MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.) IN COASTAL MARINE AND WETLAND STUDIES
MISSION STATEMENT
The Master of Science degree program in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies is taught and administered by College of Science faculty with expertise in the issues and problems facing coastal areas and wetlands both locally and globally. It was selected and developed to take educational advantage of the unique natural resources of the region and thus faculty and students become important intellectual resources for the region. The purpose of this degree program is to provide students with the tools and abilities to assess, comprehend, and synthesize a broad range of scientific information. This will, in turn, allow them to assume employment as professionals in the environmental field, to become stewards of the environment, and to also pursue further graduate study. The goals of the program are satisfied through coursework, teaching opportunities, and either the completion of a thesis or an internship.

The Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies graduate program consists of 24 credit hours of coursework and 6 credit hours of either thesis research or an internship. Courses are taught primarily by faculty members from two academic departments: biology and marine science. The coursework involves three core courses stressing coastal physical processes, ecology, and environmental policy. Various electives provide students with skills in conservation biology, geographic information systems, statistics, wetland delineation, geophysical surveying as well as the theoretical background in specific areas of organism biology and ecology.

Located near coastal marshes, swamps, a large unregulated river, barrier islands, and the ocean, the program offers exceptional opportunities for basic and applied research. Students pursue projects that contribute to the characterization and preservation or management of the coastal ecosystem and the organisms that thrive in this ecosystem. Research conducted by graduate students and their faculty mentors is typically presented to the public via seminars, conferences or publications. Teaching assistantships, research assistantships and fellowships are available on a competitive basis.

Student Learning Outcomes
1. Identify and explain the biological, chemical, geological and physical processes influencing the coastal zone.
2. Describe connections among the biological, chemical, geological and physical processes influencing the coastal zone.
3. Describe how a coastal zone policy or regulation is influenced by scientific research in the coastal zone.
4. Demonstrate proper research, writing and oral communication skills.

Graduate Applications
Applications for graduate study should be directed to the Office of Graduate Studies at Coastal Carolina University.

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 (1) scores on The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a score of at least 575 on the paper based (PBT) or 89 on the internet-based test (IBT) or (2) the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a score of 6.5 with no subscore lower than 5.0 within the last three years, or (3) students may complete ELS Centers level 112 English language training programs.

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; and

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.

Degree Requirements
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; and
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 Wetlands 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, MSCP, PHYS, or STAT.
A maximum of 6 credit hours at the 500 level may be used towards completing degree requirements.

**THESIS RESEARCH OR INTERNSHIP (6 Credit Hours)**
CMWS 700: Thesis Research ............................................................................. 6
or
CMWS 701: Internship ...................................................................................... 6