



COASTAL CAROLINA
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

Master of Science
Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies
Handbook
2012

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The College of Science offers the Master of Science degree program in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies.

This CMWS Graduate Student Handbook has been carefully screened for errors and is regularly updated. However, should this handbook and the Coastal Carolina University Catalog 2012-2012 differ, the University Catalog for the year of enrollment shall be considered the final authority.

WELCOME TO COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the Master of Science graduate program in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies. This handbook has important information regarding the program and its requirements, including timetables, forms, and responsibilities.

Keep this booklet as a guideline and reference for your progress each semester.

Additional information can be found on the CMWS website:
<http://www.coastal.edu/science/coastalstudies/> and in the CCU Catalog.

We are happy that you chose this program to begin your graduate career.

If you have question or problems, contact the CMWS program coordinator.

Dr. James O. Luken
Associate Provost/Director of Graduate Studies
Coordinator, Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies
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COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
Master of Science
COASTAL MARINE AND WETLAND STUDIES
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE
College Administration

Dean's Office SCIE 124

Dr. Michael H. Roberts, Dean
349-2282
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Dr. Deborah Vrooman, Associate Dean
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Departments and Centers

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Molly French, Administrative Specialist
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mfrench@coastal.edu

Burroughs and Chapin Center for Marine and Wetland Studies - BCMW

Dr. Paul Gayes
349-4015 BCMW 105
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Marine Science – CSCC

Dr. Eric Wright
349-4017 CSCC 151J
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349-2262 CSCC151I
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Boats and Boat Operation

Richard Goldberg
Boat Captain
Goldberg@coastal.edu
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Sam Gary
Boat Operations Manager
sjgary@coastal.edu
Cell 843 274-4204

Campus directory

Area code: (843)

• Academic Colleges	
Spadoni College of Education, Kearns Hall _____	349-2604
College of Science, Science 124 _____	349-2202
Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts, Edwards 201 _____	349-2421
Wall College of Business Administration, Wall 213 _____	349-2641
• Admissions, Kingston Hall _____	349-2026
• Athletics, Arcadia 114 _____	349-2820
• Bookstore, University Hall _____	349-2360
• Bursar, Evergreen _____	349-2159
• Monthly Payment Plan, Evergreen _____	349-2245
• Career Services, Indigo House _____	349-2341
• Counseling Services, Student Health Center _____	349-2305
• Dining Services, Student Center 105 _____	349-2255
• Financial Aid, Kingston Hall _____	349-2313
• Scholarship Office, Admissions Office, Kingston Hall _____	349-2308
• Foreign Language Instructional Center, Prince 123 _____	349-2468
• Student Health Center _____	347-7466
• Honors Program, Singleton 121 _____	349-2298
• ID Office, Atheneum 006-A _____	349-6435
• Information Technology Services, Wall 105 _____	349-2084
• Library _____	349-2402
• Math Lab, Prince 208 _____	349-2884
• Multicultural Student Services, Prince 215 _____	349-2863
• Admissions Office, Kingston Hall _____	349-2188
• PE Center _____	349-2802
• Post Office, Sands Hall _____	349-2156
• Public Safety, Atheneum Hall _____	349-2177
• Registrar, Singleton 108 _____	349-2019
• Residence Life, Waccamaw Hall _____	349-6400
• Services for Students with Disabilities, Student Health Center _____	349-2305
• Student Activities, Student Center 106 _____	349-2301
• Student Computing Services, Prince 204 _____	349-2938
• Student Affairs, Singleton 104 _____	349-2302
• Student Academic Support Services, Prince 212 _____	349-2934
• Writing Lab, Prince 208 _____	349-2937

FINAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SATISFYING DEGREE REQUIREMENTS, AS OUTLINED IN THE UNIVERSITY CATALOG, RESTS WITH THE STUDENT.

It is your responsibility as a graduate student to be well informed. Remember that not everything goes as planned; your best defense against possible problems is to be informed and to address problems quickly.

The academic calendar is accessible from the university website and contains important dates, such as start and end of semesters, registration dates and holidays.
<http://www.coastal.edu/registrar/>

Places and Things to Know

Campus ID Card (CINO Card)

<http://www.coastal.edu/campuscard/>

For access to all the appropriate Coastal Carolina University facilities, each student must have their campus identification card. The CCU Campus ID card is your official CCU identification card. The campus card is issued by the Campus Card Office, which is located in Atheneum Hall, Room 006A, located beside the Atheneum gazebo and in the area known locally as "the horse shoe". You must bring a picture government-issued ID (driver's license, Passport, high school ID, etc.) and your seven-digit university-issued student number (which you can find on your schedule). After data are entered into the computer, your picture will be taken. Your Campus Card ID card will then be ready within a matter of minutes.

Campus Shuttle

<http://www.coastal.edu/students/shuttle/>

The Coast RTA Student Shuttle stops at University Place, the Burroughs and Chapin Center for Marine and Wetland Studies, Chanticleer Drive, and several locations on campus. For more detailed information, visit the web site.

CCU Bookstore

<http://www.efollett.com>

<http://www.bkstr.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/StoreCatalogDisplay?storeId=10479&langId=-1&catalogId=10001>

Keep your receipt any time you purchase textbooks. When you purchase books, you will receive information about return policies.

Coastal e-mail PIN

<https://www.coastal.edu/search/pin/>

Your username/PIN can be obtained electronically by visiting www.coastal.edu/search/pin.

Grade Access

<http://www.coastal.edu/registrar/grades.html>

This link gives you a copy of the Grade Access Information brochure.

Vehicle Registration Form

<http://www.coastal.edu/safety/police/index.html?type=forms>

If you have a vehicle, you must purchase a CCU vehicle registration sticker through the Department of Public Safety located in Atheneum Hall.

The Student Mail-In Vehicle Registration Form is located at

http://www.coastal.edu/forms/publicsafety/registration_student_mail.pdf

Operating University Vehicles and Boats

To drive university vehicles, you must obtain a copy of your driving record from the Department of Motor Vehicles in the state where your driving license is issued and submit it to CCU Transportation.

To operate university boats, you will need to complete a number of steps as outlined in the Boating Safety Manual. Details will be provided in CMWS 697. Boat/vehicle checkout at: <http://bcmw.coastal.edu/>

Kimbel Library

Hours:

Monday – Thursday	8 AM to midnight
Friday	8 AM to 5 PM
Saturday	10 AM to 6 PM
Sunday	1 PM to 11 PM

Health Insurance

<http://www.studentinsurance.com>

Students who do not have health insurance may purchase coverage at a very reasonable cost through Pearce & Pearce, Inc. underwritten by Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company.

Degree Time Line—Thesis Option

Stay one step ahead

Know what you are expected to do and when.

Know when an important deadline is coming up.

First Semester

Identify your faculty advisor.

Select and take at least six credit hours. A full load is 9 hours.

Include at least one core course and the seminar course.

Start to define a research direction with your advisor.

Begin to read journals and learn lab techniques.

Select your faculty committee members.

Consult with your major advisor. They are there for guidance.

Select future classes and produce your own timeline for research.

This is not final and can be modified from semester to semester.

Begin writing your research proposal.

Second Semester

Select and take at least six credit hours. A full load is 9 hours.

Three core courses should be completed in the first year.

Take another seminar course.

Arrange an official committee meeting.

Develop thesis proposal and have your major advisor and committee review it.

Submit signed Thesis Proposal and Budget to the CMWS Graduate Coordinator.

Submit a course plan approved by your committee members

Application for Candidacy Form is the course plan.

First Summer

Begin Research.

Register for at least one hour of thesis research credit.

Third Semester

Research time.

Continue research and planning.

Take other classes required for your program.

Fourth Semester

Focus on your research and writing your thesis.

Check deadlines.

Write thesis and submit to your committee for review.

Plan to do several thesis revisions based on your committee comments.

Now is the time to wrap up loose ends, any outstanding coursework or field experience.

Submit graduation application to the CMWS Graduate Coordinator.

Check the deadline on the CCU web page.

Once approved by your advisor, submit thesis to the Graduate Coordinator to check formatting.

Once approved by the Graduate Coordinator, schedule thesis presentation and oral defense.

Present research and defend the research.

Make final thesis revisions and obtain committee signatures on your cover page.

Make copies for committee members who want them.

Make official thesis copies and submit for signature of the CNAS Dean and the Associate Provost. Provide the Graduate Coordinator with an electronic file of the thesis.

Graduate. Congratulations.

Milestones for Typical Fall Admission—Thesis Option

YEAR 1

Thesis Committee (Form)

End of first semester

Last day of classes Fall semester

Application for Candidacy (Form)

Second semester

Last day of classes Fall semester

Thesis Proposal (Form)

Second semester

Feb. 1

YEAR 2

Graduation Application

Fourth semester

Second week in January

Defense of Thesis

Fourth semester

Two weeks before end of semester or earlier.

Submission of Thesis

End of Fourth semester

By the last day of the semester.

May Graduation

Essential Forms and Responsibilities

Task	Reporting Responsibilities		
	Student	Advisor	CMWS Coordinator
Thesis Committee	Obtains commitment from faculty/others to serve on the thesis committee.	Guidance on selection of committee members	
	Submits signed form to the CMWS Graduate Coordinator.	Signs completed form	Receives and files form.
Application for Candidacy	Working with major advisor, completes a course plan.	Guidance and approval of course plan.	
	Submits signed form to the CMWS Graduate Coordinator.	Approves and signs application.	Receives and files form.
Thesis Proposal	Writes thesis proposal including a budget proposal.	Supervises thesis proposal.	
	Obtains approval from Thesis Committee members.	Approves and signs proposal and budget.	
	Submits signed form to the CMWS Graduate Coordinator.		Receives and files form.
Graduation Application	Submits to CMWS Graduate Coordinator before the deadline.	Verifies requirements are met and signs	Checks degree audit and signs application.
Presentation of Thesis	Prepares and presents thesis research.	Supervises preparations.	Reserves room and equipment.
		Introduces student.	Prepares flyers.
Defense of Thesis	Obtains signatures of committee members as proof of passing on the title page.	Completes and obtains signatures of committee on report of defense form.	Reserves room.
		Submits to CMWS Coordinator.	Receives and files form.
Submission of Thesis	Prints thesis and copies, proofs and boxes them.	Proofs and signs thesis.	Obtains signature of CNAS Dean and Graduate Director.
	Pays Bursar's Office for original and copies to be bound.		
	Submits thesis and receipt to CMWS Graduate Coordinator.		Turns in copies to Library for binding.

Role of the Major/Thesis Advisor

A key role of the major advisor is to assist in the selection and refinement of a thesis topic and to give advice in the design of the research program. The advisor will also give advice on and edit the thesis. The advisor, therefore, must have expertise in the appropriate area of research.

The graduate advisor will help in the selection of at least two additional faculty members to serve on your thesis committee. The thesis committee should be composed of faculty members who can provide you with additional expertise in the design and execution of thesis research. Any faculty member at CCU is eligible to serve as a committee member if he/she has expertise in an appropriate field of research. Faculty from other universities or agencies may also serve as committee members.

The Thesis Committee

The thesis committee will assist in putting together the degree program and must approve program courses. They will also assist with the development of the research proposal and must approve the thesis proposal. The committee may offer advice and counseling on any aspect of the degree program. The committee will evaluate performance, and determine whether the student passes or fails. Each committee member will read, edit, and evaluate the thesis and must approve the final draft.

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

Thesis

Philosophy

Although course work is important, research and the resulting thesis are the unique experiences of graduate study. The design of a realistic and well-defined research project should be considered the highest priority. A detailed proposal outline helps you achieve this goal by explaining the steps in developing a review of the pertinent literature and a written narrative of the direction the thesis will take. The proposal is used by both student and graduate committee for evaluating and overseeing research progress. Research provides an opportunity to make a contribution to science. Thesis writing is an important step to that contribution. The thesis should present research findings evaluated within the context of previously published works. It is usually a common goal of student and advisor to publish results of the thesis research. There are several possible arrangements between the student and advisor concerning authorship of a manuscript to be submitted for publication. This should be discussed as the research progresses.

Thesis Proposal

A thesis proposal prepared early in the academic program is essential to promote a firm and mutual understanding of expectations for educational and research activities. The proposal should be completed before the end of the first academic year and will be retained as a part of your CMWS graduate file. It will consist of the cover sheet, literature review, research proposal, and budget. The budget must include all real projected expenses including the use of boats. There must be a clearly identified section in the proposal that describes the relationship between the proposed research and the material covered in the core classes (CMWS 601, 602 and 603). Students are required to present their proposals in the seminar class during the second semester. Once approved by your committee the cover page will be signed by your committee.

The proposal is a research proposal or plan, and as such may be modified as the research progresses. Scientific research may not proceed as expected; do not be surprised if your research goes in a different direction from your proposal. Once approved by the faculty committee the proposal does not have to be revised even if the research changes direction.

Thesis Credit

Students must complete at least six (6) credit hours of thesis research (CMWS 700). The student must be registered during any semester in which work on the thesis occurs, and he/she must be enrolled during the semester in which graduation occurs.

Thesis Format

Thesis guidelines are available online under forms at <http://www.coastal.edu/science/coastalstudies/> or from the CMWS Graduate Coordinator. The thesis format should adhere to these guidelines. Detailed presentations of methods and data should be in appendices and should be sufficient to allow future students to duplicate the work or to make comparisons between your data and newly gathered information. In general, your thesis should be in the format of an article ready for submission to an appropriate science journal.

The student should contact the CMWS Graduate Coordinator early in the thesis writing process to find out if there are any changes in thesis guidelines, and any relevant deadlines. The thesis does not fulfill the degree requirement until it has been signed by the dean of the Graduate School. The thesis title and date of approval must be filed in the Graduate School before the degree requirement is officially met.

Defense of Thesis

Approximately two months before the desired date for the thesis seminar and defense, the student should submit a thesis draft (including figures and tables) to his/her advisor. The advisor shall read and edit the draft and return it for revisions. After these revisions are made to the draft, it is submitted to other members of the committee and the CMWS Graduate Coordinator. Each committee member should study and edit the thesis before the defense. The CMWS Graduate Coordinator reviews the thesis for formatting, and upon

approval, the student may schedule the presentation and defense. The defense of thesis shall be conducted at a date and time mutually agreed upon by the student and examining committee. Normally, the defense of thesis immediately follows the public presentation. At the conclusion of the defense, copies of the thesis containing each member's suggestions for changes are returned to the student. After committee deliberation on the quality of responses to questions, oral performance, and condition of thesis, the student shall be notified of whether he/she passed or failed. If the defense is passed, the student must prepare a final copy of the thesis based on the written and oral comments provided by the committee. Should he/she fail the defense, the committee will schedule a second defense allowing for further study or revision. Typically a period of three months is provided for the revision.

Considerations and Milestones: Non-Thesis Option

The non-thesis option should be chosen by those who are interested in education, policy or management aspects of coastal marine and wetland studies. This option involves completion of an internship followed by written and oral summary of the internship experience. Students should decide within the first semester which option, thesis or nonthesis, they will pursue. Students are responsible for identifying and developing internship opportunities but they should consult with faculty advisors regarding the focus and outcomes of internships and appropriate coursework. An approved degree plan should be completed and submitted with the Application for Candidacy before the end of the second semester. An Internship Proposal must be completed and approved by the CMWS Graduate Committee before the internship is started. This should be completed before the end of the second semester. During the semester of the internship, students must register for 6 credits of CMWS 701 Internship. When the internship is complete, students must work with the CMWS Coordinator in scheduling a presentation and submitting a final report for approval by the CMWS Graduate Committee.

Checklist for a Two-Year Timeline

First Semester

- _____ Find a faculty advisor if you don't already have one.
- _____ Enroll in 6+ credit hours, including two core classes.
- _____ Attend seminars as appropriate.
- _____ Define research or internship direction with the help of an advisor.
- _____ Begin reading journal articles.
- _____ Begin learning laboratory methods and techniques.
- _____ Develop a Degree Plan.
- _____ Begin writing thesis or internship proposal.

Second Semester

- _____ Enroll in 6+ credit hours (include a minimum of one core course so you will have completed at least three core courses by the end of the second semester).
- _____ Attend seminars as appropriate.
- _____ Write research or internship proposal; have it reviewed by an advisor as you write.
- _____ Present proposal at the seminar.

- _____ Submit application for Candidacy. Finish thesis or internship proposal.
- _____ Submit approved proposal to program coordinator

First Summer

- _____ Become active in research or complete your internship.

Third Semester

- _____ Focus on research or complete your internship.
- _____ Enroll in any remaining mandatory course work.
- _____ Attend seminars as appropriate.
- _____ Submit the graduation application and degree certification form to CMWS Graduate Coordinator before deadline posted on the web page.

Fourth Semester

- _____ Enroll in any remaining mandatory coursework.
- _____ Write thesis or internship report; several revisions are necessary.
- _____ Provide copies of thesis to all committee members. Or, submit internship report to CMWS Graduate Committee.
- _____ Schedule thesis presentation and oral defense of the thesis or presentation of the internship results.
- _____ Present and defend thesis or present results of the internship.
- _____ Revise thesis after obtaining committee input. Or, revise internship report.
- _____ Get final approval of the thesis or internship report.
- _____ Make thesis copies for signature by committee members, the Dean, and the Director of Graduate Studies.
- _____ Submit the thesis copies.
- _____ Graduate.

Admission Requirements

Regular admission to the Master of Science in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies is met by satisfactorily meeting the following criteria:

1. Completion of an application form.
2. Submission of an official transcript from each post-secondary school or college previously attended (all prior undergraduate academic study must be represented as well as other graduate study). Transcripts should show a minimum overall graduating GPA of 3.0 and a minimum GPA of 3.0 in any graduate work already completed.
3. Evidence of having received a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution in this country or its equivalent at a foreign institution based on a four-year degree program.
4. Completion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The University expects successful applicants to have a score of no less than 150 on both the verbal and quantitative portions.
5. Submission of at least two letters of recommendation.
6. Submission of a written statement of educational and career goals, how this degree will fulfill those goals and the subject area of research interest while completing this degree.
7. Submission of a resume.

International students whose native language is not English must also submit scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a score of at least 575 (paper-based test) or 89 on the TOEFL (internet-based test) or 6.5 on the IELTS with no subscore lower than 5.0 on the IELTS or students may complete the ELS Centers level 112 English language training program.

Scores on the GRE and TOEFL or IELTS must be less than three years old.

Provisional Admission

Applicants may receive provisional admission in the Master of Science in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies degree program if they do not meet the stated admission requirements and are entering the University for the first time or are returning to the University after an extended absence. Students on provisional admission are limited to 12 hours of course work.

Removal of Provisional Status

To remove provisional status the student must, within the first two academic semesters (either Fall, Spring, or Spring, Fall):

- a. Earn a B or better in two core courses;
- b. Maintain a 3.0 GPA in all graduate courses taken;
- c. Earn a B or better in all undergraduate prerequisites required as specified in the provisional acceptance letter.

Degree Requirements

Admission to Candidacy

Admission to the graduate program in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies does not signify Admission to Candidacy. To be eligible for Admission to Candidacy for the Master of Science in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies, a student must choose either the thesis or non-thesis option and then satisfy the corresponding requirements.

Thesis Option

1. Achieve regular admission status;
2. Have a degree plan and thesis proposal approved by the major professor, thesis committee, Program Coordinator, and the Dean;
3. Complete a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate work at Coastal Carolina University; and
4. Have earned a B or better average on all graduate work pursued and a B or better in the three core courses (CMWS 601, CMWS 602, CMWS 603).

Non-Thesis Option

1. Achieve regular admission status;
2. Have a degree plan and internship proposal approved by the Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies Graduate Committee, the Program Coordinator, and the Dean;
3. Complete a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate work at Coastal Carolina University; and
4. Have earned a B or better average on all graduate work pursued and a B or better in the three core courses (CMWS 601, CMWS 602, CMWS 603).

The final decision for admission to Candidacy is made by the Dean of the College of Science. All students, including transfer students, must clear the English Proficiency Requirement, if applicable, before being admitted to Candidacy. Candidacy Applications are available in the Dean's office.

The Master of Science in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies requires:

1. Successful completion of an approved program of study with a minimum of 30 graduate hours;
2. Admission to Candidacy;
3. A minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B) on all course work;
4. Completion, presentation, and successful defense of a thesis; or, completion of an internship followed by an oral presentation and written report summarizing the internship experience.
5. All work applied toward the degree must be earned in the six years immediately preceding the completion of the graduate program.

Note: Transfer credit(s) cannot be used to raise the GPA at CCU.

Thesis Option

Students choosing the thesis option based on original research must assemble a thesis committee of at least three members by the second semester of enrollment. The committee will consist of at least three full-time CCU faculty members including the major professor who will chair the committee. An approved member from an outside institution may be included. The entire thesis committee will meet with the student semi-annually to assess progress and to give advice. Before graduation, students will submit the completed thesis to the CMWS coordinator who will schedule the public defense.

Non-Thesis Option

Students interested in future employment as professionals in the environmental field with federal, state, local agencies, not-for-profit organizations or private businesses may choose a non-thesis option. Students who select a non-thesis option will complete an internship (CMWS 701, total of 6 credits) with a sponsoring public, non-profit or private laboratory, agency or business. The internship will be at least 450 hours. The internship must be approved by the CMWS coordinator

and the outside supervisor, and should be related to the student's educational and career goals. The details of the work should be described and filed with the CMWS coordinator before beginning the internship. Although the faculty will provide guidance to students, it is the responsibility of each student to seek and secure an internship. A final written report describing the activities and outcomes of the internship is required for graduation and should be filed with the CMWS office. The report should analyze and detail how the student's internship activities integrate with the interdisciplinary field of CMWS and the current state of knowledge, and identify the directions of growth in the future student's career. The report must be submitted and approved before graduation. The on-campus presentation, summarizing the material in the report, will be followed by a meeting of the candidate with CMWS graduate committee to discuss the report and its connections to core CMWS courses taken by the candidate.

Enrollment Requirement

Students in the Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies program must be continuously enrolled during all phases of graduate work. This includes fall, spring and summer terms. (The summer term here is inclusive of Summer 1, Summer 2 and Maymester.) This requirement is typically satisfied by registering for a minimum of one graduate credit in each term. However, the situation may arise where students have completed all course requirements except for the thesis or internship. In this case, students must enroll in CMWS 702 Project Completion in order to satisfy the continuous enrollment requirement. Registering in CMWS 702 maintains email and library privileges and also allows access to university facilities and faculty advisers. CMWS 702 does not count toward degree requirements and does not substitute for the 6 credit hour requirement in CMWS 700 Thesis Research or for the 6 credit hour requirement in CMWS 701 Internship.

Required Graduate Degree Credit Hours (30 Graduate Credit Hours)

The Master of Science in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies requires the successful completion of an approved program of study with a minimum of 30 graduate credit hours. Within the approved program are three core courses, three seminar courses, electives, and a required thesis or internship.

CORE COURSES (9 credit hours)

CMWS 601: Coastal Marine and Wetland Processes	3
CMWS 602: Coastal Marine and Wetland Ecology	3
CMWS 603: Coastal and Wetland Policy and Management	3

GRADUATE SEMINAR COURSES (3 credit hours)

CMWS 697: Graduate Seminar I	1
CMWS 698: Graduate Seminar II	1
CMWS 699: Graduate Seminar III	1

ELECTIVES (12 credit hours)

(Choose 12 credit hours).....12
 Electives must be 500 level or above courses from BIOL, CHEM, CMWS, MATH, MSCI, PHYS, or STAT.

A maximum of 6 credit hours at the 500 level may be used towards completing degree requirements.

THESIS RESEARCH (6 credit hours) or INTERNSHIP (6 credit hours)

GENERAL GRADUATE INFORMATION

Admission Categories

Students admitted to graduate study are placed in either one of two general categories: candidates for degrees or non-degree candidates. Applicants are required to meet all standards for admission if they wish to pursue a degree program. The category of non-degree admission is available for qualified students with reasons for earning graduate credit without a degree objective.

Credits earned as a non-degree student may be applied toward degree requirements only upon the approval of the academic unit offering the degree. Students holding non-degree admission are advised to contact the graduate coordinator in the academic area where a particular course is offered as to their eligibility to register for the course. Students admitted in a non-degree classification are not eligible for student financial aid.

Readmission

A student enrolled as a degree-seeking student who leaves the University in good standing and misses one or more major terms and does not attend another institution need only submit the application for readmission in order to return to the University. Summer terms do not count as a major term in this instance.

Valid Period of Admission

Admission to a graduate program is valid for one year with the approval of the coordinator. If an applicant fails to complete any graduate course or part of the prescribed program within this period, the acceptance lapses, and the student becomes subject to any new requirements that may have been adopted. If a student has not acted upon an admission after one calendar year, the student must reapply for admission.

Students who have been admitted to a graduate program under regulations other than those now in force and who have not completed any Coastal Carolina University graduate courses during a period of three or more years, are required to fulfill current admission requirements prior to returning to the University for additional graduate work. Upon readmission, such students become subject to current regulations of the institution and of the program to which they are admitted.

Time Period - Maximum/Minimum Period Allowed

A student is expected to obtain a degree in accordance with the requirements set forth in the regulations in force at the time he/she is admitted to degree candidacy, or under subsequent regulations published while he/she is enrolled as a degree candidate. However, a student is restricted in his/her choice to the requirements of one specific catalog. Students have a period of 6 years inclusive and continuous in which to claim the rights of a specific catalog.

Academic Standards

Graduate students will earn degree credit completed at a grade level of C or above, but the student's average on all courses attempted for graduate credit which are to be applied to degree completion must be at least a B (3.0 on a 4-point system). Additionally, the student's grade point average on all courses numbered 700 or above, that are to be applied to degree completion, must be no less than 3.0. Students are advised that some academic programs may have more stringent standards and to contact the graduate coordinator in their academic area of interest regarding applicable academic standards. Grades earned on credits transferred from other universities do not count in the grade point average. Grades earned below the grade of C do not transfer to Coastal Carolina University.

Students who receive grades below B on 12 credits of degree-required graduate course work at the University within a 6 year period are suspended from degree candidacy status and are not permitted to enroll for further courses even as non-degree students, without the specific written approval by the Office of Graduate Studies. After a grade below B is 6 years old, it will cease to be a disqualifying factor.

Academic Discipline

Infractions of academic discipline at the University are dealt with in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility. Examples of such infractions include but are not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and illegal use of old laboratory reports. Further information is contained in The Student Handbook, Office of Student Services or the Office of the Provost.

Advisement

Every graduate student admitted to a degree program is entitled to an adviser. Students admitted as non-degree students, that is, those who do not seek degree admission or who have not yet met all the conditions for degree candidacy, are not assigned to advisers. They may, however, consult with the designated graduate administrator within the college where their course work is offered about both specific and general information.

Appeals and Petitions

Appeals should be made within the academic unit that directs the student's program. Appeals should be addressed to the designated graduate administrator in the college where the course work is housed. Only after the internal process for appeals and grievances has been exhausted should a student take his/her case to the Dean of the College. If the Dean cannot resolve the question being raised, he/she will refer it to the Committee on Petitions and Scholastic Standing, or other similar committee, in the college of the student's degree.

A student who wants relief from any academic regulation of the University may submit the case for consideration to the appropriate committee in the College of the student's major or the appropriate University-wide committee. Petitions related to programs, regulations, or other matters in the graduate program should be addressed to the Dean of the College who will then refer it to the appropriate College committee. Petitions

requesting substantial deviation from established practice also should be referred to the Dean of the College. Appeals, grievances, or petitions may be related to academic matters only.

Appeals for Reinstatement

Appeals for reinstatement to degree candidacy should be forwarded to the Dean of the College for review by the college's appeals process. Appellants who have maintained a B average despite their accumulation of lower grades may, if their appeals are supported by their academic units/programs, be allowed to proceed toward their degrees provided they receive no additional grades below B. Appellants who have not maintained a B average should show extenuating circumstances and obtain the support of their academic units/programs if they wish to be considered for reinstatement.

Correspondence Courses

The University neither offers correspondence courses for graduate credit nor accepts correspondence work as applicable toward a graduate degree.

Courses Outside Major Program Area

Students wishing to enroll in courses outside the area to which they have been admitted should do so only with the permission of their advisers and the Dean of the course.

Students are advised to seek guidance from the graduate administrator of the College sponsoring the course regarding eligibility and prerequisites.

An individual who has been denied admission to a program may not continue to enroll in courses in that program without special permission of the Dean of that college. This permission is needed even if the student enters another degree program at the institution.

Credit by Examination

No graduate credit is offered by examination only.

Pass-Fail Option

Under certain circumstances, a student may elect pass-fail grading in a course whose content is outside the major area. This option permits enrichment of the student's experience without affecting the average grade. A grade of either satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) will be awarded, and those courses completed with a satisfactory grade may be counted toward total credit hours earned. Any student interested in this option should consult his/her adviser and the Chair of the department offering the course prior to registration. Satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading is available only for courses specifically approved for such grading or individually by prior authorization of the Dean of the course.

Prerequisites

Prerequisite courses are listed to inform students about the academic background recommended for satisfactory course completion. If a student believes that he/she has the knowledge and/or skills represented by a prerequisite course obtained via other courses or methods, this should be discussed with the professor prior to registration regarding special permission to enroll.

Revalidation

Regular graduate students of the institution desiring to revalidate over-age courses (courses over six years old) must secure permission of the Dean where the course is housed. If the revalidation is to be completed by formal examination, the applicant must pay to the Bursar's Office, in advance of the examination, a fee of \$75.00 for each course revalidated. The fee is not refundable once the student has presented himself/herself to the instructor for the examination.

Residence

Students may transfer a maximum of twelve credit hours into the University applicable to the completion of a degree program. Hours remaining beyond the maximum of twelve that may be transferred in must be completed in residence at the University. Students studying in a degree program that requires a thesis must register for a minimum of one credit hour in the semester of the thesis defense.

Course Load

A student may enroll for a semester load not to exceed twelve (12) graduate hours with the exception of the fall semester of the M.A.T. program. A student is classified as a full-time student for academic purposes with nine (9) or more hours during a fall or spring term, or six (6) hours during the entire summer session. A student is classified as a part-time (half-time) student for academic purposes with six (6) credit hours during a fall or spring term.

Course Loads for Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistant applicants must be full-time students. Graduate assistants are required to carry a minimum of twelve (12) hours over a twelve month period. Students in good standing and with extenuating circumstances may apply to the Graduate Coordinator in their area of study for an extension to the 12 month period. Students are advised to contact the graduate coordinator in their program area with respect to any specific requirements in terms of course loads for graduate assistants in that area.

Transfer Credit

A student transferring to the University from another college or university should, before enrolling in any course at the University, have transcripts evaluated by the Office of Admissions. It is only through such evaluation that a student will know which transferred courses may be applicable toward Coastal degree requirements. Students from regionally accredited colleges and universities may transfer credit for academic courses completed with grades of C or above, but the University reserves the right to determine what credit, if any, for courses taken elsewhere will be counted toward its degrees.

The regional accrediting associations are: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, Southern

Association of Colleges and Schools, and Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Students cannot receive degree credit for a course taken at Coastal if they have received transfer credit for an equivalent course taken previously at another institution. Similarly, transfer credit will not be awarded if a Coastal equivalent, regardless of the grade earned, appears on the Coastal academic record. A student can not be awarded more transfer credit for a course than the original institution awarded.

Credits earned at another institution while a student is on suspension, academic or non-academic, from Coastal Carolina University are not transferable and cannot be applied toward a degree or used in improving the grade point average.

Evaluation of Transfer Credit

Up to 12 semester hours of credit with grades of B or above (or equivalent grades if a different system is used) from other institutions of approved graduate standing may be transferred for use with the following restrictions. Credit must have been earned at an institution accredited, at the time the course work was completed, by a regional accrediting commission. The only exceptions to this standard are as follows: transfer from foreign institutions, transfer of course work completed at an institution accredited by a recognized accrediting body, or the acceptance of credit for military education. Graduate credit will not be accepted for portfolio-based experiential learning which occurs prior to the student's matriculation into a Coastal Carolina University graduate program and which has not been under the supervision of the institution. The credit must be approved by the graduate administrator and the Dean of the College where the student seeks to have the credit applied. The credit must be dated within the six-year period allowed for a degree. There is no revalidation mechanism for transfer credit that does not fall within the time limit.

Vehicle Registration

As a primarily non-residential or commuter campus, the University recognizes the importance of providing adequate parking for all members of the University community. All graduate students, full and part-time, are expected to have their vehicles registered with the appropriate display of the University parking decal. This pertains to the traditional academic year as well as summer study. Regulations regarding automobile registration and parking are distributed by the Department of Public Safety. Students, faculty, and staff are required to register their vehicles each school year.

Identification Cards

Identification cards are required for all members of the University community. Upon completion of their first registration, students will be issued a photo-ID card for use while enrolled at Coastal Carolina University. Valid ID cards are required for entrance to campus activities and events, for use of library materials and resources, and for use of all campus facilities. University police officers are authorized by state law to request students and staff to present identification cards on campus property at any time. Students must present an ID card when requested by any University official.

If cards are misplaced or destroyed, they may be replaced at a cost of twenty dollars. For information regarding ID cards, contact the Identification Card Office, 349-6435, located in Atheneum Hall.

Graduation

The candidate may graduate in August, December or May. CCU Commencement exercises are held in December and May. December and May graduates are encouraged to participate in Commencement exercises; summer graduates are encouraged to participate in the December graduation. All graduates participating in the CCU Commencement exercise must order academic regalia.

ADVICE TO CMWS STUDENTS FROM THE COORDINATOR

Plan on finishing this degree in two years. This requires choosing a thesis topic that will yield reliable data in a short period of time (i.e., one summer or one year).

Choose a thesis topic that will give us new insights, but be realistic in terms of what can be done considering available equipment, facilities and resources.

Choose a thesis topic that meshes with your career goals.

Plan on publishing your thesis research in a peer-reviewed journal. Take the lead on this.

Choose a project that will increase your marketability.

Assess your weaknesses and choose courses or pursue independent study to alleviate these weaknesses. Refresh (upgrade) your math skills. Take an introductory course in statistics. Get up to speed on data manipulation in Excel. Learn how to analyze data in SPSS. Learn how to construct publication-quality figures in SigmaPlot. Develop your writing skills.

Occasionally take your major professor or committee members out to lunch. (They are human and they do like to eat!)

Be strategic in communicating with your major professor and committee members. Don't rely too much on email for discussing important issues. It is always best to schedule face to face meetings. Use email for simple things like verifying meeting times, checking small facts, etc.

Keep your major professor and committee informed about your progress. Talk to them.

Become a skeptic. Don't rely on what other people have told you. Find out for yourself.

Begin and quickly complete the transition from undergraduate to graduate. You should rely on your major professor for timely advice and guidance, but this is now your deal. Solve your own problems. Take ownership of your graduate education.

Become the expert on your chosen research area. Search both the old and modern published literature. Don't rely solely on electronic databases as many of these do not include papers published prior to 1980.

Join the Graduate Student Organization (GO).

Savor the life of a graduate student. What follows graduate school will not likely be nearly as enjoyable.

Advice to New Students from CMWS Graduate Students

Be proactive when meeting with faculty members, finding out about current research on campus and getting any information or help that you need.

Be persistent when seeking out and in speaking with faculty. They often have a lot going on. Also, if you submit any work for their perusal, remember that it may take a while for them to get to it.

Get an introductory textbook for Marine Science (properties of water, waves, tides, etc) and Ecology (diversity, fragmentation, Island Biogeography, etc) and review for 601 and 602, respectively.

When taking 601 (Coastal Marine and Wetland Processes) and 602 (Coastal Marine and Wetland Ecology) ask the professors to suggest introductory text books to use as a guide if you do not have a strong background in physics, oceanography, and ecology.

Immediately focus on developing a question to rest your research upon.

Know your authors.

Don't assume you will be notified in advance of upcoming deadlines. It is up to you to be responsible for getting everything done on time.

If your research calls for new equipment or advanced training you need to get it taken care of before the field season starts, otherwise it is too late.

If you need to use a boat for your research, get certified to drive a boat as soon as possible.

Start looking for scientific papers from the start and read them. Try to read at least a few each week, preferably a couple a day.

