



# Graduate Student Handbook

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[www.marine.usf.edu/students/student-handbook](http://www.marine.usf.edu/students/student-handbook)

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## Key Policies and Information

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### 1) Overview

The College of Marine Science (CMS) Student Handbook contains policies, requirements, and information specific to the College of Marine Science. Selected key policies from the University of South Florida (USF) Graduate Catalog are also included. Please be aware that the requirements and policies listed in the Graduate Catalog describe the minimum standards of the university, however, the College of Marine Science may have additional and more specific requirements and policies. These requirements and policies are outlined in the CMS Student Handbook and must be adhered to in order to earn the Master's or Ph.D. degree in Marine Science. Each year the CMS handbook is updated as needed.

CMS Student Handbook Website

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/students/student-handbook>

### 2) USF Graduate Catalog

The Graduate Catalog includes all policies, requirements, procedures, programs and course descriptions in effect at the time of publication. The Graduate Catalog is applicable to students admitted to a graduate degree program or graduate certificate, and/or non-degree seeking students taking graduate coursework. The Graduate Catalog is an online publication available on the Office of Graduate Studies website. USF reserves the right to repeal, change, or modify the policies, procedures, programs, and course descriptions at any time.

Graduate Catalog Website

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/catalog.php>

Graduate Policies and Procedures

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

### 3) Catalog of Choice

In order to graduate, students must meet all requirements specified in the Graduate Catalog of their choice, except as noted below. The University is dynamic, thus changes and updates to the catalog are anticipated. In contract to program requirements, which are tied to a specific catalog, **all students must comply with University policies and procedures that come into effect each catalog year.**

- Students cannot choose a USF Catalog published prior to admission (or readmission if reinstated) or during an academic year in which they did not complete at least two terms. If a student is dropped from the system and must be reinstated, the student's choice of Catalog is limited to the one in effect at the time of reinstatement/readmission or during their continuous re-enrollment.
- If state law or certification requirements change, the student must comply with the most current standard or criteria.
- If the College or Department makes fundamental changes to the program that necessitates changes in the degree requirements of enrolled students, the needs of those students will be explicitly addressed in the proposal for change and scrutinized by the Office of Graduate Studies prior to acceptance and online posting within the USF Graduate Catalog.

- USF policies and procedures not related to degree requirements, such as academic grievance procedures, student conduct code, and other procedural processes and definitions, may be updated each year. The student will be held to the most current catalog and procedures available.
- USF may not be able to offer all the courses, programs, and majors listed in the Catalog. If the student cannot meet all of the graduation requirements specified in the Catalog as a result of decisions and changes made by the University (or College), appropriate substitutions will be determined by the program to ensure that the student is not penalized.

#### **4) University Degree Requirements**

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For detailed degree requirements for the Master's and Ph.D. programs, please visit the "University Degree Requirements" section of the Graduate Catalog.  
<http://www.grad.usf.edu/catalog.php>.

#### **5) Forms**

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There are several forms required to be submitted to the CMS Academic Affairs Office during various stages of your program. The program checklists (available in the back of this handbook) explain how and when to submit these forms, which can be found on the CMS Graduate Programs website.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/education/current-students/forms/>

#### **6) Major Professor(s) (usually original advisor)**

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Before entering the College of Marine Science, each student is assigned a faculty advisor or Major Professor. By the end of the second semester, the student should choose a plan of advanced study, an area of research, and a major professor (usually the original advisor). The major professor must be a CMS graduate faculty member with qualifications appropriate to the required level of supervision. In special cases, a co-advisor from outside CMS may be chosen to help direct a student, however, a co-advisor from within CMS must also be utilized. If a major professor cannot be identified or in the event a major professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another major professor. Students who are unable to find a replacement major professor should confer with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, for available options. If no other options exist, the student will be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program.

#### **7) Advisory Committee Requirements**

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Each student is responsible to form a Master's or Ph.D. Advisory Committee. The advisory committee is generally formed before or during the second year of study. The student is required to submit the Advisory Committee Appointment form to the CMS Academic Affairs office for approval in order to officially form their committee. The Committee Appointment form is available on the CMS Graduate Programs forms website.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/education/current-students/forms/>

##### Master's Committee

The Master's Committee consists of the major professor and at least two other members of CMS or an area/institution related to that in which the degree is sought. At least one of the additional two members must be a professor from CMS. Members are chosen by the student

and the major professor and must be approved by the Marine Science Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. All members of the committee must sign the Graduate Student Advisory Committee Appointment form. In addition, a CV must be included for any member who is not from within USF. Once a committee is appointed, the student should formulate a plan for the remainder of their Master's program. This plan is called a thesis proposal and should be presented to the committee for their approval soon after the committee is appointed.

#### Ph.D. Committee

The Ph.D. Committee consists of five members, at least three of whom must be professors from CMS. At least one member must be from a science department, agency, or program outside CMS (NOTE: Although the USF Office of Graduate Studies only requires four members to serve on a student's dissertation committee, CMS still requires five members to serve on the committee). A sixth member may be added for additional expertise. The committee must be appointed before the candidacy examination is taken. Members are chosen by the student and the major professor and must be approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. All members of the committee must sign the Graduate Student Advisory Committee Appointment form. In addition, a CV must be included for any member who is not from within USF. Once a committee is appointed, the student should formulate a plan for the remainder of their Ph.D. program. This plan is called a dissertation proposal and should be presented to the committee for their approval soon after the committee is appointed.

#### Changing a Committee Member

If for some reason a student wants to change a member of their committee, the student must complete the Change of Committee form. The form requires signatures of the co/major professors, added members, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. This form can be found on the CMS forms website.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/education/current-students/forms/>

### **8) Annual Progress Reports**

The College requires each student to complete a Progress Report after each academic year to document their progress towards their degree. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will distribute this form to the students and their major professors in August for completion by October 15<sup>th</sup>. All students are required to complete an Annual Progress Report. An Academic Hold will be placed on the student's account if one is not submitted by the deadline, which will prevent subsequent registration and graduation until the hold is removed. These annual progress reports are used in the Faculty Annual Reviews. Students, who are not making benchmarks by the provided timeline, will be asked for a revised timeline they anticipate making their remaining benchmarks.



## 9) Comprehensive Exams – *PhD Degree Only*

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**The comprehensive exams are a two-stage process described below.**

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All CMS Doctoral students are required to successfully complete a comprehensive examination before applying for Admission to Doctoral Candidacy. Students must be enrolled in at least 2 graduate credit hours during the semester they take the comprehensive exams. These two exams are called the Integrated Marine Science Exam (IMSE) and the Ph.D. Candidacy Exam (PCE), respectively.

- **The Integrated Marine Science Exam (IMSE):** The IMSE administered early each Fall semester (in just before the start of the Fall semester). The exam aims to judge a student's ability, upon successful completion of the four core classes (B- or better), to integrate the concepts covered in these classes. The emphasis of the exam is not to repeat the disciplinary questions that may have been asked during the core classes, but to examine a student's ability to use critical and logical thinking to derive coherent interdisciplinary answers to basic ocean science questions. Answers should include facts and explanatory reasoning.

Every year, eligible students will take the same IMSE exam at the same time. Questions will be determined, provided, and graded by an IMSE committee of eight faculty members, two from each core discipline, appointed by the Dean. The IMSE committee will be a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee, with half of the committee (one from each discipline) rotating off each year. All PhD seeking students are expected to take the IMSE exam directly after passing their last core class, and no later than the beginning of their third year. PhD students must receive formal approval from the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and their major advisor to delay taking the IMSE. MS students who anticipate continuing for the PhD degree may take this exam to fulfill the IMSE requirement as long as they enter the PhD program within 7 years of passing the exam.

The IMSE is a 4-hour written exam, which may be followed by an oral exam if a student performs marginally on the written exam. There are three grades of the written exam: Satisfactory, Marginal, and Unsatisfactory. Students will know the grades of the written exam no later than early October. Students who receive grades of Unsatisfactory are not allowed to take the oral exam but will be required to take the IMSE again the following year. Students who receive grades of Marginal may choose to take the oral exam in early November, or retake the written exam in the following year. For the students taking the oral exam, the Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory grades of the IMSE exam will be based entirely on the outcome of their oral exam. The questions in the oral exam will be broadly related to those from the previous written exam.

If a student receives an Unsatisfactory grade, the student has a second chance to pass the exam in the following year. If a student receives an Unsatisfactory grade twice, the student may not proceed in (or enter) the Marine Science PhD program.

- **PhD Candidacy Exam (PCE):** After passing the IMSE, students are expected to have their research proposal approved by their dissertation committee and then take and pass a PCE administered by the dissertation committee. Students are required to take the PCE no later than the start of their fourth year. A student who fails the first PCE must re-take it within a year and pass it in order to become a PhD candidate. The PCE is meant to test the students' in-depth knowledge in the natural sciences with emphasis on ocean

science, their area of concentration, and their area of dissertation research. The PCE is also meant to identify gaps in students' knowledge and evaluate their abilities to reason and support their answers to questions posed by their dissertation committees. Students should meet with their dissertation committee members prior to the exam and review exam expectations.

The PCE must consist of a 2-4 hour oral exam, with an optional written exam of no more than 10 hours over one week (which could be prior to or after the oral exam) at the discretion of the student's major advisor.

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## Frequently Asked Questions regarding the IMSE

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- **When is the exam given?**

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It will be offered in August near the start of the fall semester.

- **Are the full bank of questions available to students for studying purposes?**

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No, however, the questions will draw from material from all four core courses in Biological, Chemical, Geological, and Chemical Oceanography. The answers should attempt to integrate the concepts taught in as many of those courses as possible. Questions from previous exams are released for studying purposes.

- **What happens if I do not pass the first time?**

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If a PhD student receives a marginal grade for the written portion, the faculty examining committee will follow up with an oral exam at sometime within the fall semester after the written exam (normally early November). If the PhD student does not pass the oral exam, they have the option to take the IMSE once more the following year or to complete a Master's degree if they do not already have one. If the student does not pass the IMSE on their second attempt, and if they have a Master's degree, then the student must withdraw from the program by the end of the Fall semester that they took the exam. All students PhD or MS only have two attempts. If the student passes while a MS student, the student does not need to retake the exam after entering the PhD program.

- **What is the process for being dismissed from the College in regards to this exam?**

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Students will be asked to voluntarily withdraw from the program. Otherwise, they will be dropped from the program.

- **What is the required grade for passing the IMSE?**

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The exam is not graded. The student will either earn a satisfactory, a marginal with a follow-up oral exam, or an unsatisfactory outcome.

- **How is the IMSE graded?**

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By the examining faculty committee, using a systematic list of answers sought, and discussion of the student's reasoning and problem solving approach.

- **How should I prepare? It will be two years since I had biology. Is there a process you think that would lend itself to preparing for this exam?**

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Review the core courses, and consider reviewing an undergraduate textbook(s) in oceanography, marine biology, etc. Studying with other students is encouraged and has proven helpful.

- **What is the purpose of this exam?**

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To avoid having a PhD student spend three or more years in the program to discover they are not prepared or able to pursue a PhD.

## **10) Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

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### **For the Ph.D. Degree only.**

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In order to be admitted to doctoral candidacy, students must meet the following requirements.

1. Admission to the Doctoral Program.
2. Appointment of a Doctoral Committee.
3. Attainment of an overall and degree program Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 or better at USF at the time of candidacy. All "I" and "M" grades must be cleared before candidacy may be finalized.
4. Completion of the Integrated Marine Science Exam and the Ph.D. Candidacy Exam.
5. Completion and approval of their Dissertation Proposal.
6. Certification by the Doctoral Committee that the above requirements have been successfully completed.

#### Applying for Admission to Candidacy [for the Ph.D. Degree only]

The Admission to Candidacy form (*found on the Office of Graduate Studies Website Forms page and the CMS Graduate Program Forms page*) should be submitted for approval during the semester that the comprehensive exams were completed, but no later than the semester following the successful completion of the exam. The form will be approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies for final approval. Doctoral Candidacy is effective when the Office of Graduate Studies approves the request and changes the student's status to 6C. For procedures and processing deadlines refer to the Office of Graduate Studies website.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu>

Once candidacy status is approved, the student is eligible to enroll in dissertation hours (OCE 7980) in the semester that immediately follows the last business day of the approval window. For example, a student approved during the fall approval window may enroll in the spring. A student approved during the spring approval window may enroll in the summer and students approved during the summer approval window may enroll in the fall. Students may not enroll in dissertation hours prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy.



The College of Marine Science requires at least 16 dissertation hours for completion of the degree. The College of Marine Science, with approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, may apply Directed Research hours toward the total number of dissertation hours required. Directed Research hours shall not exceed 50% of the dissertation hour requirement (i.e., not exceed 8 hours). No directed research hours will be converted to dissertation hours (i.e., a directed research course dropped and a dissertation course added) prior to or during the approval window. For more information refer to Enrollment Requirements in the Academic Policies section of the Graduate Catalog.

## **11) Application to Graduate**

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Students who plan to graduate must complete and submit their Graduation Application form online. Please give yourself an earlier deadline to address any potential obstacles. When you are ready to begin the survey and apply, login into *OASIS* using your Net ID and self-assigned password, then click on the **Student** menu and select **Apply for Graduation**. This application must be submitted in the term of expected graduation by the deadline noted on form. If a student applies for graduation and is not approved, a new Graduate Degree Graduation Application must be submitted by the deadline in a new term. In order for the degree statement to appear on a student's academic record, the student must file the aforementioned application whether or not participation in the commencement ceremony is desired. Inquiries concerning approval or denial of graduation should be made to the CMS Academic Affairs Office. It is the student's responsibility to clear all "I" (Incomplete) and "M" (Missing) grades in all courses and to provide official transcripts of all transferred course work needed for graduation at least three weeks prior to the end of the term in which the student expects to graduate.

## **12) Sufficiency Meeting**

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The student's committee must come to agreement, after reading the thesis or dissertation, that the student is ready and prepared to defend their research project. The committee should be given at least two weeks to read the thesis or dissertation. During this meeting, the student should have each committee member sign off on the Request to Defend form. Normally, this meeting will be held in one room, but remote options (i.e., teleconference or by email) are acceptable. Following a successful sufficiency meeting outcome, the student must provide at least two weeks public notice before the Defense can take place, except for under extenuating circumstances approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

### **13) Defense**

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The oral Defense should be conducted to allow for the student to make any necessary corrections following the defense and still meet the final copy deadline for turning in the thesis/dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies (i.e., the ETD deadline). All members of the Committee must be present for the examination unless an absence is approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs under extenuating circumstances. The Defense is open to the public and as such, must meet the requirements of the Sunshine Laws for the State of Florida. The defense presentation is followed by questions from the public audience. Then there is a short break after which the committee asks additional questions. The public is welcome to observe but not participate during the committee questioning. After questioning, the student and public are asked to leave. The committee then discusses the defense and votes. The student is informed of the outcome and is provided a summary of changes that are needed for the ETD. As a general rule, the defense should occur at least one week before the ETD deadline.

### **14) Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Resource Center**

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Each student is required to submit their completed written Thesis or Dissertation electronically to the Office of Graduate Studies. The ETD Resource Center contains all of the requirements, instructions, and information regarding your final electronic submission [for example: tutorials about the ETD process, review of ETD deadlines, description of the ETD Workshops (each student is required to attend one of these workshops before graduation) and Boot Camps, ETD registration and submission requirements, and the student, advisor and Office of Graduate Studies responsibilities]. Each student is encouraged to visit the ETD resource center at least 1-2 semesters before they plan to graduate in order to be aware of and meet the requirements of this process. ETD Resource Center website.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>.

### **15) Commencement**

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Graduate students may not participate in commencement exercises until all requirements for the degree sought have been fulfilled. Students graduating from programs based from the Tampa campus (including CMS) participate in commencement exercises on the Tampa campus at the Sun Dome, usually at 6 pm on the Saturday following the last day of finals during that semester. All doctoral graduates receive degree conferral from the Tampa campus and are hooded by their major advisor or a selected faculty member during the commencement exercises in Tampa. More information on graduation through the Tampa campus can be found at the following website.

<http://usfweb2.usf.edu/commencement/>

### **16) Diplomas**

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Diplomas are mailed to the student's permanent address approximately six (6) weeks after commencement. Students with a change of address need to fill out a change of address form at the Registrar's office in Tampa and update this information on Oasis. Questions regarding diplomas and degree certification should be directed to the Registrar's office at 974-2000. If an earlier confirmation of degree completion is needed (e.g., for a job application) contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

## 17) Academic Standards and Grades

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### In Good Standing

To be considered a student in good standing, graduate students must maintain an overall minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in all courses taken as a graduate student, and maintain an overall minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in all courses taken in the student's degree-seeking program. No grade of C- or below will be accepted toward a graduate degree. Students must meet the requirements to be in good standing to graduate. A student will not be certified to graduate if an IF or MF is on the transcript, unless the student requests to "accept" the IF or MF grade and the request is signed and approved by the student, program, college and Office of Graduate Studies. IF or MF grades that are "accepted" may never be changed.

### Core Course Grading

Core courses required for the College of Marine Science must be completed with at least a B- to be accepted toward degree, otherwise, the course will need to be retaken. If the student does not pass a core course with a B- or better the second time, the student will be asked to voluntarily withdraw from the College unless a petition is submitted by the student explaining the extenuating circumstances and is approved by the major advisor and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. If neither action is taken, the student will be dismissed from the program if they do not voluntarily withdraw from the program.

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

The GPA is computed by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of graded (A-F) hours completed. The total quality points are figured by multiplying the number of credits assigned to each course by the quality point value of the grade given. The GPA is truncated to two decimals (3.48) and is not rounded up. Credit hours for courses with grades of I, IU, M, MU, N, S, U, Q and grades which are preceded by T (Transfer) are subtracted from the total hours attempted before the GPA is calculated. Graduate students are not eligible for grade forgiveness. All grades earned, regardless of course level, will be posted on the transcript. If a student retakes a course, both grades will be used in the determination of the GPA. Courses taken at USF as non-degree-seeking are not computed in the GPA unless the courses are transferred in and applied to the degree requirements. The program and the college must approve such actions. *Grades for transfer credits accepted toward the degree program will not be counted in the GPA unless the coursework in question was taken as a non-degree-seeking student at USF and meets the requirements stated in the Institution Based Credit/Transfer of Credit section at the website below.*

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/catalog.php>

### Graduate Grading System Plus/Minus Grading:

Effective fall semester 2000, graduate and undergraduate grades will be assigned quality points in the Grade Point Average (GPA) grading system. If used, the +/- designation must be stated in the syllabus provided at the beginning of the course. The use of the +/- grading system is at the discretion of the instructor. The syllabus policy is available in the Office of the Provost. If not stated in the syllabus, the default will be standard A-F grading for any formal course.

#### Letter grade and number of grade points

A+	4.00	B+	3.33	C+	2.33	D+	1.33	F	0.00
A	4.00	B	3.00	C	2.00	D	1.00		
A-	3.67	B-	2.67	C-	1.67	D-	0.67		

FF	Failure due to academic dishonesty
I	Incomplete, grade points not applicable (types of I–grades: I, IA, IB, IC, ID, IF)
M	Missing grade/no grade reported by instructor, grade points not applicable
MF	Missing grade changed to F, 0.00 grade points
MU	Missing grade changed to U, grade points not applicable
N	Audit, grade points not applicable
S/U	Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, grade points not applicable
W	Withdrawal or drop from course without penalty, grade points not applicable
Z	Continuing registration in multi-semester internship or Thesis/Dissertation courses, grade points not applicable

#### Satisfactory (S) / Unsatisfactory (U)

Graduate students may not take courses in the major on an S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory) basis unless courses are specifically designated S/U in the Catalog. Students may take courses outside of the major on a S/U basis with prior approval of the course professor, major professor or advisor, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The student may apply a maximum of six (6) hours of such credit (excluding those courses for which S/U is designated in the Catalog) toward a master's degree. Directed Research, Thesis, and Dissertation courses are designated as variable credit and are graded on an S/U basis only. Before a student begins work under Directed Research, a written agreement must be completed between the student and the professor concerned, setting forth in detail the requirements of the course.

#### Incomplete (I)

An Incomplete grade ("I") is exceptional and granted at the instructor's discretion only when students are unable to complete course requirements due to illness or other circumstances beyond their control. This applies to all gradable courses, including pass/fail (S/U).

Students may only be eligible for an "I" when:

- majority of the student's work for a course has been completed before the end of the semester
- the work that has been completed must be qualitatively satisfactory
- the student has requested consideration for an "I" grade as soon as possible but no later than the last day of finals week. The instructor is allowed, but not required, to advocate this option.

The student must request consideration for an Incomplete grade from the instructor of record. Even though the student may meet the eligibility requirements for this grade, the course instructor retains the right to make the final decision on granting a student's request for an Incomplete. The course instructor must complete the "I" Grade Contract on Canvas that describes the work to be completed, the date it is due, and the grade the student would earn factoring in a zero for all incomplete assignments. The due date can be negotiated and extended by student/instructor as long as it does not exceed one semester from the original date grades were due for that course. The instructor must not require students to either re-register for the course or audit the course in order to complete the "I" grade. Students may register to audit the course, with the instructor's approval, but cannot re-take the course for credit until the I

grade is cleared. An “I” grade not cleared within the next academic semester (including summer semester) will revert to the grade noted on the Canvas “I” Contract. I grades are not computed in the GPA, but the grade noted on the contract will be computed in the GPA, retroactive to the semester the course was taken, if the Canvas contract is not fulfilled by the specified date. When the final grade is assigned, if applicable, the student will be placed on academic probation or academically dismissed (refer to Automated Academic Probation Procedures for information) if it causes their GPA to drop or remain below a 3.0. Students cannot be admitted to doctoral candidacy or certified for graduation with an “I” grade.

For complete information please refer to the I Grade Policy and Procedures and Incomplete Grade Contract section of the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website.  
<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

#### Missing (M)

The University policy is to issue an “M” grade automatically when the instructor does not submit any grade for a graduate student (undergraduate rules apply to undergraduate and non-degree-seeking students). Until it is removed, the “M” is not computed in the GPA. An “M” grade which is not cleared within the next academic semester (including summer semester) will be converted to “MF” or “MU,” whichever is appropriate. “MF” grades are calculated in the GPA and if applicable, the student will be placed on academic probation or academically dismissed. To resolve the missing grade, students receiving an “M” grade must contact their instructor. If the instructor is not available, the student must contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Students cannot be admitted to doctoral candidacy or certified for graduation with an “M” grade.

#### Continuing Registration Grades (Z)

The “Z” grade shall be used to indicate continuing registration in multi-semester internship or Thesis or dissertation courses where the final grade to be assigned will indicate the complete sequence of courses or satisfactory completion of the thesis or dissertation. Upon satisfactory completion of a multi-semester internship or thesis or dissertation, the final grade assigned will be an “S.” The Office of Graduate Studies submits the change of grade for the last registration of thesis or dissertation courses once the thesis or dissertation has been accepted for publication. Note: Graduation will not be certified until all courses have been satisfactorily completed. No grade changes will be processed after the student has graduated except in the case of university error. Procedures requiring petitions are processed through the Office of Graduate Studies.

#### Probation

Any student who is not in good standing at the end of a semester shall be considered on probation as of the following semester. The College may also place students on probation for other reasons as designated by the College. Notification of probation shall be made to the student in writing by the Office of Graduate Studies and/or by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. At the end of each probationary semester, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs shall recommend, in writing, to the student one of the following:

1. Removal of probation
2. Continued probation; OR
3. Dismissal from the degree program.

Students with a GPA below 3.00 for two consecutive semesters will be prevented from registering for courses without the permission of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will notify the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies in cases of academic dismissal. To be readmitted, the student will need to reapply for admission, meeting the admission criteria in place at the time.

For complete information please refer to the Academic Probation section of the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>.

#### Voluntary Withdrawal

A student may withdraw from the university without grade penalty by the University deadline. Information on the different types of withdrawal (i.e., withdrawing from a single class – see the Drop section, an entire semester, or from the degree program itself) can be obtained from the Registrar's Office. Appropriate alternative calendar dates may apply. Students who withdraw may not continue to attend classes during the semester that is noted on the withdrawal request.

### **18) Student Rights and Responsibilities**

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The University of South Florida is a learning community designed to foster collaboration, open communication, mutual respect, and inclusiveness among students, faculty, and staff as they engage in the education process. As members of this community, all students are entitled to certain rights and privileges, which are protected. In order to protect the rights and privileges of all students, there are guidelines for conduct that are intended to facilitate the desired environment and educational goals of the University and its students. It is important that each student become familiar with the rights and responsibilities afforded students at the university. For complete information, please visit the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities' website (*Refer to the main menu item – "Student Code of Conduct"*).

<http://www.sa.usf.edu/srr>

In addition to and in alignment with the University's Code of Conduct, all members of the College of Marine Science community are afforded the rights and held to the responsibilities outline in the *Student-Faculty-Staff Rights and Responsibilities at the University of South Florida College of Marine Science*. This document is included at the end of this *Handbook*.

### **19) Student Conduct**

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Students are responsible for compliance with all public laws as well as university rules and regulations. Students accused of a crime may be prosecuted under the appropriate jurisdiction and also disciplined under the Student Code of Conduct. The University may pursue disciplinary action even if criminal justice authorities choose not to prosecute, and it may also act independently of the criminal judicial process. Any member of the University community may file charges against a student for an alleged violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Such charges should be filed in writing with the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities also reserves the right to initiate or follow-up any investigative leads where there is reasonable belief of possible violations of the Student Code of Conduct. For complete information, please visit the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities' website.

<http://www.sa.usf.edu/srr/>



## **20) Academic Integrity of Students**

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Review the full regulation online for complete information. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, forgery and obstruction, multiple submissions of the same work for credit, misconduct in research and creative endeavors, and computer misuse. The full policy is available on the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website, Academic Policies, Section 7.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

## **21) Disruption of Academic Process**

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Review the full regulation online for complete information. Defined as the act, words, or general conduct of a student in a classroom or other academic environment that directs attention away from the academic matters at hand or presents a danger to the health, safety, or well-being of self or other persons. For example, noisy distractions, persistent, disrespectful or abusive interruption of lecture, exam, academic discussion, or general University operations. The full policy is available on the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website, Academic Policies, Section 7.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

## **22) Academic Grievance Procedures**

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An “academic grievance” is a claim that a specific academic decision or action that affects that student’s academic record or status has violated published policies and procedures, or has been applied to the grievant in a manner different from that used for other students. Grievances may relate to such decisions as the assignment of a grade seen by the student as incorrect or the dismissal or failure of a student for his or her action(s). Academic grievances will not deal with general student complaints. The Academic Grievance Procedures are to be used for academic situations and not for situations of Disruption of Academic Process. It is important to remember that resolution of the grievance must take place first within the College of Marine Science and move on further to the Office of Graduate Studies only if resolution has not been achieved at the lower level. The full policy is available on the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website, Academic Policies, Section 7.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>.

## **23) Parking Information and Campus Maps**

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For information on USF Parking Services, policies, and regulations, refer to USF Parking and Transportation Services:

- Tampa: <http://www.usf.edu/administrative-services/parking/>
- St. Petersburg: <http://www.usfsp.edu/administrative-and-financial-services/parking-transportation/>

Campus maps

- Tampa: <http://www.usf.edu/administrative-services/parking/documents/visitormap.pdf>
- St. Petersburg: <https://www.usfsp.edu/root/files/2012/01/CAMPUSMAP300.pdf>

## **24) Student Identification Card (USFCard) Policy**

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University policy requires all students obtain and carry the USFCard while on campus. To obtain an USFCard visit the following website. <http://www.nelson.usf.edu/im/studentids.html>

## **25) Courses Offered and Registration Information**

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### Course Offerings:

To view the current schedule of courses and their descriptions, please visit the following website.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/students/courses-offered>

### Registering for Classes:

To register for classes, students must login to MyUSF and select the OASIS option under the “My Resources” tab.

<http://my.usf.edu>

### Required Immunization Health History Forms

Student Health Services (SHS) requires the USF Immunization Health History Form for evaluating and maintaining medical requirements for registration for all University of South Florida students. Please contact the Immunization Compliance Office at 813-974-4056 or visit the SHS website for more information.

<http://www.shs.usf.edu/immunizations/immunization-compliance.aspx>

### Registration and Tuition Payment Deadlines:

Degree-seeking students who do not register prior to the first day of classes may “late-register” during the first week of classes. A late registration fee is charged during this week. To avoid cancellation of registration, fees and tuition are due and payable for all registered courses of record on the fifth day of classes (end of drop/add period). Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of their course registration by the end of the drop/add period (i.e., by the fifth day of classes). In the event there are courses incorrectly listed or missing on the record, students should go into OASIS and make the necessary corrections. Course registration not corrected by the end of the fifth day of classes will result in liability of tuition and fees. If courses need to be added or dropped after the fifth day of classes, refer to the add/drop sections of the Graduate Catalog. Note, graduate research and teaching assistants will have a 9 week deferment to pay tuition fees.

For complete information please refer to the Registration and General Information section of the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

Additional information on all registration requirements, procedures, and schedule of classes may be at the Registrar’s Office website.

<http://www.registrar.usf.edu/index.php>

## **26) Dropping a Course**

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Students are responsible for dropping a course if they do not wish to continue enrollment for that course. A student may drop a course(s) during the following times:

1. During regular registration and the add/drop periods (first five days of classes). No entry of the course(s) will appear on any permanent academic records and full refund of fees is due for course(s) dropped within those periods.

2. Between the second and tenth week of the semester (except for summer sessions – see the Summer Schedule of Classes for dates). Registration fees and tuition must be paid for the course(s) and the academic record will reflect a “W” grade for the dropped course(s).
3. Following the tenth week deadline if the request meets one of the following exceptions:
  - a) Illness of the student of such severity or duration to preclude completion of the course(s) as confirmed in writing by a physician (M.D.).
  - b) Death of the student or death in the immediate family (parent, spouse, child or sibling) as confirmed by documentation (death certificate, obituary) indicating the student’s relationship to the deceased.
  - c) Involuntary call to active military duty as confirmed by military orders.
  - d) A situation in which the University is in error as confirmed by an appropriate University official.
  - e) Other documented exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the student which precluded completion of the course(s) accompanied by explanatory letter and supporting documentation. Courses may not be dropped after the last day of classes except in cases of University Administrative error.

Effective Fall 2016, all graduate students will be limited to a total of two course withdrawals while enrolled as a degree-seeking or a non-degree seeking taking graduate courses at USF. Only in extenuating circumstances will approval be granted for more than two course withdrawals. Appeals for additional course withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies via the Graduate Petition process.

For complete information please refer to the Registration and General Information - Adds, Drops, Deletes, Fee Adjustments, Retroactive Actions section of the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures website.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

## **27) Tuition Information**

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### Tuition and Fees

All tuition and fees are subject to change, without prior notice. For current tuition and fees information please visit the Cash Accounting website:

<http://www.usf.edu/business-finance/controller/student-services/tuition-rates.aspx>

### Residency for tuition purposes

Please refer to the “Residency Policy” on the Policies and Procedures website on the Office of Graduate Studies web site.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

### To view tuition charges and account balance:

To confirm the total amount of tuition due or check your account balance, you can view your fees in OASIS under the “Tuition, Fees & Payment” tab. To access your fee information via the web, login to OASIS, click on Tuition, Fees and Payments and View My Account Summary by Term. Please note that once you have paid your fees, your fee amount shown on the web will reflect your payment (i.e., if you have paid the entire amount, you will see the \$0.00 is due). If you wish to only view your tuition charges for a specific semester go to View My Fee Assessment. Payments and charges other than tuition are not reflected on the fee assessment.

#### Paying your tuition:

You will not receive a bill for your tuition. Tuition is due on the 5th day of each term (semester). Payments can be made online at the OASIS website, <http://usfonline.admin.usf.edu/> by credit/debit card or eCheck. A \$10.00 fee is assessed for payments made with any bank card. There is no charge for paying by eCheck. Payments can also be made using checks or money orders. Visit the Cashier's website for information about paying tuition.

<http://usfweb2.usf.edu/uco/cashiers/payinfo.asp>

## **28) Enrollment Requirements**

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### **Minimum University Regulations**

#### Continuous Enrollment for All Graduate Students (except for Doctoral Candidates)

All graduate degree-seeking students must be continuously enrolled. Continuous enrollment is defined as completing, with grades assigned, a minimum of 6 hours of graduate credit every three continuous semesters (i.e. two (2) hours Spring/ two (2) Summer/ two (2) Fall; OR, three (3) Fall/ zero (0) spring/ three (3) Summer; OR six (6) Fall/ zero (0) Spring/ zero (0) Summer; etc.). Students on an approved leave of absence are not subject to the enrollment requirement for the time approved for the leave. See also the Time Limitations Policy in the Graduate Catalog.

#### USF Full-Time Student Definition

Students taking nine (9) or more hours toward their degree in the fall or spring semester, or taking six (6) or more hours in the summer semester, will be classified as Full-Time students for academic purposes. All Graduate Assistants and Fellows are required to be full-time each semester.

#### Financial Aid Requirements

More hours may be required for financial aid reasons. For financial aid requirements, contact the Office of Financial Aid and review with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs as needed.

#### Veteran's Administration Benefits

Students receiving Veterans' Administration benefits should confirm their enrollment requirements with the Office of Veterans' Services or Veterans' Coordinator.

#### Readmission Following Non-enrollment

A graduate student who is not registered and enrolled for a minimum of six (6) credits in a 12 month period is automatically placed in non-degree seeking (i.e., inactive) status. Students must be readmitted to the degree program to continue their studies. Readmission is at the discretion of the program and is not guaranteed. Refer to the Readmission Policy in the Graduate Admissions Section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

#### Enrollment during Comprehensive Exams and Admission to Candidacy

During the term in which students take the comprehensive exams, students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit. If the exam is taken between semesters, the student must enroll for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit in the semester following the exam. Students must also be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate work in the semester of admission to doctoral candidacy.

### Thesis Hours

Before students can enroll in thesis hours, they must have a committee appointment form on file with the Academic Affairs Office and SACS evaluation forms from their committee members regarding the Thesis Proposal.

### Dissertation Hours (only for Doctoral Candidates)

Students working on a dissertation must enroll for a minimum of two (2) hours of dissertation **every semester**, starting with the semester following Admission to Doctoral Candidacy, up to and including the semester the dissertation is submitted to and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. Dissertation hours may apply to the Continuous Enrollment Requirement. Students who are dropped from degree-seeking status and formally readmitted to the program must enroll in a minimum of 5 dissertation hours in the semester that the readmission is effective. Refer to the Readmission Policy in the Graduate Admissions Section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

### Enrollment during Semester of Thesis Submission

Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) thesis hours during the semester that the thesis is submitted and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, usually the semester of graduation. Students not enrolled for the minimum requirement will not have the thesis approved and therefore will not be certified for graduation.

### Enrollment during Semester of Graduation

Master's Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) Thesis hours and during the semester of graduation. Ph.D. students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) Dissertation hours during the semester of graduation.

### Enrollment for Graduate Assistants (e.g. TAs and RAs)

Graduate Teaching and Research Assistants should be full-time students. Exceptions must be approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies or designee.

### Leaves of Absence (LOA)

Leaves of absence may be granted to students under exceptional and unavoidable circumstances. Students requesting a LOA must specify the reasons for the leave, as well as the duration. Requested LOA may be approved for up to two years. Students requiring less than three (3) consecutive terms of absence do not need an approved LOA if they meet the continuous enrollment requirement. Students with an approved LOA must be enrolled in the first semester after the leave expires. To request an LOA, the student must complete the form available from the Office of Graduate Studies website. The LOA must be approved by the Major Professor, the College, and the Office of Graduate Studies, and is noted in the student's record. If the LOA is granted, the time absent does not count against the student's time limit to obtain the degree. Students returning from an approved LOA must reactivate their status by contacting the CMS Associate Dean of Academic Affairs who will then start the procedure with the Office of Graduate Studies. Doctoral candidates returning from a LOA must also have their candidacy status reactivated.

## 29) Transfer of Credits Policy

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Students may transfer credits from any regionally accredited institution into their graduate degree program, as long as the majority of the credits are earned at the institution granting the degree. For the entire policy and to download the form, visit the “Transfer of Credit Policy” and the “Transfer Course Form” listed on the Office of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures web site.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

Credits obtained from USF System Institutions will be calculated into the GPA at USF and will be noted on the transcript as the grade earned. Credits from other regionally accredited universities are not calculated into the GPA at USF.

- Only credits with a grade of B or better may be transferred.
- No coursework may be transferred that was completed five or more years prior to enrollment in the graduate degree program.
- There is no time limitation for courses from a completed master’s degree or professional degree applied toward a doctoral degree as a post-master’s student.
- The graduate degree program / department will be responsible for evaluating, approving, and initiating the transfer as soon as possible after the time of admission.
- **This must be completed and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies preferably in the first semester, but no later than the second semester that the student is enrolled in the graduate program.**

Note: Students taking courses at USF System Institutions other than their home USF institution should seek the approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs prior to taking the courses to ensure that the courses are eligible for transfer.

## 30) Time Limitations

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### Master’s Degree – Time Limitation

Master’s degrees must be completed within **five (5) years** from the student’s date of admission for graduate study. Courses taken prior to admission to the USF graduate program, for example as non-degree seeking or from other institutions that were transferred in, have no time limitation. All courses taken while in the Master’s program are current for 10 years.

### Ph.D. Program – Time Limitation

Doctoral degrees must be completed within **seven (7) years** from the student’s original date of admission for doctoral study. All courses taken while in the doctoral degree are current for 10 years. Courses transferred in have no time limitation. There is no time limitation for courses from a completed master’s degree used toward a doctoral degree. For students who are readmitted, see Readmission Policy.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies>



### Time Limit Extensions

In the event that a student nears the end of the time limitation as specified above, but the student needs more time to complete the degree, the student may submit a request for an extension using the *Time Limit Extension Request Form*, available on the Office of Graduate Studies website.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.php>

Requests must include:

- the reasons for the delay in completion,
- the anticipated time needed for completion,
- a detailed plan of study and timeline for the remaining requirements for the degree,
- endorsements from the graduate faculty advisor, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, prior to submission to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval

If approved, the time limit extension also applies to courses applied toward the degree. However, programs may require additional or repeat coursework as part of the condition of the time limit extension. Students who exceed the time limitations may have their registration placed on hold until a request for extension has been approved. Only one time limit extension request is permitted. Students who are temporarily unable to continue the program should submit a Leave of Absence Request, which extends the time limit for the duration of the approved Leave (see Leave of Absence in the Enrollment Requirements section for information; the *Leave of Absence Request Form* is available online.

<http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.php>

## **31) Change of Graduate Program**

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Students may decide that another graduate program is more in line with their career focus or research perspective. Students who wish to change from one degree program to another (at the same level) must obtain a Graduate Change of Program Application from the Office of Graduate Studies or Office of the Registrar website.

- The new department will consider the Change of Program request as a new application.
- The Deans of the Colleges (or their designees) involved and the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies must approve the Change of Program.
- The new department may elect to accept all, some, or none of the graduate courses previously taken by the student and only those courses accepted will be computed in the GPA. Students desiring to change program levels (e.g., from a Master's program to a Doctoral program) must submit a new application for admission.

## **32) International Students**

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International Students have certain requirements that must be met while attending USF. The Office of International Services is located on the Tampa campus in the Center for Global Solutions, Room 104 and is the main administrative and immigration office. International students leaving the country for a cruise, conference, or meeting will need to fill out the form under the third bullet.

- Class registration restriction for F-1 Visas – This regulation allows students to enroll in only one 3-credit hour online/distance learning course per the official full-time equivalent for the degree level of study.
- International Advisor Contact Information: <http://global.usf.edu/is/contact.php>
- International Student Study or Graduate Research Abroad Request: <http://global.usf.edu/is/contact.php>
- International Student Forms: <http://global.usf.edu/is/cur-Forms.php>
- International Teaching Assistant Handbook:  
[http://www.grad.usf.edu/International Teaching Assistants Handbook.php](http://www.grad.usf.edu/International%20Teaching%20Assistants%20Handbook.php)
- F - 1 Student Information: <http://global.usf.edu/is/cur-F1.php>
- J – 1 Student Information: <http://global.usf.edu/is/cur-J1.php>

### **33) Expectations for Graduate Student Assistantships & Other Student Work Appointments**

**Expectations for students on teaching assistantships or work appointments specifically reserved for students (i.e., Ocean Camp, GK-12, etc.)**

- You are expected to spend your appointed number of hours on your assigned duties (i.e., appointments can vary, usually from 10-30 hrs per week).
- When teaching assistantships do not require the full 10 or 20 hours/week, the student should spend the remainder of their paid time on their research or on lab project needs.
- Typically, a requirement of such support is that you be enrolled for 9-12 credits. Thus, you should be spending a minimum of 27 hours per week (9 credits x 3 hrs/credit minimum) on class work and/or research, depending upon how you are registered.
- Even if your support does not require registration for 9 hours, you should spend at least 20 hours per week in pursuit of your degree.

### **34) Data Management and Responsibility, Publication, and Presentations**

*All research data are intellectual property of USF or of the collaborating institution.*

- Ultimate responsibility for all data rests with the Principal Investigator on the project, who has the right to request a copy of those data at any time and who has the responsibility to use those data in project reports and presentations. When the student's advisor is not the lead PI on a project, the advisor still retains the right to request a copy of project data from supervised students at any time and to use those data in project reports and presentations as necessary to meet obligations to funding agencies and the university.
- All graduate students are expected to exercise utmost responsibility and integrity when analyzing data entrusted to them. That includes quality checking all data and formulas, and asking for assistance and advice as appropriate on data analysis and interpretation.
- In the event that a student is working with proprietary data collected, e.g., using Department of Defense or private funding, points 6-b and 6-c apply, however, the student also will be required to sign a data-confidentiality agreement.
- On many projects, more than one graduate student may be working on aspects of the same project. Students are expected to cooperate and collaborate with each other and with other researchers on that project, because the larger effort is generally greater than any individual data set.
- All abstracts to be submitted for presentations at professional meetings should be given to the advisor and any co-authors sufficiently in advance of deadlines (minimum: 1 week)

to make any suggestions and corrections before the abstract is submitted. Students should consider whose efforts and data contributed to data to be presented; in some cases, the advisor will recommend addition of appropriate co-authors.

- All papers prepared for submission for publication in professional journals or similar venues should be submitted to the advisor and any other co-authors to make suggestions and corrections before submission. Students should consider whose efforts and data contributed to the publication; in some cases, the advisor will recommend addition of appropriate co-authors.
- Students/former students will be first author on any paper emerging primarily from their thesis or dissertation research while they are graduate students or within 12 months of completion of their degrees. If the student/former student does not take the initiative to submit their research for publication within 12 months of graduation, the advisor assumes the right to publish that thesis or dissertation research as first author. Students/former students will be listed as co-authors as appropriate to their contributions to a publication.
- Acknowledgments are a critical part of papers and presentations. Students should check with their advisor (and the lead PI, if other than the advisor) for appropriate information on grant, contract and permit acknowledgments, as well as names of others whose efforts or support contributed to the success of the research.

## Table of Policy Requirements

		Masters	Doctoral Students
Date of Admission		Fall 2018	Fall 2018
Graduate Catalog of Admission		2018-2019	2018-2019
Time Limit to Complete Degree		Total: 5 years Fall 2023	Total: 7 years Fall 2025
Progress Reports		Due every October (after the first year)	Due every October (after the first year)
Continuous Enrollment Policy		At least 6 graduate hours per 12 month period	At least 6 graduate hours per 12 month period <i>*See Candidacy Enrollment Policy below</i>
GA/TA/RA Enrollment Policy		Should be full-time students: Fall/Spring: 9 or more hours Summer: 6 or more hours	Should be full-time students: Fall/Spring: 9 or more hours Summer: 6 or more hours
Comprehensive Exams	Part 1: Integrated Marine Science Exam (IMSE)	Optional: MS student can opt to take the IMSE if they plan to cont. to PhD within 7 years	<i>Target: August 2019</i>
	Part 2: PhD Candidacy Exam (PCE)	n/a	<i>Target: 2021-2022</i> Register for at least 2 graduate hours taken in the semester of the comprehensive exams
Candidacy Enrollment Policy		n/a	<i>*Once admitted into doctoral candidacy, the student must enroll in at least 2 dissertation hours every semester, including Summer, until dissertation is submitted</i>
Thesis/Dissertation Enrollment		At least 2 thesis hours in semester of final submission, minimum of 6 hours	At least 2 dissertation hours in semester of final submission, minimum of 16 hours
GPA Requirement to be in "Good Standing"		At least a 3.00 GPA overall and in program	At least a 3.00 GPA overall and in program

# Masters Programs Student Benchmarks Chart

## Year 1

- Take Core Courses
- Begin research
- By 2nd Term: Confirm Major Professor
- By 2nd Term: Form Advisory Committee

## Year 2

- Hold your Thesis Proposal Assessment Meeting
- Take electives
- Continue Research & Writing Thesis

## Prepare for Final Semester

- Apply to Graduate on OASIS
- Review ETD Website and Checklist & Attend Workshop
- Register for Commencement (optional)

## Final Semester

Submit Dissertation Committee*	Sufficiency Meeting & Request for Defense*	Defense*	Submit Certificate of Approval Packet to OAA	Final Submission to ETD
Target: Two weeks before Sufficiency Meeting	Target: At least two weeks prior to defense  Forms: Request for Dissertation Defense; Create & Post Defense Announcement	Target: Four weeks before the end of the term  Forms: Successful Defense; Dissertation Defense & Written SACS Evaluations	Target: One week after Defense  Forms: Certificate of Approval packet	Deadline determined by ETD Office and is posted each semester

\*can be completed prior to graduating semester.

## Every Semester

- Discuss your funding with your MP & submit funding info to OAA
- Register for courses in advance--avoid \$100 late registration fee
- Email committee with an update on your research and drafts
- Check your GPA: Must maintain 3.00 for Good Standing

## Every Year

- Discuss & submit a progress report every October after your first year
- Consider new funding sources and apply (e.g. fellowships, grants, TA)
- Meet with committee

# MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

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## *Timeline and Checklist*

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Download this checklist at: <http://www.marine.usf.edu/documents/checklist-ms.pdf>

### **CREDIT REQUIREMENTS** *(Biological, Chemical, Geological, Physical Concentrations)*

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- ☐ 32 semester credit hours total
  - ☐ 12 core class credits - 4 core classes, 3 credit hours per class (Physical, Chemical, Biological and Geological Oceanography). A grade of "B-" or better in each of the core classes is required.
  - ☐ 8 elective formal class credits
  - ☐ 6 elective research credits
  - ☐ 6 thesis credits (OCE 6971)

### **CREDIT REQUIREMENTS** *(Marine Resource Assessment Concentration)*

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- ☐ 32 semester credit hours total
  - ☐ 12 core class credits - 4 core classes, 3 credit hours per class (Physical, Chemical, Biological and Geological Oceanography). A grade of "B-" or better in each of the core classes is required.
  - ☐ 9 MRA concentration credits - 3 of the 4 MRA courses (Population Dynamics, Fish Biology, Dynamics of Marine Ecosystems, Applied Multivariate Statistics)
  - ☐ 5 elective research credits
  - ☐ 6 thesis credits (OCE 6971)

### **REQUIRED FORMS**

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Links to all forms required for the master's degree program can be found on the CMS Graduate Programs - Forms website. Unless noted otherwise, all completed forms should be returned to the Academic Affairs Office or the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/education/current-students/forms/>

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND TIMELINES**

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#### **1. Permanent Major Advisor Assigned**

Target: Year 1

#### **2. Form Your Thesis Advisory Committee**

Target: Year 2

- ☐ Advisory Committee Appointment Form
  - For non-USF members: Email CV to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to obtain approval.



- Committee consists of three (3) people: the major professor and two other members from CMS or an area related to that in which degree is sought. At least one of the additional two members must be from the CMS.

### 3. Submit Thesis Proposal to Committee Members

Target: Year 2

- ☐ Thesis Proposal – SACS Evaluation Form

Once your thesis proposal is approved – distribute this form to each of your committee members. Once completed, instruct your major advisor to return the forms to the Academic Affairs Office or the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

### 4. Complete Core Courses

Target: within 2 years

- Core courses must be passed with a B- or better grade. Students who earn below a B- must retake the core course. *Please note: a B- is 2.66 GPA points.* Too many B- grades can bring a GPA below a 3.00 and place a student on probation.

### 5. Complete Other Formal Courses (as advised by committee)

Target: Within 2-3 years

### 6. Review the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Resource Center website

Target: 1-2 semesters prior to graduation

- ☐ <http://www.grad.usf.edu/etd-res-main.php>

### 7. Attend the ETD Workshop

Deadline: 1 semester prior to graduation

- ☐ The ETD Workshop is offered on the Tampa Campus and is helpful to attend, but not required. If you cannot attend, students are expected to understand the process by reviewing the ETD website. Visit the ETD Resource Center for dates and details.
- ☐ [http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD\\_Reg\\_01\\_WorkshopsAndSessions.php](http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD_Reg_01_WorkshopsAndSessions.php)

### 8. Electronic Thesis Registration (online)

Deadline: to be completed prior to the end of the 4th week of classes in the semester of graduation.

- ☐ <http://www.grad.usf.edu/etd-res-main.php>

### 9. Apply to Graduate

Deadline: by 4<sup>th</sup> week of final semester, see Graduation Deadlines for exact date

- ☐ Students who plan to graduate must complete and submit their Graduation Application online. Please give yourself an earlier deadline to address any potential obstacles. When you are ready to begin the survey and apply, login into *OASIS* using your Net ID and self-assigned password, then click on the **Student** menu and select **Apply for Graduation**.
- ☐ Enroll in minimum of 2 thesis credits during the term of graduation.

## 10. Submit Thesis to Committee

Deadline: by the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the semester you plan to graduate

- ☐ Students should send by mail or email a copy of their thesis to their major advisor and committee members giving at least a two-week review period before the Sufficiency Meeting.

## 11. Sufficiency Meeting

Target: Usually the semester you plan to graduate, the meeting must occur at least two weeks before you defend.

- ☐ Verify with your committee that you are ready to defend at the sufficiency meeting.
- ☐ Work with your committee members to determine a time and date for your defense.

Once your date is established, find and schedule a facility where the defense will be held. Please work with Academic Affairs Administrator to schedule rooms in KRC and MSL, and the Karen A. Steidinger Auditorium. **The defense date must be set at least two weeks after the Sufficiency Meeting.**

- ☐ Request for Master's Thesis Defense Form

Due: at least two weeks BEFORE your defense

Obtain the necessary signatures from major professor, committee members and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. *Note: The signatures of your committee members indicate that they have read the dissertation and the student is ready to defend.*

- ☐ Create a Defense Announcement

Due: two weeks BEFORE to your defense.

- Templates are available on the CMS Forms website.
- ☐ Provide a copy of your defense announcement to the Academic Affairs office. The Academic Affairs office will post your defense announcement on the bulletin board outside of MSL 210C, send a copy to the Office of Graduate Studies in Tampa, and will also send an email notice to [users@marine.usf.edu](mailto:users@marine.usf.edu) announcing your defense.
- ☐ You are responsible for posting your defense announcement around our buildings at least 1 week prior to the defense in at least 6 public locations (for example 3 in KRC and 3 in MSL). Additionally you can email the announcement to any interested parties.

## 12. Thesis Defense

- All Committee members should be present in person or remotely. Note, the major advisor is required to be physically present the final defense.
- Generally 30-45 minutes of presentation (discuss length with your advisor), followed by questions from the general audience, a short break, then questions from the committee, and then a final deliberation and vote by only the committee.
- Majority vote is needed for passing

- ☐ Successful Defense Form

Deadline: day of your defense

- Print and bring to your defense. Obtain signatures of all committee members and submit completed form to the Academic Affairs office.

- ☐ Thesis Defense & Thesis Written – SACS Evaluation Forms

Deadline: day of your defense

- Print and bring a copy for each committee member. To be completed by each committee directly after defense and submitted to the Academic Affairs office. One is for the written thesis and the other is for the oral defense.

## 13. Electronic Thesis Submission

Target: no later than the final submission deadline posted on the Office of Graduate Studies web site

Our College has a special arrangement with the Office of Graduate Studies so you do NOT have to drive to Tampa to submit your forms, instead you will deliver all signed documents directly to Academic Affairs Office on or before the posted deadline by 3 pm. The final submission process involves uploading your final written thesis to the ProQuest website, completing surveys, and hand delivering paper forms in person to the Academic Affairs Office.

- ☐ Please refer to the ETD Resource Center for detailed instructions, required forms and deadlines. <http://www.grad.usf.edu/etd-res-main.php>
- ☐ The Certificate of Approval Form (two pages)
- ☐ Plagiarism Check Summary Page – completed by Major Professors
- ☐ SACS Evaluation Forms (CMS website)

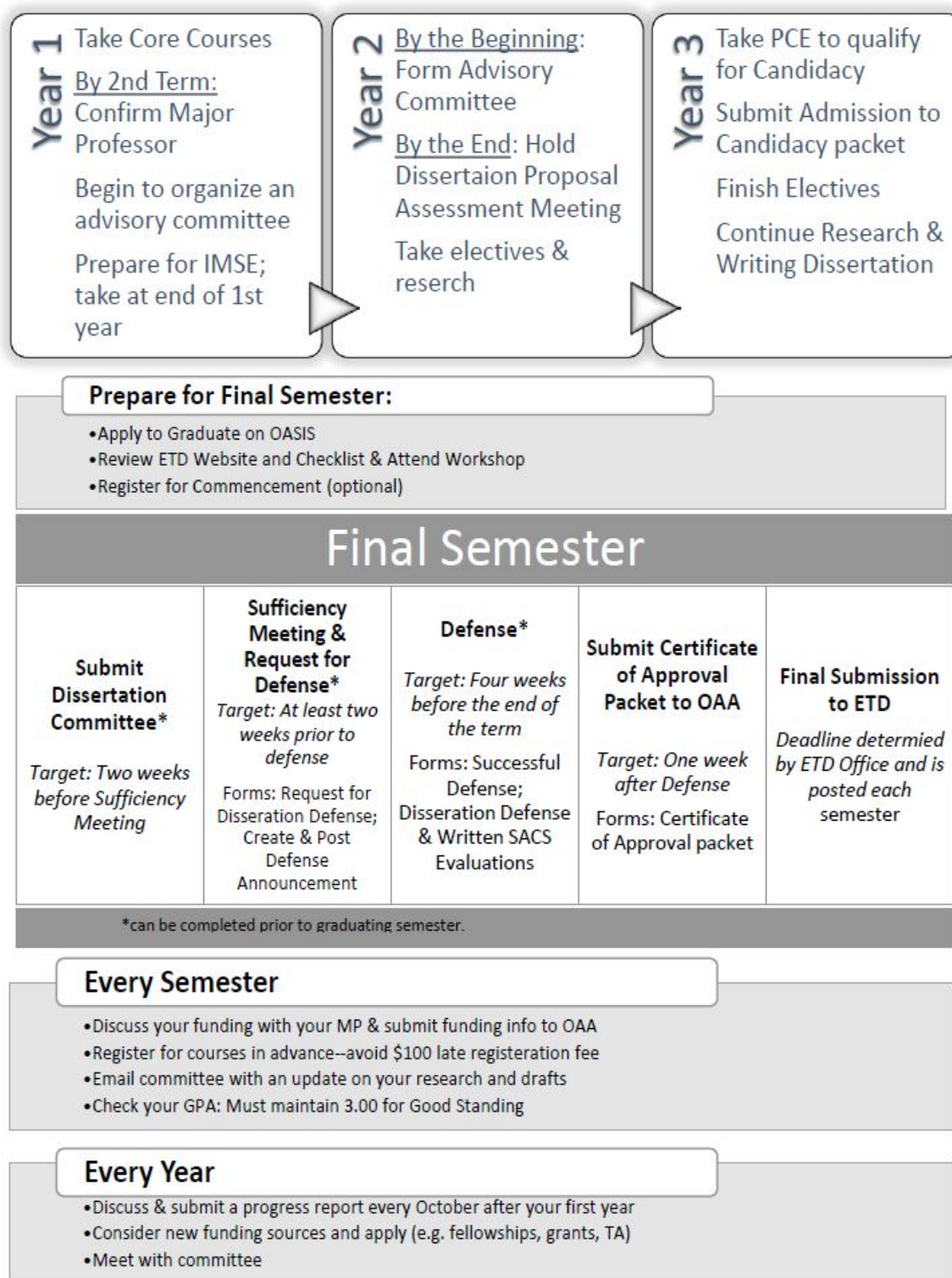
Deadline: after committee approves the final manuscript

To be completed by each committee and submitted to the Academic Affairs office.

## 14. Commencement

- ☐ Students must register if they wish to participate in the graduation ceremony. College of Marine Science students participate in the Tampa Ceremony (not St. Pete), below is a link to Tampa campus registration and ceremony information.
- ☐ <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/commencement/check-list.asp>

# Doctoral Programs Student Benchmarks Chart



# DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

## Timeline and Checklist

Download this checklist at: <http://www.marine.usf.edu/documents/checklist-phd.pdf>

### CREDIT REQUIREMENTS *(Biological, Chemical, Geological, Physical Concentrations)*

- ☐ 90 credit hours required (post-bachelor's)
- ☐ 60 credits required (post-master's)
  - ☐ 12 core class credits - 4 core classes, 3 credit hours per class (Physical, Chemical, Biological and Geological Oceanography). A grade of "B-" or better in each of the core classes is required.
  - ☐ 62 elective credits ( post-bachelor's)
  - ☐ 32 elective credits (post-master's)
  - ☐ 16 dissertation credits (OCE 7980)

### CREDIT REQUIREMENTS *(Marine Resource Assessment Concentration)*

- ☐ 90 credit hours required (post-bachelor's)
- ☐ 60 credit hours required (post-master's)
  - ☐ 12 core class credits (4 core classes, 3 credit hours per class (Physical, Chemical, Biological and Geological Oceanography). A grade of "B-" or better in each of the core classes is required.
  - ☐ 9 MRA concentration credits - 3 of the 4 MRA courses (Population Dynamics, Fish Biology, Dynamics of Marine Ecosystems, Applied Multivariate Statistics)
  - ☐ 53 elective credits (post-bachelor's)
  - ☐ 23 elective credits (post-master's)
  - ☐ 16 dissertation credits (OCE 7980)

### REQUIRED FORMS

Links to all forms required for the Ph.D. degree program can be found on the CMS Graduate Programs - Forms website. Unless noted otherwise, all completed forms should be returned to the Academic Affairs Office or the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

<http://www.marine.usf.edu/graduate-programs/forms.shtml>

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND TIMELINES

#### 1. Permanent Major Advisor Assigned

Target: Year 1

#### 2. Comprehensive Exam Part 1: IMSE

Target: End of Year 1

- All students will take the same exam, at the same time, and questions will be determined by a committee to be appointed by the Dean. All Ph.D. students are expected to take this exam no later than the beginning of their third year (to allow for students who take 2 years to finish the core classes because of other course requirements or when they start).

### 3. Form Your Dissertation Advisory Committee

Target: Year 2

- ☐ Advisory Committee Appointment Form
  - For non-USF members: Email CV to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs) to obtain approval.
  - Committee consists of 5 members, at least 3 of whom must come from CMS. At least 1 member must be from outside of the CMS. A 6th member may be added for additional expertise.

### 4. Submit Dissertation Proposal To Committee Members

Target: Year 2

- ☐ Dissertation Proposal – SACS Evaluation Forms:  
During your Dissertation Proposal meeting, distribute this form to each of your committee members. Once completed, instruct your major advisor to return the forms to the Academic Affairs Office or the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

### 5. Complete Core Courses

Target: within 2 years

- Core courses must be passed with a B- or better grade. Students who earn below a B- must retake the core course. *Please note: a B- is 2.66 GPA points.* Too many B- grades can bring a GPA below a 3.00 and place a student on probation

### 6. Complete Other Formal Courses (as advised by committee)

Target: Within 2-3 years

### 7. Comprehensive Exam: Part 2 Ph.D. Candidacy Exam

Target: Within 12 months of completion of formal class work

- ☐ Request a meeting with committee at least 2 months before hand to set the date and review requirements. Refer to CMS student Handbook for details.
- ☐ Enroll in minimum of 2 graduate credits during the term you take the exam.
- ☐ Admission to Candidacy Form  
(found on the Office of Graduate Studies web site. Obtain signature of major professor and submit this form to the Academic Affairs Office at least 3 days prior to the Office of Graduate Studies Deadlines. See the form for approval window and deadlines. [http://www.grad.usf.edu/inc/linked-files/A2C\\_form.pdf](http://www.grad.usf.edu/inc/linked-files/A2C_form.pdf))
- ☐ Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam – SACS Evaluation Form  
Once you take you pass your comprehensive exams – distribute this form to each of



your committee members. Once completed, instruct your major advisor to return the forms to the Academic Affairs Office.

## **8. Enroll in dissertation credits (OCE 7980)**

Target: After passing comprehensive exams

NOTE: You cannot register for dissertation credits until the next complete semester following admission to candidacy. For example, if you completed your requirements for candidacy and submitted your Admission to Candidacy form in Summer, you will enter candidacy and be able to register for dissertation in Fall.

## **9. Review the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Resource Center website**

Target: 1-2 semesters prior to graduation

- ☐ <http://www.grad.usf.edu/etd-res-main.php>

## **10. Attend the ETD Workshop**

Deadline: 1 semester prior to graduation

- ☐ The ETD Workshop is offered on the Tampa Campus and is helpful to attend, but not required. If you cannot attend, students are expected to understand the process by reviewing the ETD website. Visit the ETD Resource Center for dates and details.
- ☐ [http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD\\_Reg\\_01\\_WorkshopsAndSessions.php](http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD_Reg_01_WorkshopsAndSessions.php)

## **11. Electronic Dissertation Registration (online)**

Deadline: to be completed prior to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> week of classes in the semester of graduation.

- ☐ <http://www.grad.usf.edu/etd-res-main.php>

## **12. Apply to Graduate**

Deadline: by 4<sup>th</sup> week of final semester, see Graduation Deadlines for exact date

- ☐ Students who plan to graduate in summer must complete and submit their Graduation Application online. Please give yourself an earlier deadline to address any potential obstacles. When you are ready to begin the survey and apply, login into *OASIS* using your Net ID and self-assigned password, then click on the **Student** menu and select **Apply for Graduation**.
- ☐ Enroll in minimum of 2 dissertation credits during the term of graduation.

## **13. Submit Dissertation to Committee**

Deadline: by the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the final semester

- ☐ Students should send by mail or email a copy of their dissertation to their major advisor and committee members.

## **14. Sufficiency Meeting**

Target: Usually the semester you plan to graduate, the meeting must occur at least two weeks before you defend.

- ☐ Verify with your committee that you are ready to defend at the sufficiency meeting.

- Work with your committee members and Chairperson to determine a time and date for your defense. Once the date is established, find and schedule a facility where the defense will be held. Please work with the Academic Affairs Administrator to schedule rooms in KRC and MSL, and the Karen A. Steidinger Auditorium. **The defense date must be set at least two weeks after the sufficiency meeting.**
- Nomination of Outside Chairperson:  
The Dissertation Defense (or Final Oral Examination) shall be presided by a senior and distinguished scholar from outside the department, nominated by the Major Professor. If the chair is from another institution, this individual should have the equivalent qualifications necessary to chair a dissertation in the subject area at the University of South Florida. Once you and your major professor have selected a chairperson – your major professor will send a memo to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs requesting that the person be appointed as outside chair of the defense, explaining the expertise of nominee and provide a copy of his/her CV.
- Request for Dissertation Defense Form  
**Due: two weeks BEFORE your defense**  
Obtain the necessary signatures from major professor, committee members and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. *Note: The signatures of your committee members indicate that they have read the dissertation and the student is ready to defend.*
- Unsigned Successful Defense Form  
**Due: two weeks BEFORE your defense**  
Provide a completed, unsigned copy of the Successful Defense form in advance. The Academic Affairs office will send the form to the chairperson (prior to the defense), the chairperson will be responsible for obtaining all signatures at the successful completion of the Defense.
- Create a Defense Announcement  
**Due: two weeks prior to your defense**
  - Templates are available on the CMS Forms website.
  - Provide a copy of your defense announcement to the Academic Affairs office. The Academic Affairs office will post your defense announcement on the bulletin board outside of MSL 210C, send a copy to the Office of Graduate Studies in Tampa, and will also send an email notice to [users@marine.usf.edu](mailto:users@marine.usf.edu) announcing your defense.
  - You are responsible for posting your defense announcement around our buildings **at least 1 week prior to the defense** in at least 6 public locations (for example 3 in KRC and 3 in MSL). Additionally you can email the announcement to any interested parties.

## 15.Dissertation Defense

- The Chair of the Defense and all Committee members should be present in person or remotely. Note that the Chair of the Defense and the major advisor are required to be physically present at the defense.

- 2-3 hours in length
- Majority vote is needed for passing
- ☐ Return the Successful Defense Form  
After successful completion of the defense – the chairperson is responsible to return the form to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
- ☐ Dissertation Defense & Dissertation Written - SACS Evaluation Forms  
Distribute these forms to each of your committee members. One is for the written dissertation and the other is for the oral defense. Once completed, instruct your major advisor to return the forms to the Academic Affairs Office. Note: you may also distribute the Dissertation (Written) – SACS Evaluation form to each of your committee members at your defense.

## 16. Electronic Dissertation Submission

**Target: no later than the final submission deadline posted on the Office of Graduate Studies web site**

Our College has a special arrangement with the Office of Graduate Studies so you do NOT have to drive to Tampa to submit your forms, instead you will deliver all signed documents directly to Academic Affairs Office on or before the posted deadline by 3 pm. The final submission process involves uploading your final written dissertation to the ProQuest website, completing surveys, and hand delivering paper forms in person to the Academic Affairs Office.

- ☐ Please refer to the ETD Resource Center for detailed instructions, required forms and deadlines. <http://www.grad.usf.edu/etd-res-main.php>
- ☐ The Certificate of Approval Form (two pages)
- ☐ Plagiarism Check Summary Page – completed by Major Professors
- ☐ Survey of Earned Doctorates Certificate of Completion (see ETD website)
- ☐ SACS Evaluation Forms (CMS website)

**Deadline: after committee approves the final manuscript**

To be completed by each committee and submitted to the Academic Affairs office.

## 17. Graduation

- ☐ Students must register if they wish to participate in the graduation ceremony. College of Marine Science students participate in the Tampa Ceremony (not St. Pete). Below is a link to Tampa campus registration and ceremony information. <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/commencement/check-list.asp>

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## Helpful Contacts:

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- ❖ **Dialing on Campus:** The area code is “727.” Using office phones, dial the last 5 digits of the number (i.e. “3-1234” for St. Petersburg or “4-1234” for Tampa)
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### UNIVERSITY POLICE SERVICES

USF St. Petersburg FPF 105  
140 Seventh Avenue South St. Petersburg Florida 33701  
Open 24 Hours, 7 Days a week

**EMERGENCY OR CRIME ON-CAMPUS DIAL: (727) 873-4140 OR “3-4140” OR 911**

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### Administration

Jacqueline E. Dixon	Dean of the College	553-3369	KRC3109	<a href="mailto:jdixon@usf.edu">jdixon@usf.edu</a>
Linda Kelbaugh	Executive Admin Spec	553-1634	KRC 3114	<a href="mailto:lkelbaugh@usf.edu">lkelbaugh@usf.edu</a>
Gary Mitchum	Associate Dean of Research	553-3941	MSL215	<a href="mailto:mitchum@usf.edu">mitchum@usf.edu</a>

### Academic Affairs

David Naar	Associate Dean of Academic Affairs	553-1637	MSL214	<a href="mailto:naar@usf.edu">naar@usf.edu</a>
Sami Francis	Assistant Director of Academic Affairs	553-3944	MSL 210C	<a href="mailto:Sfrancis1@usf.edu">Sfrancis1@usf.edu</a>
Ana Arellano	Recruiter & Instructor	553-3504	MSL210A	<a href="mailto:aarellan@mail.usf.edu">aarellan@mail.usf.edu</a>

### Business Services / Travel /Purchasing

Elisha Evangelisto	Business Services & Travel	553-3359	MSL 114	<a href="mailto:eevangelisto@usf.edu">eevangelisto@usf.edu</a>
Betty Rahn	Purchasing Card (PCard)	553-1138	MSL 101B	<a href="mailto:brahn@usf.edu">brahn@usf.edu</a>
Holly Peterson	Purchase Orders/Receiving	553-1194	MSL 101C	<a href="mailto:hpeterson@usf.edu">hpeterson@usf.edu</a>
Nancy Holloway	Grants/Awards/Budget Accounting	553-1271	MSL 101A	<a href="mailto:holloway@usf.edu">holloway@usf.edu</a>

### Facilities

Joe Donnelly	Facilities Manager	553-1190	MSL 101D	<a href="mailto:donnelly@usf.edu">donnelly@usf.edu</a>
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### Front Reception

Flo Cole	Front Receptionist	553-1130	MSL119	<a href="mailto:fcole@usf.edu">fcole@usf.edu</a>
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### Human Resources

Tim Trowbridge	HR Administrator	553-3375	MSL 111	<a href="mailto:ttrowbridge@usf.edu">ttrowbridge@usf.edu</a>
Macaulay Cardinal	Unit HR Coordinator	553-1632	MSL 107	<a href="mailto:mcardinal@usf.edu">mcardinal@usf.edu</a>

### IT/Computer/Website

Doug Myhre	Technology & Systems Manager	553-1119	FWRI 3003A	<a href="mailto:doug@usf.edu">doug@usf.edu</a>
Sean Beckwith	IT Support Specialist & Web Content Developer	553-3558	MSL 109	<a href="mailto:stbeckwith@mail.usf.edu">stbeckwith@mail.usf.edu</a>
Jay Novitzke	Webmaster	553-3390	MSL 101D	<a href="mailto:jaynovitzke@usf.edu">jaynovitzke@usf.edu</a>

### Sponsored Research Contact

Anita Thompson	CMS Unit Research Administrator	553-3360	KRC 3110	<a href="mailto:athomp@usf.edu">athomp@usf.edu</a>
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## Helpful Websites

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### Emergency Contacts

- ❑ Campus Police (St. Pete): <http://www.usfsp.edu/university-police-department/>
- ❑ Title IX: <http://www.usf.edu/diversity/title-ix/>
- ❑ Center for Victim Advocacy (VAWA): <http://www.sa.usf.edu/ADVOCACY/page.asp?id=72>
- ❑ Student Ombuds Office: <http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/ombuds/>
- ❑ Students Rights and Responsibilities: <http://www.sa.usf.edu/srr/page.asp?id=69>

### Marine Science

- ❑ Home: [www.marine.usf.edu](http://www.marine.usf.edu)
- ❑ Graduate Program Information: [www.marine.usf.edu/graduate-programs](http://www.marine.usf.edu/graduate-programs)
- ❑ Courses Offered: <http://www.marine.usf.edu/students/courses-offered>
- ❑ Forms: <http://www.marine.usf.edu/education/current-students/forms/>
- ❑ Student Handbook: <http://www.marine.usf.edu/students/student-handbook>
- ❑ CMS Internal Website: [www.marine.usf.edu/internal](http://www.marine.usf.edu/internal)

### Office of Graduate Studies

- ❑ Home: <http://www.grad.usf.edu>
- ❑ Catalog: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/catalog.php>
- ❑ Policies and Procedures: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>
- ❑ ETD Resource Center: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>
- ❑ Graduate Assistant Resource Center: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/assistantships.php>
- ❑ Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC):
- ❑ Workshops: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/events.php>

### Registrar's Office

- ❑ Home: <http://www.registrar.usf.edu/>

### IT & myUSF Portal (OASIS Course Registration/Tuition/Canvas)

- ❑ MyUSF Portal: <http://my.usf.edu>
- ❑ System-wide Course Schedule Search: <http://www.registrar.usf.edu/ssearch/search.php>
- ❑ USF IT: <http://www.usf.edu/it/>
- ❑ Free Software Application Portal (CITRIX): <http://apps.usf.edu/>
- ❑ Computer Store: <http://www.usf.edu/it/computer-store/>
- ❑ Virus Software: <http://www.usf.edu/it/class-prep/symantec-virus-protection.aspx>

### USF - Services

- ❑ USF Home: [www.usf.edu](http://www.usf.edu)
- ❑ USF St. Petersburg Campus: [www.stpete.usf.edu](http://www.stpete.usf.edu)
- ❑ Financial Aid Office: <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/finaid/>
- ❑ Parking: <http://www.usfsp.edu/financial/parking-transportation/>
- ❑ Student Health Services: [www.shs.usf.edu](http://www.shs.usf.edu)
- ❑ USF Libraries: <http://www.lib.usf.edu/>
- ❑ Poynter Library, USF St Pete: <http://www.nelson.usf.edu/>

### Calendars / Important Deadlines

- ❑ Academic Calendar: <http://www.registrar.usf.edu/enroll/regist/calendt.php>
- ❑ Cashiers Office – Important Dates: <http://www.usf.edu/business-finance/controller/>