mailing list.

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A Welcome Letter from the MEES Program Director



On behalf of the University System of Maryland (USM), I want to welcome you to the Marine Estuarine & Environmental Sciences (MEES) Graduate Program! We are pleased that you have decided to join us for your graduate studies which is an important stage in your academic and professional development. You have joined a vibrant, highly regarded program that promises to provide an outstanding education, exciting experiences, and the opportunity to work with world-class scientists.

The MEES Program has a strong faculty dedicated to graduate education, research, and creative works. As you learn from them, you will find yourself breaking new intellectual ground and contributing to the academic and professional conversations; joining a community composed of distinguished faculty and talented students.

Although there is a great deal to learn within the Foundation that you have chosen to study, take the time to interact with faculty and students from the larger USM program wide community of scholars by attending events like:

- **the MEES Colloquium** - an annual fall MEES program wide tradition with events like a seminar series with plenary & cultural event speakers, Foundation presentations & the prestigious 3M student talks, as well as panel sessions covering current issues such as climate change, and the very popular MEES GSO social event.
- **the MEES alumni panels** - where former MEES students share advice on; attending graduate school, exploring possible career paths, job interviewing tips, and much more, all hosted by the MEES-GSO.

Each campus also hosts many talks, seminars, and classes offered inter-institutionally which foster communication and understanding among the different campuses. In addition to the MEES Program's exceptional academic resources, we also encourage you to explore wellness resources and community centers at your Home Institutions where you'll find other students, faculty, and staff who are eager to offer support of many kinds.

Finally, you have chosen to attend graduate school based in a terrific, vibrant state. Maryland offers many cultural, recreational, and entertainment opportunities, so make sure to make the most of your time here as you advance your career goals.

Best regards,
Timothy Canty
Program Director
Marine Estuarine & Environmental Science
HJ Patterson Bldg 1213E; (301) 405-5360; tcanty@umd.edu

Our Commitment to Diversity, Inclusivity, Equity

The Marine Estuarine & Environmental Science Graduate Program (MEES) is committed to recruiting, cultivating, engaging, and encouraging a diverse and vibrant community of faculty, staff, and graduate students. We believe that diversity includes the presence of differences in all its forms and is the foundation for a living set of practices and goals; shared among the brilliant community of people who make up this unique program.

The heartbeat of the MEES Graduate Program is in its people – faculty, staff, and students – who are passionate about research, teaching, and learning. We believe that a diverse and inclusive educational and work environment provides an atmosphere that allows all individuals to attain their greatest potential which in turn allows the greatest benefits for MEES. MEES is dedicated to fostering a safe, civil, and welcoming environment for all students, faculty & staff. We are committed to improving representational diversity, fostering inclusive cultures and communities, and striving towards equity in the program and in our communities.

Science is important to the health and welfare of all people. Impactful innovation requires a wide variety of experiences, expertise, insight, and knowledge that flourishes in a fully diverse, equitable, and inclusive academic environment. The MEES Graduate Program welcomes all people to join us in our quest to advance science for the betterment of humanity.

Program Administration & Contacts Information

MEES Central Office, College Park

Graduate Program Director:	Timothy Canty
Email:	tcanty@umd.edu
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Phone:	301-405-9793
Graduate Program Specialist:	Valerie Bonhomme
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Phone:	301-405-6938
MEES Central Office Email: mees@umd.edu	
College Park Inter-institutional Enrollment: interinstitutional@umd.edu	

University of Maryland, Baltimore

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Graduate School Assistant Dean:	Keith Brooks
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Phone:	410-706-7131
UMB Inter-institutional Enrollment: Theresa Murray	
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Phone: 410-706-4629	

University of Maryland, Baltimore County

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Phone:	301-455-3659
UMBC Inter-institutional Enrollment: Theresa Marrow	
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Phone: 410-455-2500	

University of Maryland, Eastern Shore

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Phone:	TBD
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Graduate Admission Coordinator:	Preston Gross
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UMES Inter-institutional Enrollment: Markeisha Jones	
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University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences

<i>UMCES Central Office</i>	
President: Peter Goodwin	Vice President of Education: Lawrence Sanford
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Asst. to the Vice President of Edu.: Amy Griffins	UMCES HR Director: Lisa Ross
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<i>UMCES Horn Point Laboratory (HPL)</i>	
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Executive Director/Lab Director: Russell Hill	Payroll/HR Personnel: Monica Gellene
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Graduate Student Organization

<i>GSO Governor Members</i>	
GSO President: Tori Agnew	Email: magnew1@umbc.edu
GSO Vice President: Billy Atkinson	Email: watkinson@umces.edu
<i>UMB Representative</i>	
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<i>UMES Representatives</i>	
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MEES Handbook Overview

Marine Estuarine & Environmental Science (MEES) is an inter-institutional graduate program leading to the Master and Doctoral degrees from five campuses within the University System of Maryland (USM). This handbook provides the policies and procedures for the MEES Graduate Program. Some of the information contained in this document is available from several alternative sources, particularly on the laboratory and campus websites. It has been combined here to make life easier for you.

The policies outlined in this handbook generally detail program specifics. However, please be informed that there are university-specifics policies and procedures that students must also follow. Please use this handbook to access helpful resources pertinent to academic research: a list of important websites, key points of contact, and program course requirements & descriptions to help you prepare for your first semester.

Use this handbook as a reference for the appropriate steps and considerations when you have a question or a problem. If you have concerns that are not addressed in the handbook, please email the MEES office at mees@umd.edu.

The University System of Maryland (USM)

The MEES Graduate Program is part of the University System of Maryland (USM). It is a multi-institutional program consists of five universities and various facilities. Below is the list of the universities and participating facilities along with the website address for each institution. Students may find it beneficial to explore and familiarize themselves with the varying guidelines, policies, requirements, and resources that are available at each institution.

University of Baltimore

Main Website: www.umaryland.edu

University of Maryland Baltimore County

Main Website: www.umbc.edu

Graduate School Website: www.gradschool.umbc.edu

University of Maryland Center of Environment Science

Main Website: www.umces.edu

University of Maryland College Park

Main Website: www.umd.edu

Graduate School: www.gradschool.umd.edu

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Main Website: www.umes.edu

Graduate School: www.umes.edu/grad

Institute of Marine, Environment, and Technology

Main Website: www.imet.edu

Disciplinary Foundations

The MEES Program consists of four disciplinary foundations that MEES students can choose to embark on that is suitable to their interest. Each foundation has a specific research focus that uniquely makes up the MEES Program, on a small-scale level, and contributes to the science field and solving real-life problems on a grand scale level. Successful graduates from any of the four Foundations can find professional opportunities in federal, state, and local government agencies (EPA, FDA, NIH, USGS, USDA, NOAA, etc.), academic institutions, private consulting or manufacturing companies, and research firms.

Earth & Ocean Sciences

The Earth & Ocean foundation is an interdisciplinary field incorporating fundamental and applied studies of the land, estuarine, and ocean system. It includes elements of environmental chemistry, geochemistry, hydrology, and toxicology to help understand and predict the fate and effects of nutrients and contaminants in the environment. The foundation uses a wide variety of techniques and approaches, including observing platforms and numerical models to investigate processes in each sub-system, build connections across systems, understand processes at multiple spatial scales, and foster interdisciplinary educational experiences for graduate students. Students will gain a fundamental understanding of the movement and transformation of materials and energy between mountain headwater and estuarine, coastal, and oceanic systems, including geomorphology and landscape dynamics, physical circulation and transport, chemical transformation, and biological reaction.

Ecological Systems

The Ecological Systems foundation encompasses a broad array of topics and scales of research that emphasize understanding the interactions between organisms and their environment. Student research in this area has included the development of techniques in landscape ecology, ecological genomics, and fisheries stock assessment. Faculty in this foundation is actively conducting research around the globe from the Arctic and Australia to continental areas such as the American Midwestern prairie and the iconic Chesapeake Bay. The faculty draw from the traditions of individual, population, community, and ecosystem approach, providing students with depth in their individualized training even as the curriculum promotes access to a variety of ecological perspectives. Students will develop imperative skills that include sophisticated field and laboratory studies and analytical & simulation modeling.

Environmental Molecular Science & Technology

The Environmental Molecular Science & Technology foundation incorporates research topics that include current molecular approaches to study biodiversity, bioremediation, food chains, the discovery of drugs and enzymes from marine microbes and microorganisms, sustainable aquaculture, biofuels, biogeochemistry of carbon cycling, and genomics/metabolomics or marine organisms. This foundation provides an entrepreneurship program for the translation of scientific

research into start-up business through the development of business plans and the formation of biotechnology startup companies.

Environment & Society

The Environment and Society foundation focus on foundational knowledge of core theories and methods in the following domains of integrated social and environmental sciences: coupled natural and human systems, cultural models of the environment, political ecology, participation and governance, ecological economics, and environmental ethics. Students will develop scholarship and practice in social science aspects of coupled natural human systems that includes critical thinking, written and verbal communication, and practice in interdisciplinary fieldwork to hone skills in data collection and analysis, consensus building, and stakeholder analysis.

Master of Science (M.S.) Degree Requirements

The degree requirements of the Master of Science (M.S.) include coursework, research, and a thesis defense. The policies and requirements for the Master of Science students provided in this handbook is program-specific and not institution-specific meaning all MEES regardless of your home institutions are expected to adhere to these policies and requirements. However, there may be additional policies and requirements that are specific to the student's home institution but are not listed in this book. It is the responsibility of the students to ensure that they meet the requirements set forth by their home institution in addition to the program's requirements provided. **Students must adhere to the requirements set forth by both the MEES Graduate Program and their home institution** to graduate with the Master of Science degree.

The general coursework and program requirements are listed below.

- 1) Coursework: 30 credits of coursework
 - 24 credits of coursework; minimum of 12 credits must be at the 600 level or higher
 - 6 credits of thesis research credits: MEES799
 - Mandatory Core Foundation course
 - Earth & Ocean: MEES640
 - Ecological Systems: MEES660
 - Environmental Molecular Science & Technology: MEES680
 - Environment & Society: MEES620
 - Minimum of 3 Professional Development courses
 - MEES601(formerly MEES609A) – Required Professional Development course (Satisfy 1 of the 3 courses required)
 - 1 Issue Study Group
 - Elective courses approved by the student's advisory committee
- 2) Pre-liminary Thesis Research Proposal
- 3) Thesis Defense
- 4) Other Degree & Program Requirements

Coursework Requirements

Coursework & Credits: Students are required to complete a minimum of 30 credits which includes 24 credits of coursework and 6 credits of thesis research credits. Of the 24 credits of coursework required, 12 credits must be at the 600 level and higher.

Foundation Course: There are four core foundation courses (MEES620, MEES640, MEES660, and MEES680) that relates to the four disciplinary foundations in the program. Students are expected to take the core foundation course under their disciplinary foundation.

Professional Development Courses (MEES601): Professional Development courses are designed to provide students with the skills to transcribe scientific discoveries into

communication products and productive interaction with the management & policy communities, the public, and scientists outside the field.

Students are required to complete three credits of Professional Development course. From the three courses required, MEES601(formerly MEES609A) is mandatory for all MEES students regardless of your foundation, home institution, and lab locations. Credits will be granted to students who have previously taken MEES609A. Professional Development courses beyond the required three courses can satisfy elective courses.

Issue Study Group: Issue Study Groups are courses that focus on current issues in environmental science and policy relevance to the current society. Students enrolled in the course can expect to collaboratively research, discuss, and synthesize information on a chosen topic and culminating in a public communication.

Students are required to complete one issue study group.

Elective Courses: Elective courses offer students the opportunity to focus their education on their specific research topic. Students and their advisory committee should choose courses that contributes to the student's research.

Non-MEES Courses: There are non-MEES courses that can satisfy certain MEES course requirement. Students must receive approval from their Research Advisory Committee prior to enrolling in non-MEES courses.

Thesis Research Credits (MEES799): Students normally take thesis research credits following the completion of their coursework and approval of their research proposal by their advisory committee. Students are required to complete 6 credits of thesis research credits (MEES799) under their advisor's section.

Pre-liminary Thesis Research Proposal

A written statement detailing the research to be conducted needs to be submitted to the MEES Program Office upon approval from the student's Advisory Committee one year after entrance into the program. If vertebrate animals are to be used in the research, the animal use protocol should be approved prior to the research (see Research Assurance).

Thesis Defense

An oral thesis defense will be administered by the Research Advisory Committee in accordance with the Graduate School regulations from the students' home institution at the completion of the research project. Students must provide the Research Advisory Committee a copy of the thesis at least two weeks prior to the oral defense.

The Research Advisory Committee may conclude that the candidate has passed or failed. A student may be conditionally passed with the provision that minor changes in the thesis be made and approved by the Primary Advisor. A student who fails may at the discretion of the

committee and with approval of the MEES Director and the appropriate Graduate School be permitted to stand a second defense after acting on suggestions for improvement of the thesis (collection of more data, use of different statistical analysis, rewriting of the discussion, etc.), at an appropriate time agree upon by the Primary Advisor.

Once the thesis has been successfully defended, one copy must be supplied to the MEES Office in addition to the copy required by the Graduate School of the student's home institution.

Other Degree & Program Requirements

Registration: Students are expected to be registered for the Fall and Spring terms regardless whether they are part-time or full-time students. Please check with your home institutions for the registration policies for part-time and full-time students.

Program Time Limits: The program mandates that all full-time master's students must complete their degree within 4 years after admission and all part-time master's students must complete their degree within 5 years after admission. Each home institutions may also have additional institution-specific time limits, so students must check with their home institution to ensure they have not reached their time limit.

For students that have reach their time limit but have not completed their degree. They will need to file a petition with their home institution requesting an extension.

Research Advisory Committee: All admitted students must have a research advisory committee. The Research Advisory Committee is responsible for assisting students in choosing courses, research processes, and providing guidance on the policies and procedures in the program.

Master's students are required to have three members compose of the following:

- 1) Advisor – Faculty serve as the primary generally serve as chair for the thesis defense
- 2) 2 Additional Members: 1 of the 2 members should be a MEES faculty. Students can have non-MEES faculty be a part of the Research Advisory Committee, but they are classified as Special Members and must be nominated by the home institution prior to the thesis defense.

Initial Advisory Committee Meeting & Report: All newly admitted students must have an initial meeting with their research advisory committee by the end of the second semester. Once a meeting has been completed, student must submit the Initial Advisory Committee Meeting by September 30th following the meeting.

Annual Advisory Committee Meeting & Report: All students are required to have annual advisory committee meeting and submit and annual advisory committee report to the MEES Office by September 30th of each year.

Nomination of Committee Form: In the semester that the student plans to have their thesis defense, they must submit a Nomination of Committee form (varying form based on home

institutions) to their home institution to officially inform the institution of their defense date and the committee members.

Announcement of Thesis Defense: All students are required to adhere to the policy for announcing their thesis defense set forth by their home institution.

Report of the Examining Committee Form: This is the equivalent of the “grade sheet” for the student thesis defense. Committee members will only sign off on the form if they agree the student has passed. Students are responsible for checking with their home institutions on the number of signatures needed to pass.

Submission of the Thesis: Students are required to submit a copy of the thesis to the MEES Office as well as their home institution. The submission method varies by the home institution, so students should check with their home institution.

Doctoral of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree Requirements

The degree requirements of the Doctoral of Philosophy (Ph.D.) include coursework, research, and a dissertation defense. The policies and requirements for the Doctoral of Philosophy students provided in this handbook are program-specific and not institution-specific meaning all MEES regardless of your home institutions are expected to adhere to these policies and requirements. However, there may be additional policies and requirements that are specific to the student's home institution but are not listed in this book. It is the responsibility of the students to ensure that they meet the requirements set forth by their home institution in addition to the program's requirements provided. **Students must adhere to the requirements set forth by both the MEES Graduate Program and their home institution** to graduate with the doctoral degree.

The general coursework and research requirement for the program is listed below.

- 1) Coursework: 36 credits of coursework
 - 24 credits of coursework; minimum of 12 credits must be at the 600 level or higher
 - 12 credits of dissertation research credits: MEES899 (course code may vary by institutions)
 - Mandatory Core Foundation course
 - Earth & Ocean: MEES640
 - Ecological Systems: MEES660
 - Environmental Molecular Science & Technology: MEES680
 - Environment & Society: MEES620
 - Minimum of 3 Professional Development courses
 - MEES601(formerly MEES609A) – Required Professional Development course (Satisfy 1 of the 3 courses required)
 - 1 Issue Study Group
 - Elective courses approved by the student's advisory committee
- 2) Pre-liminary Dissertation Research Proposal
- 3) Examination
 - Comprehensive Exam
 - Must be completed by end of the 6th semester
 - Compose of both a written and oral portion
- 4) Dissertation Proposal Defense
 - Must be completed within 1 year of passing the comprehensive exam
- 5) Advanced to Candidacy
 - Must advance to candidacy within 5 years admission to the Ph.D. program
- 6) Dissertation Defense
- 7) Other Degree & Program Requirements

Coursework Requirements

Coursework & Credits: Students are required to complete a minimum of 36 credits which includes 24 credits of coursework and 12 credits of dissertation research credits. Of the 24 credits of coursework required, 12 credits must be at the 600 level and higher.

Doctoral students may petition for a maximum of 16 credits to be waived from their coursework if they have previously earned a master's degree and have the support and approval of their Research Advisory Committee. Please note that general credits previously earned without the completion of a master's degree cannot be used to waive the coursework. In addition, a student must have the Initial Advisory Committee Meeting and written support from their Research Advisory Committee before submitting the petition to the MEES Office.

Foundation Course: There are four core foundation courses (MEES620, MEES640, MEES660, and MEES680) that relates to the four disciplinary foundations in the program. Students are expected to take the core foundation course under their disciplinary foundation.

Professional Development Courses (MEES601): Professional Development courses are designed to provide students with the skills to transcribe scientific discoveries into communication products and productive interaction with the management & policy communities, the public, and scientists outside the field.

Students are required to complete three credits of Professional Development course. From the three courses required, MEES601(formerly MEES609A) is mandatory for all MEES students regardless of your foundation, home institution, and lab locations. Credits will be granted to students who have previously taken MEES609A. Professional Development courses beyond the required three courses can satisfy elective courses.

Issue Study Group: Issue Study Groups are courses that focus on current issues in environmental science and policy relevance to the current society. Students enrolled in the course can expect to collaboratively research, discuss, and synthesize information on a chosen topic and culminating in a public communication.

Students are required to complete one study issue group.

Elective Courses: Elective courses offer students the opportunity to focus their education on their specific research topic. Students and their advisory committee should choose courses that contributes to the student's research.

Non-MEES Courses: There are non-MEES courses that can satisfy certain MEES course requirement. Students must receive approval from their Research Advisory Committee prior to enrolling in non-MEES courses.

Dissertation Research Credits (MEES899): Students must enroll in the dissertation research credits following the completion of their coursework, approval of their research proposal by their advisory committee, completion of the comprehensive exam, completion of the dissertation

proposal defense, and advance to candidacy. Students are required to complete 12 credits of dissertation research credits (MEES899) under their advisor's section. Please note that course number and credits requirements may vary based on the student's home institution.

Pre-liminary Dissertation Research Proposal

A written statement detailing the research to be conducted needs to be submitted to the MEES Program Office upon approval from the student's Advisory Committee one year after entrance into the program. If vertebrate animals are to be used in the research, the animal use protocol should be approved prior to the research.

Comprehensive Examinations

Doctoral students are required to take the comprehensive examination. It is suggested that students take the exam in their full-time 4th semester of the program (after they have completed most coursework), but no later than by the end of their full-time 6th semester in the Ph.D. program.

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to determine whether the student demonstrates sufficient evidence of scholastic and intellectual ability in their chosen field of research, as well as an interdisciplinary breadth of knowledge characteristic of the MEES program, to continue working towards their MEES PhD degree. It cannot be a defense of the dissertation research proposal.

The comprehensive examination consists of both a written and an oral portion. The written portion is taken first, followed by the oral portion contingent on committee acceptance of the written portion answers. Both the written and oral portions of the comprehensive exam should be scheduled ahead of time, separated by at least two weeks but no more than six weeks, if possible.

The Research Advisory Committee is responsible for coordinating areas of examination, with each committee member providing written questions about different relevant disciplinary or interdisciplinary subjects; at least one committee member should ask interdisciplinary questions and all committee members are encouraged to do so. The student and each committee member should meet at least 4 weeks before the written exam to communicate about the subject, scope, and format of questions to be asked. Each committee member should indicate at that time whether their question(s) will be open or closed book and to what extent the use of technology is allowed. Committee members also may suggest reference materials if appropriate, but they should not provide specific exam questions to the student before the exam. Committee members should submit their questions to the student's advisor before the beginning of the written exam. The advisor will be responsible for collating the questions, administering the written exam, and sending student responses back to the committee members for grading.

Written Exam: The written portion of the comprehensive exam is usually taken on consecutive workdays. The total examination time should be at least three but not more than five workdays. Committees with more than five members should coordinate questioning to fit within

the five-day limit. The MEES office must be notified of dates and committee members at least two weeks prior to the written examination. The advisor should provide each day's questions to the student at the beginning of the day and collect their answers at the end of the day. Within one week of the end of the written exam, all committee members should inform the advisor whether the student's answers were acceptable to proceed to the oral examination. A copy of the compiled written exam questions, student answers, and committee responses must be provided to the MEES office. The student may ask for feedback from committee members.

To proceed to the oral exam, the student must receive, at minimum, four "accept" votes. If fewer than four "accept" votes are received, the student fails the written examination and cannot proceed to the oral examination. A student who fails the written examination may take it again within 1 year, but no sooner than 6 months after the initial examination.

Oral Exam: The oral examination is designed to probe in more detail the student's responses to the written examination, but other relevant topics may also be discussed. All members of the research advisory committee are required to attend the oral examination either in person or virtually. The advisor moderates questioning during the oral examination. The length of the oral examination may not exceed 3 hours. The research advisory committee should meet privately at the beginning of the oral examination to coordinate among themselves, and again at the end to determine whether the student's performance on the entire exam was satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

A minimum of four satisfactory votes are required for the student to pass. A MEES Report of Examination form must be signed by all committee members and filed with the MEES office within two weeks of the oral examination date. If a student fails only because of their performance in the oral portion of the examination, the committee may approve retaking the oral examination within 1 year.

Failure: If a student fails the comprehensive examination twice, matriculation in the MEES Ph.D. program will be canceled. In this circumstance, the student may appeal to the MEES Director, who will convene a committee of independent MEES full graduate faculty members to review the examination materials and decisions and make a final pass/fail decision.

Remote Participation: Remote participation for the comprehensive exam is permitted under substantial circumstances and requires a written request from the student and support from the Primary Advisor. The request must be submitted to the Graduate Director for approval at least two weeks before the defense. Students are not permitted to take the comprehensive exam from a non-participating institution, labs, facilities, locations, etc.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

The Dissertation Proposal Defense is an oral examination of the research proposal administered by the Research Advisory Committee. Students must supply the research advisory committee with a formal research proposal in which the following is detailed: background information, research progress to date (if any), specific objectives, and experimental design of the proposed research at least 2 weeks before the proposal defense.

The student passes if there are at least four affirmative votes. If failed, the student must re-defend the proposal within 1 year. A second failure will result in the cancellation of matriculation.

Advanced to Candidacy

Students must formally apply for Advancement to Candidacy through their home institution after the students have successfully completed both the Comprehensive Examinations and the Defense of the Dissertation Proposal. Students must advance to candidacy within 5 years of admission to the Ph.D. program

Dissertation Defense

An oral dissertation defense will be administered by the Research Advisory Committee in accordance with the Graduate School regulations from the students' home institution at the completion of the research project. Students must provide the Research Advisory Committee a copy of the thesis at least two weeks prior to the oral defense.

The Research Advisory Committee may conclude that the candidate has passed or failed. A student may be conditionally passed with the provision that minor changes in the thesis be made and approved by the Primary Advisor. A student who fails may at the discretion of the committee and with approval of the MEES Director and the appropriate Graduate School be permitted to stand a second defense after acting on suggestions for improvement of the thesis (collection of more data, use of different statistical analysis, rewriting of the discussion, etc.), at an appropriate time agree upon by the Primary Advisor.

Other Degree & Program Requirements

Registration: Students are expected to be registered for the Fall and Spring term whether they are part-time or full-time students. Please check with your home institutions for the registration policies for part-time and full-time students.

Program Time Limits: The program mandates that all full-time doctoral students must complete their degree within 7 years after admission and all part-time doctoral students must complete their degree within 9 years after admission. Each home institutions may also have additional institution-specific time limits, so students must check with their home institution to ensure they have not reached their time limit.

For students that have reach their time limit but have not completed their degree. They will need to file a petition with their home institution requesting an extension.

Research Advisory Committee: All admitted students must have a research advisory committee. The Research Advisory Committee is responsible for assisting students in choosing courses, research processes, and providing guidance on the policies and procedures in the program.

Doctoral students are required to have five members compose of the following:

- 1) Advisor – Faculty will generally serve as the Chair for the student’s dissertation defense.
- 2) 3 Additional Members: 1 of the 3 members should be a MEES faculty. Students can have non-MEES faculty be a part of the Research Advisory Committee, but they are classified as Special Members and must be nominated by the home institution prior to the thesis defense.
- 3) Dean’s Representative: The faculty represents the Graduate School and is responsible for ensuring that the dissertation defense follows the Graduate School policies. The Dean Representative can be a voting or non-voting member. If they are a non-voting member, the student will need to have 1 more voting member for a total of six members.

Initial Advisory Committee Meeting & Report: All newly admitted students must have an initial meeting with their research advisory committee by the end of the second semester. Once a meeting has been completed, student must submit the Initial Advisory Committee Meeting by September 30th following the meeting.

Annual Advisory Committee Meeting & Report: All students are required to have annual advisory committee meeting and submit an annual advisory committee report to the MEES Office by September 30th of each year.

Nomination of Committee Form: In the semester that the student plans to have their dissertation defense, they must submit a Nomination of Committee form (varying form based on home institutions) to their home institution to officially inform the institution their defense date and the committee members.

Announcement of Dissertation Defense: All students are required to adhere to the policy for announcing their dissertation defense set forth by their home institution.

Report of the Examining Committee Form: This is the equivalent of the “grade sheet” for the student thesis defense. Committee members will only sign-off on the form if they agree the student has passed. Students are responsible for checking with their home institutions on the number of signatures needed to pass.

Submission of the Dissertation: Students are required to submit a copy of the thesis to the MEES Office as well as their home institution. Submission method varies by home institution, so students should check with their home institution.

Inter-institutional Registration

The Inter-institutional enrollment program is a University System Maryland (USM) program that allows all qualifying students in the USM institutions to enroll in courses at other USM institutions while paying tuition at their home schools.

Most of the courses in MEES are officially hosted by the University of Maryland, College Park while being taught at an off-campus location. All MEES students that does not matriculate at UMCP or UMCES will enroll in MEES courses through the inter-institutional program.

Inter-institutional Registration Eligibility and Restrictions

- 1) Students must be enrolled in degree-seeking program
- 2) Students must have the approval of their Graduate Program Director for the course to count as resident credit
- 3) Registration for courses is on a space available basis.
- 4) Visiting students are expected to meet prerequisites or other criteria set by the host institutions.
- 5) Tuition and fees are paid at the home institution.
- 6) Students are responsible for paying the additional fees associated with certain courses (studio fees, lab fees, books, study materials, etc.).
- 7) Students are responsible for Special Permits, parking, and other fees at the host institution.
- 8) Students must comply with the host institution's registration periods and deadlines.
- 9) Continuing education courses cannot be taken through the inter-institutional registration program.

Registration Procedures

Non-UMCP/UMCES students from other USM institutions registering for courses host by UMCP

- 1) Student must contact the Inter-institutional Registration Coordinator at their home institution for information on registration procedure and complete the Application for Inter-Institutional Enrollment form. The enrollment form will be submitted to the home institution upon completion.
- 2) Student must contact the instructor and department at College Park to receive permission to enroll in courses that requires permission or approval before they can be registered for the course.
- 3) The student's home institution will register the student for a generic course (for billing and enrollment purposes at the home institution). A copy will be provided to the student to submit to UMCP for enrollment of the actual course. Registration of a generic course does not guarantee that student has been enrolled in the actual course at the UMCP institution.
- 4) UMCP registered student for the approved course on the first day of the classes for the semester.

- 5) Students must notify the Inter-institutional Coordinator at both their home institution and host institution if a course has been cancelled, or if the student wants to change or drop the course. Failure to notify the coordinator at both institutions could result in a failing grade assigned for the course.
- 6) Upon completion of the course the UMCP will send the earned grade to the home institution. The home institution will post the grade to the student record and update the course information on the transcript. The grade received will be used in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average.

UMCP/UMCES students registering for courses that are hosted at other USM institutions

- 1) Student must contact the Inter-institutional Registration Coordinator at UMCP for information on registration procedure and to complete the Application for Inter-Institutional Enrollment form. The enrollment form will be submitted to UMCP upon completion.
- 2) Student must contact the instructor and department at the host institution to receive permission to enroll in courses that requires permission or approval before they can be registered in the courses.
- 3) UMCP will register the student for a generic course (for billing and enrollment purposes at the home institution). A copy will be provided to the student to submit to the host institution for enrollment of the actual course. Registration of a generic course does not guarantee that student has been enrolled in the actual course at the host institution.
- 4) Registration date will adhere to the host institution's policies. The host institution will provide the student with the registration date of their institution.
- 5) Students must notify the Inter-institutional Coordinator at both their home institution and host institution if the course has been cancelled, or if the student wants to change or drop the course. Failure to notify the coordinator at both institutions could result in a failing grade assigned for the course.
- 6) Upon completion of the course, the host institution will send the earned grade to the UMCP. UMCP will post the grade to the student record and update the course information on the transcript. The grade received will be used in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average.

Research Assurances

All MEES students who plans to involve any of the three categories listed below are required to receive proper approval prior to starting their research.

Human Research

All research involving human subjects must receive approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the initiation of the research. The IRB ensures that the federal policies regarding human subjects for research are met.

Vertebrate Animals Research

All research involving vertebrates' animals or animals' protocol must receive approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) prior to the initiation of the research.

Hazardous Materials

All research involving hazardous materials, DNA/RNA recombinants must receive approval from the University Maryland Biosafety Committee.

MEES Graduate Student Affairs

MEES Email Subscriptions and ListServ

Since MEES students are not stationary in one single location, but spread across multiple campuses, communication becomes a strong commodity to the MEES program. Email is the primary method use in the MEES Program for faculty, staff, the MEES Graduate Student Organization, and fellow MEES students to stay connected and stay on top of important policies, deadlines, funds opportunities, job opportunities, academic events, and students 'events.

All MEES Students should subscribed to the MEES email subscription and listserv and ensure that all contact information is up to date.

Graduate Student Organization (GSO)

All students working toward an M.S. or Ph.D. in the Marine, Estuarine and Environmental Science (MEES) graduate program are members of the Graduate Student Organization (GSO), as well as faculty and administration who chose to take part.

You can reach your GSO representatives via email: mees-gso@umd.edu. Please include your campus location in your email.

Purpose

GSO serves as the legitimate voice of the MEES student body, and to direct student input on issues concerning the MEES program to the appropriate administrative levels; provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, concerns, and information among graduate students and between students and faculty with the hope of establishing a comfortable productive academic environment.

Goals

- 1) Explore ways by which the MEES Program can become stronger and more cohesive as a program, through curriculum requirements, course offerings and inter-campus relations.
- 2) Improve communication among graduate students, faculty and administration; become directly involved with the committees and groups affecting the MEES Program (i.e. the MEES Program committee, the UMCES graduate faculty committee and the MEES program office).
- 3) Offer skill development in areas that will benefit the academic and professional careers of graduate students.
- 4) Provide an informal area where proposals, talks and research ideas may be presented, discussed, and critiqued; discuss current research topics in diverse biological fields.
- 5) Provide new student orientation.

Activities

- 1) Organization and sponsorship of a skill development seminar/workshop series on various topics designed to help graduates further their professional careers
- 2) Organization and sponsorship of annual poster sessions and oral presentations where graduate students present their current research at the MEES Colloquium
- 3) Sponsorship of graduate student travel awards designed to help supplement registration and travel costs for graduate students to present their research at scientific meetings
- 4) Sponsorship of social events to increase camaraderie among graduate students

MEES Colloquium

Each year students and faculty from all the campuses affiliated with the MEES Program gather in one location for a weekend to hold a Colloquium. The two-day event features student presentations and posters, guest talks, and social events. The Colloquium is a good place for students to present their research in a familiar environment as well as to find out what other students in the MEES Program are doing.

First year students are strongly encouraged to attend this event. Third- and Fifth-year students are required to participate in the colloquium.

