

# School of Marine Science and Policy

## Policy Statement Sc/1/10

### Graduate Program

#### 1. Administration

- a) The Director is responsible for the graduate-degree programs in the School of Marine Science and Policy (SMSP). The various curricula are housed in the four Academic Programs that comprise the SMSP (see Policy Statement Sa/2/09). Each Program is administered by an Associate Director. Coordination and oversight of graduate education resides in the Directors Council of the School (see Policy Statement Sa/3/09).
- b) All core and joint faculty members of the SMSP are eligible to teach graduate courses and to serve as principal advisors or as advisory committee members. Core faculty members are those individuals who have primary appointment in the SMSP. These include both tenure-track and research faculty (see SMSP Policy Statement Sf/5/09). Joint faculty members have primary appointment in another unit of the University and secondary appointment in the SMSP (see College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment Policy Statement F/2/09).
- c) Individuals other than School faculty may be permitted to teach specific graduate courses during specific terms if both the course and instructor are approved by the appropriate Associate Director and the Director.

#### 2. Assessment

The Mission Statement for the SMSP is *to advance knowledge and education critical to the understanding, stewardship, and conservation of estuarine, coastal, and ocean environments*. The curricula of the academic programs in the SMSP are multidisciplinary and encompass the fields of Marine Bioscience, Marine Policy, Oceanography, and Physical Ocean Science and Engineering. Students are encouraged to explore areas outside of their own specialties.

The faculty of the SMSP have defined seven learning goals consistent with this Mission Statement. Students will:

- 1. Identify or define a research question
- 2. Understand and synthesize literature material
- 3. Design and execute a research study or experiment
- 4. Critically evaluate and interpret the outcome
- 5. Write for peer review publications
- 6. Present in professional and public forums
- 7. Perform in collaborative workgroups

The specific learning goals stated above are mapped to courses administered by the four

academic programs in the SMSP and achievement of these goals are assessed through multiple methods including:

- Exams
- Term Project(s) / Paper(s)
- Laboratory Report(s)
- Oral Presentation(s)
- Problem Based Learning
- Problem Sets
- Case Studies

A curriculum map for each academic program, which links the learning goals to the various courses and learning opportunities offered through the SMSP, can be found on the SMSP webpage at

<http://www.ceoe.udel.edu/academics/smsp/academicAssessment.shtml>.

### **3. Admission**

- a) Admission to the graduate programs of the School is based on GRE scores, grade point averages, letters of recommendation, and other appropriate information.
- b) Initial screening of applications is done in the University Office of Professional and Graduate Education. Subsequent evaluation for Master of Science (MS), Master of Marine Policy (MMP), and PhD programs is conducted by the respective Associate Directors in consultation with relevant faculty members. The Associate Director forwards a recommendation to the Director, who makes final decisions concerning admission.
- c) The Master of Marine Management degree is administered by a three member committee (MMM Advisory Committee) composed of the Associate Director for Marine Policy and two faculty mentors. One of the mentors must be from the Marine Policy program and the other from one of the science programs. This committee oversees admissions into the MMM Program and reports to the Director.
- d) Before qualified applicants are admitted to the School, a specific faculty member must be identified as the primary advisor for the applicant. The Director appoints the faculty advisor *pro tem*; at the initiative of faculty or applicant, the advisor may be changed. When an appropriate advisor cannot be identified, the relevant Associate Director acts as the point of contact for the applicant regarding academic issues.

### **4. Policies for Matriculated Students**

- a) Requirements for the various degrees offered by SMSP are described at <http://www.ceoe.udel.edu/academics/degrees.shtml>. All degrees except the Master of Marine Management require a thesis or dissertation describing original

work completed by the student.

- b) Graduate work must be completed within the time limits imposed by the University and SMSP.  
([http://www.ceoe.udel.edu/academics/policies\\_current/index.shtml#progress](http://www.ceoe.udel.edu/academics/policies_current/index.shtml#progress))
- c) On petition, waivers of the time limits may be granted for good cause. The waiver must be approved by the student's advisor and the Director of the SMSP. In the case of University time limits, the waiver must be approved by the University Office of Graduate and Professional Education.
- d) A Ph.D. committee must consist of at least four members, but not more than six. At least one member of the committee must be a core faculty member of the SMSP and at least half of the committee members must be either core or joint faculty in the School. As per University regulations, at least one member of the committee must be external to the School, and students are "encouraged to seek the external member from outside the University in order to broaden the perspectives of the committee."
- e) An MS or MMP committee must consist of at least three members, but no more than four. At least one member of the committee must be a core faculty member of the School and at least half of the committee members must be core or joint faculty in the SMSP.
- f) Only core or joint appointees may serve as committee chairs, except in the case of an emeritus professor who has, prior to retirement, been the advisor of a student when that student's committee was formed.
- g) A qualifying examination is required to obtain admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. In order to take the examination, each student must be in good academic standing and have approval of the advisory committee. A research proposal is ordinarily required before a student takes the qualifying examination.
- h) The qualifying examination must include both oral and written parts.
  - i. The examination is prepared and administered by the advisor in consultation with the student's advisory committee
  - ii. The faculty in each Academic Program defines the general format of qualifying examinations for students in that Program.
  - iii. At least 60 days prior to the examination, the advisor must inform the student of the areas to be examined and the format of the written and oral parts of the examination.
  - iv. The student must be informed of success or failure of the qualifying examination within two weeks of completion.

- v. A student who fails the qualifying examination is entitled to only one re-examination, which must be taken within six months of the first examination.
- i) The defense of the dissertation or thesis focuses on the scope of the research and its contribution to the field.
  - i. The student's advisory committee serves as the examining board.
  - ii. The defense is oral and open to the academic community of the University and to interested members of the public; the defense must be announced at least two weeks in advance.
  - iii. The defense begins with a presentation of the work by the candidate, followed by an open period of questions from the audience.
  - iv. After a short break, the members of the examining board address questions to the candidate.
  - v. At the close of questioning, the examining board retires for deliberation and decision.
  - vi. Upon reaching a decision, the board communicates that decision to the candidate and to the Director of the School.
  - vii. Dissertations and theses must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Education according to the deadline schedule published by that office.

## **5. Change in Student Status**

- a) A student may change advisor in consultation with the assigned advisor and the potential advisor. The relevant Associate Director and the Academic Coordinator of the SMSP must be informed of the change.
- b) Students who have formed a Master of Science (MS) or Master of Marine Policy (MMP) advisory committee and who have completed a thesis proposal may petition for admission to a PhD program within three semesters of matriculation in the School. This is known as the *bypass option*. Petitioning students must submit evidence of high performance to the M.S. advisory committee. Ordinarily this evidence includes excellent grades in graduate courses, promising research results, and sound plans for dissertation research. The following steps are necessary for approval of a bypass petition:
  - i. Chair of MS advisory committee sends a letter of support of behalf of committee to relevant Associate Director.

- ii. Associate Director forwards approved letter to the Academic Coordinator.
  - iii. Director of SMSP approves bypass.
  - iv. The student submits completed change-of-status form to Academic Coordinator and continues as a PhD student
- c) Students who want to continue for a PhD after completing an MS or MMP must submit a letter of intent to the relevant Associate Director.
- i. The letter should outline dissertation research plans and specify an advisor and funding source.
  - ii. The Associate Director reviews the applicant's credentials and consults with faculty members as required.
  - iii. The Associate Director forwards a recommendation concerning admission to the Director of the SMSP.
  - iv. The Director acts on this recommendation.

## 6. Competency of SMSP graduates

- a) A recipient of a PhD from the University of Delaware must have the analytical skills and intellectual scholarship to perform research with independent creativity. This criterion is demonstrated by the submission of a **written dissertation** of original research. This accomplishment should gain wide recognition through a publication of one or more articles in an internationally recognized and refereed journal or equivalent medium.
- b) A **written thesis** is required for the MS and MMP. The depth and breadth of this document is more limited than a dissertation and reflects a more focused and restricted exposure to research and analysis.

## 7. Changes in Requirements

- a) Any change in academic requirements requires approval of the Directors Council of the SMSP.
- b) The Council has the authority to determine when a vote of the entire faculty of the SMSP is necessary to effect a change in requirements.

## Legislative History

- Draft given by Associate Dean of College of Marine Studies (CMS) to Program Directors for review and comment - December 1981.
- Draft C/1/82 circulated for faculty comment - 10 February 1982.

- Promulgated by Dean of CMS - 3 March 1982.
- CMS Executive Committee reviewed and recommended retention after modification - 25 February 1985.
- Dean of CMS promulgated - 1 December 1985.
- Revised by Academic Council of CMS annually and sent to Office of Graduate Studies for approval.
- A decision was made that the revised Graduate Program Policy Statement would be placed in the CMS Student Advisement Manual with a note to that effect in this policy manual - 1 May 1992.
- Some sections of the CMS Student Advisement Manual (now Current Student information) were moved back to this section. Revised and approved by Academic Council of CMS - 27 July 2004.
- Approved by Faculty of CMS – 7 February 2005.
- Promulgated by Interim Dean of CMS – 7 February 2005.
- Discussed and approved by Academic Council of CMS- 30 May 2006.
- Revised by Interim Director of SMSP—1 September 2009
- Discussed and approved by Directors Council of School of Marine Science and Policy—10 May 2010
- Approved by Dean of College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment—31 May 2010
- Promulgated by Interim Director of SMSP—31 May 2010