

GUIDE TO GRADUATE STUDIES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

The cornerstone of a M.S. or Ph.D. degree is the thesis/dissertation, in which the graduate student documents the ability to conduct independent research. An M.S.T. degree focuses on development of teaching skills and includes a supervised teaching project. The Graduate Committee, led by the Graduate Coordinator, along with the Program Assistant assist students with procedures and provide initial advising. In addition, each student will have a supervisory committee, led by their advisor (the supervisory committee chair) that will provide mentoring and research advice. While faculty in Geological Sciences are here to mentor and advise, the primary responsibility for success in graduate school lies with the student.

Note: None of the guidelines below are meant to contradict the Graduate Catalog, which is an important resource to students and provides important information on deadlines, registration requirements, and degree requirements: <http://gradschool.rgp.ufl.edu/current-files/current-catalog.pdf>

THESIS/DISSERTATION

Students in the M.S. and PhD graduate program must write a thesis/dissertation in accordance with the UF Graduate Student Handbook's definition of this scholarly endeavor.

PUBLICATIONS

Master candidates are encouraged to submit their research for publication. Doctoral candidates are expected to submit at least one manuscript to a refereed journal for publication prior to the dissertation defense. Publications are the prime way of satisfying the department's expectations of scholarly achievements by doctoral students. A dissertation may be composed of 3 published (or submitted) manuscripts of which the student is the first author, accompanied by introductory and summary chapters. Material included in a thesis or dissertation is required to be the student's original work.

ADVISING & MONITORING

GRADUATE COMMITTEE

The graduate committee currently consists of three faculty members: John Jaeger (Graduate Coordinator), Ray Russo, and Liz Screaton.

Initial Evaluation: Prior to actual enrollment, each student will meet with their prospective advisor, members of the Graduate Committee, and any other faculty requested by the Chair, to discuss his/her preparation, interests, and goals for graduate education. Advice will be given on curriculum and general procedures. The Graduate Committee will also be available as needed during the semester for advice.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE & THESIS PROSPECTUS

The Graduate School requires all students to have a thesis/dissertation committee by the end of their second semester. To achieve this deadline, each student should identify a potential research

project and thesis/dissertation adviser during their first semester. A month prior to the end of their first semester (i.e., by November 15th for students entering in the Fall), each student should provide to the graduate committee a tentative title for their research and a list of potential supervisory committee members. The student will write a prospectus outlining the hypothesis, goals and research plans for their thesis/dissertation. This prospectus must be approved by the adviser and submitted to the Graduate Committee April 1, ~ one month before the end of the second semester. This allows the first summer to be used for research.

The prospectus length should not exceed 5 pages (including figures but excluding references) for Masters students, and 10 pages (including figures but excluding references) for PhD students. PhD candidates entering with a BS degree (rather than an MS) have the option to write a shorter prospectus (≤ 5 pages) in their second semester; the prospectus would then be expanded prior to qualifying exams.

After the student's advisor and the Graduate Committee have approved a prospectus, a copy should be submitted to the program assistant for the student file, and to supervisory committee members. Each student will then form a supervisory committee (as described below), and have the committee information entered online before the end of their second semester. Students beyond their 2nd semester must have an approved prospectus and supervisory committee to be eligible for any departmental funds.

The first meeting of the committee should occur as soon as possible after the approval of the prospectus. Ideally, the committee should meet prior to the end of the second semester, so the student has committee input prior to summer research. At the latest, the meeting should be completed by September (for an student that started the preceding August), or approximately one year from the student's start date.

Supervisory committee composition:

M.S.

Three members of the graduate faculty, **two of whom are regular faculty members of the Department of Geological Sciences**. Adjunct faculty (e.g., Museum faculty) may serve as members or chairs of committees, but are not considered regular faculty members. If the student has a minor, a member of the faculty from that department/specialty must serve on the committee in addition to the two regular members from the Department.

M.S.T.

The committee consists of at least **three members of the U.F. graduate faculty: two graduate faculty from the Department of Geological Sciences** (at least one of which is a regular, i.e., not affiliate, faculty member from Geological Sciences) and **one faculty member from the College of Education**.

Ph.D.

The committee must consist of at least **five members of the U.F. graduate faculty**, including at least **three regular members of the Department of Geological Sciences**. Adjunct faculty (e.g.

Museum faculty) may serve as members or chairs of committees, but are not considered regular faculty members of the Department of Geological Science. The committee must also include **one person selected from the U.F. graduate faculty from outside the department** to ensure University-wide degree standards are met. That member may not be an affiliate of the Department of Geological Sciences, or anyone else who is eligible to supervise theses within the department. If the student has a minor, a member of the faculty from the department/specialty must also be on the committee. Provided the committee member from the minor department is not an affiliate of the Department of Geological Science, this member can serve as the outside member. Each member of the faculty solicited for membership on the supervisory committee must agree to serve on that committee (i.e., the student must personally arrange committee membership with each person on the committee). Once established, this committee may not be changed without the consent of the Chair and the Graduate Coordinator.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

There are two main purposes to supervisory committee meetings. The first is for the supervisory committee to provide insight and advice to the student on their research and overall development. The second is for the supervisory committee to provide feedback to the department concerning the student's progress in graduate studies.

Prior to each committee meeting, the student should prepare a progress report for the committee, including research activities and class work, and should, with their advisor, identify any issues that need to be addressed at the meeting (e.g., signing of credit transfer forms, timelines for Qualifying Exams, etc). At the meeting, the student should present an overview of research progress and plan for the upcoming year. The supervisory committee assesses the student's progress, makes recommendations for the next year's progress, and signs the form, which is submitted to the department office. The departmental form for the supervisory committee meeting can be found online at: [http://web.geology.ufl.edu/Supervisory Committee Form.pdf](http://web.geology.ufl.edu/Supervisory_Committee_Form.pdf).

It is the collective responsibility of the student and their advisor to ensure that meetings of the student and their supervisory committee occur annually, and that the completed report is submitted to the Program Assistant. It will be the Chair's responsibility to monitor the convening and reporting of these committee meetings and to utilize this monitoring in completing each faculty member's annual evaluation.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the expertise of their committee members beyond the minimum once-a-year meeting through consultation with committee members when needed.

CREDIT-HOUR REQUIREMENTS

Course work during graduate study should provide students with skills and knowledge for their research, broaden their geologic background, and prepare the student for a career. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the available opportunities to strengthen their background as much as possible. Below are general department guidelines. However, each student's background and objectives will differ; thus one of the responsibilities of each student's Supervisory Committee is to provide specific guidance to the student and, if necessary, to petition the

Graduate Committee for exceptions to the following guidelines.

M.S.

32 Semester hours: at least 24 credit hours of organized 5000 and 6000 level (graduate) GLY courses (excluding research, teaching, special projects), 2 credits of Seminar (6931), plus six credit hours of Master's Research (6971). Students can take a maximum of 4 credits of Field Topics (GLY 5786L) classes. A minor requires 6 credit-hours from the minor department. Three hours of credit towards the minor can be counted toward the 24 credits in geology. Three credit hours toward a certificate program can also be counted toward the 24 GLY credits. During a student's final semester (that in which they plan to submit their thesis), **they must be enrolled in 3 hours of 6971 (or 2 hours during the summer semester)**. Students must defend their thesis before their committee, and before final submission and graduation.

M.S.T.

36 Semester hours: at least 24 hours in organized graduate-level geology courses (5000 and 6000 level) including 2 in seminar (6931). An additional 6 hours of Internship in College Teaching (6943) is required. The remaining 6 hours must be in approved electives (including at least one course in each of the following: Social Foundations of Education, Psychological Foundations of Education, and Community College curriculum are required). Master's Research (6971) cannot be used toward the degree. Passage of a final oral examination is required of all candidates.

Ph.D.

90 Semester hours: at least 45 hours of GLY 5000 and 6000 level courses, including 3-5 hours in seminar (6931). These must be in formal, organized graduate level classes and excludes research, teaching, individual work, and special projects. The remaining credit hours (45) may be research hours (7979, 7980), additional geology classes, classes in a declared minor field and graduate or upper-level undergraduate course work in another department (with approval from the student's advisory committee). Students can take a maximum of 4 credits of Field Topics (GLY 5786L) classes. Typically up to 30 semester credits of graduate course work may be transferred from another institution following approval from the student's supervisory committee. All Ph.D. students who received a M.S. degree from another institution are expected to enroll in at least four or five formal courses in geology at the University of Florida for a minimum of 15 credit hours.

During a student's final semester (that in which they plan to submit their thesis), **they must be enrolled in 3 hours of 7980 (or 2 hours during the summer semester)**. Students must defend their dissertation before their committee and before final submission and graduation.

Dissertation committees will determine whether a foreign language or a minor is required on a case-by-case basis.

Credit Transfers: Students who have successfully completed previous graduate work can transfer credits relevant to their intended degree to UF. Guidelines and procedures for credit transfer can be found in the graduate catalog: <http://gradschool.rgp.ufl.edu/current-files/current-catalog.pdf>. A form can be obtained from the Program Assistant or at: <http://gradschool.rgp.ufl.edu/pdffiles/graduate-credit-transfer-form.pdf>. Credit transfers should

be approved by the supervisory committee during the student's first Supervisory Committee Meeting.

QUALIFYING EXAMS (Ph.D. ONLY)

WRITTEN PORTION OF THE QUALIFYING EXAM

The UF-mandated written portion of qualifying exams for PhD students entering with a MS degree should be taken during the student's third semester. For PhD students entering with a BS degree, the PhD written qualifying exam should be conducted in the fifth semester. These written exams will be organized and administered by the student's supervisory committee. In this way, the exam will be relevant to the research topic and background of each student. The exam should be open book in format, and answers based on the modern literature and key papers in the discipline area. Each committee member (usually 5) will be expected to contribute one question and evaluate the answer to that question, and one committee member (other than the chair) should coordinate the exam. The student will be given one week to complete the written answers. Length of answer for each question is limited to 3 typed single-spaced pages (including figures), with an additional page for references. The exam coordinator will gather the evaluations of the written answers and inform the student of the results as soon as possible.

ORAL PORTION OF THE QUALIFYING EXAM

The second part of the Ph.D. qualifying exams will consist of an oral exam focused on the presentation and justification of the student's prospectus/dissertation topic. It will also be a follow-up to the written exam. The oral portion of the qualifying exams for PhD candidates should be conducted by the supervisory committee before the end of the fourth semester for students entering with a MS degree and the 6th semester for students entering with a BS degree. The maximum duration of the oral portion of the exam will be three hours. Each committee member will have at least 1/2 hour to question the student. Evaluation of the student's performance by non-committee faculty members will be taken into consideration by the supervisory committee. Only members of the supervisory committee will be eligible to vote on whether or not the student passes or fails the qualifying exam. Students will be allowed only two opportunities to pass the qualifying exam. A retake of this exam must be scheduled no sooner than one semester after the first attempt.

Here are some answers to Frequently Asked Questions regarding details of the exams:

Written Exams:

Are the questions given all at once or one a day? Questions are given one per day (so a total of 5 days if you have 5 committee members), so that the student can focus on the individual question and devote an equal amount of time to each question.

Does the external (non-Geological Sciences) committee member submit a question? Yes, unless they choose not to.

Is there a time limit for each question? The default limit is 8 hours. Committee members can set shorter time limits if they wish.

Can committee members change other test conditions? Yes, committee members can choose to make the exam closed book or set different limits on length (rather than 3 single-spaced pages, plus references). These changes are not intended to make the exams more difficult but to assess specific parts of your preparation. We recommend you meet with your committee members prior to the exam (either as a group or individually) to discuss expectations for the exam.

Do my exam answers need have full, formatted references? References can be in a short format similar to Science (e.g., numbered in order of use, rather than alphabetical order, and abbreviated information). Example: 1. A.A. Author1, B.B. Author2, Science 292, 1532 (2001).

Oral Exams:

What should I present at the oral exam? The presentation should include your research motivation and research plan. It is also helpful to present your research progress to date, because that helps strengthen the case that your research plan is viable. The presentation should be ~20 to 25 minutes.

Do committee members ask questions only about the presentation? Committee questions will be related to your presentation and will also include follow-up questions from the written exams.

Can the oral exam also count as my annual committee meeting? Yes. If you want it to count as your annual committee meeting, be sure to prepare a progress report and supervisory committee report for the committee to sign (http://web.geology.ufl.edu/Supervisory_Committee_Form.pdf). It is helpful to circulate the progress report before the exam, so the committee does not have to take up exam time reviewing it.

Admission to Candidacy: Following the successful completion of the qualifying exam, the student is ready for formal admission to candidacy. This form, obtained from the Program Assistant, can be signed at the Oral Exam. Once the student has been accepted by the college as an "official" Ph.D. Candidate, they register for GLY 7980 (Doctoral Research), as opposed to GLY 7979. By UF rules, the final dissertation defense can occur a minimum of two semesters after the oral qualifying exam. The departmental expectation for normal progress is that this exam should be completed by the end of the 4th semester by students with a previous M.S. degree in a related field or by the end of the 6th semester for students entering with a B.S. degree.

FINAL EXAMINATION/THESIS DEFENSE

A final comprehensive oral exam must be passed by MS, MST, and PHD candidates. The exam will focus on a defense of the written thesis/dissertation and other areas deemed appropriate by the supervisory committee. The final exam generally consists of a presentation by the student (~30-35 mins for MS candidates; ~45-50 minutes for PhD candidates) summarizing the results of their research. Following the presentation, questions from the general audience will be taken, followed by questions by the committee. Three hours should be scheduled for the exam.

The thesis/dissertation will be formally accepted or rejected by the supervisory committee at this exam. Any faculty member may participate in the final exam, but only members of the supervisory committee will vote to pass or fail the candidate.

The examination may not be scheduled earlier than the term preceding the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. A thesis transmittal form (also available as a download at the departmental web [site http://web.geology.ufl.edu/thesis_transmittal_form.pdf](http://web.geology.ufl.edu/thesis_transmittal_form.pdf)) must accompany all theses when given to members of a student's committee and subsequently to the program assistant. The form simply states 1) that the advisor has read and approved the thesis for distribution to the committee; and 2) the committee has agreed, based on the content of the thesis, that the student is ready to defend the thesis. The signed thesis transmittal form is then presented to the program assistant and a defense is scheduled **no sooner than 2 weeks from that date**, which is a University policy. If the student feels that their thesis is ready to defend but has not received approval by the advisor, the student can present their draft to the graduate committee for review. Announcements of the final exam must be publicly posted at least one week in advance of the exam. Students are responsible for scheduling the exam and reserving the room and projector, if needed.

Students will be allowed only two opportunities to pass this exam. A retake of the final exam must be scheduled no sooner than one semester after the first attempt. All work for the doctorate must be completed within 5 years after the qualifying examination or the examination must be repeated.

SUBMISSION OF THESIS OR DISSERTATION

The Graduate School requires that any student entering after Fall 2001 must submit their thesis or dissertation in electronic form (ETD). More information is available at the web site, <http://gradschool.rgp.ufl.edu/editorial/introduction.html> or from the Graduate School Editorial Office 168 Grinter Hall. Important information on deadlines can also be found at this site.

The Department **requires** each graduating student to supply two copies of their thesis/dissertation bound in black, hard-covered, spring binders to the Department. Alternatively the student can provide electronic versions of their thesis/dissertation in WORD. One of these copies will be permanently placed in the Department's collection and the other will be given to the student's supervisory professor.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Assistantships

As each student identifies a research topic and develops their prospectus, they should discuss with their advisor financial support during the first summer, second year, and beyond. In general, students beyond their first year are supported by a research assistantship from their advisor, or a combination of research and teaching funds. After the first two semesters, it is the student's responsibility to request a Teaching Assistantship from the department well in advance of the semester it is needed.

Students on teaching assistantships will be evaluated each semester by the students in their classes and by the supervising faculty. Students on research assistantships will be evaluated each semester by the supervising faculty. It is recommended that each student and their supervising faculty discuss and clearly define criteria for satisfactory performance prior to the beginning of the semester.

To be eligible for a teaching assistantship, the student must have demonstrated satisfactory teaching performance in previous assignments, as assessed by student evaluations and supervisor evaluations. They must also be making good research progress, as assessed by their supervisory committee, and meet UF criteria for satisfactory scholarship (>3.0 GPA).

Research and Travel Support

Support for research expenses can be obtained from a variety of sources. Some examples are linked on: http://web.geology.ufl.edu/research_travel_links.html. Students are encouraged to seek outside funding, and currently the department provides matching funds (up to \$1000) for student proposals that are successfully funded. A form for these matching funds can be found at: http://web.geology.ufl.edu/student_research_applic1.pdf

The department encourages presentation at national and regional meetings. This opportunity helps build presentation skills and yields feedback and exposure to others in the research community. Links for opportunities for travel funding are found at: http://web.geology.ufl.edu/research_travel_links.html.

The department will assist with travel costs through an application process, which can be found at: http://web.geology.ufl.edu/student_travel_applic1.pdf

To obtain any form of department financial support, the student must be making satisfactory progress. The supervisory committee must be established prior to the end of the second semester and reports from the annual supervisory committee meetings must indicate satisfactory or better progress through its annual meeting reports.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES AND REQUIREMENTS

M.S.

- Initial evaluation -**prior to first semester.**
- Selection of preliminary thesis topic, advisor, and committee-**one month before end of first semester**
- Thesis prospectus - **one month before end of second semester.**
- Supervisory committee selected - **by end of second semester**
- Total hours (32), 24 in organized GLY 5000 and 6000 level, 6 in GLY 6971 and 3 in GLY 6931
- Final oral examination no sooner than two weeks after all members of the committee receive a defensible draft. The final written thesis must be submitted to the University within 6 months of the oral examination.
- Submit a final copy of the thesis to the Department.

M.S.T.

- Initial evaluation -**prior to first semester**
- Selection of advisor - **one month before end of first semester**
- Supervisory committee-**by end of second semester** including one member from the Department of Education
- Total hours (32), 24 including organized GLY 5000 and 6000 level, 2 in 6931, and GLY 6943, plus 9 in Education courses
- Final oral examination during last semester

Ph.D.

- Initial evaluation -**prior to first semester.**
- Selection of preliminary thesis topic, advisor, and committee-**one month before end of first semester**
- Dissertation prospectus - - **one month before end of second semester**
- Supervisory committee selected- **by end of second semester.**
- Written qualifying exams –**third or fourth semester with M.S. or fifth/sixth semester B.S.**
- Oral qualifying exam - **by the end of the fourth semester with M.S. or sixth semester B.S.**
- Advancement to candidacy- **by the end of the fourth semester with M.S. or sixth semester B.S.**
- Total hours (90), 45 in GLY 5000 and 6000 level courses including at least 3 hours of 6931, 45 in other (research or additional course work).
- Dissertation defense no sooner than two weeks after all committee members receive a defensible draft. At least 2 semesters after the oral qualifying exam. Final copy no more than six months later.
- Submit a final copy of the dissertation to the Department.

APPLYING FOR FLORIDA RESIDENCY

It is imperative that you take the steps necessary to apply for Florida residency upon your arrival in Gainesville. In Florida all U.S. citizens and permanent residents, including students, are eligible to apply for residency for tuition purposes. Except for certain provisions stated on the residency affidavit included with the admissions application, Florida residency for tuition purposes cannot be obtained until the student has resided in the state for at least 12 months preceding the term for which residency is sought. The application must be accompanied by supporting documentation, also dated at least 12 months prior. A driver's license, vehicle registration, and voter registration are the customary documents presented.

In addition, all legal ties to another state must be severed. Residency for tuition purposes is controlled exclusively by laws enacted by the Florida Legislature. Students who are initially classified as nonresidents will not be reclassified as residents merely by being enrolled for one year. Physical presence in Florida merely incidental to enrollment in a college is not sufficient, under Florida laws, to obtain reclassification. Students must formally apply for residency reclassification and provide supporting documentation.

The residency review staff members in the Admissions Office are not authorized to provide guidance on methods of obtaining residency. Their role is to review applications for Florida resident status, together with supporting documentation, and to render a decision based on the documentation and the requirements of Florida law. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to provide all appropriate documentation.

On arrival in Gainesville, a student initially classified as a non-Florida resident wishing to establish residency should pick up the Request for Change in Residency Status form in the Admissions Office, S222 Criser Hall, to review the information and items that will be requested when the student files for residency after being in the state 12 months. Also, on arrival in Gainesville the student should file the Declaration of Domicile form at the Alachua County Administrative Building (corner of University Avenue and Main Street), Official Records Office, Room 101, and should keep the receipt, to be attached later to the request for change form. The student should obtain a Florida drivers license or I.D., Florida voter registration, Florida vehicle registration, or other applicable documents as soon as possible. It is essential to relinquish documentation showing legal ties to another state. It is also advisable to keep copies of utility deposits, rental agreements, and other documents, as well as proof of any employment, particularly employment unrelated to the University, as supporting documentation.

Application for reclassification as a Florida resident for tuition purposes must be made to the Admissions Office, Room S222 Criser Hall, before the fee payment deadline of the term for which residency is sought but after the fee payment deadline for the previous term.

The cost differential for tuition and fees for a resident vs. a non-resident is substantial. Students will save several hundred dollars per semester in fees alone with in-state status. The difference in tuition for a typical student is approximately \$5000. If you are eligible, but do not chose to apply for residency, **you may be responsible for the difference in tuition.**