GRADUATE HANDBOOK

for

M.S. and Ph.D. in Marine Biology

The Department of Life Sciences (LSCI)
College of Science and Technology (S&T)
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC)

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http://marinebiology.tamucc.edu
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INTRODUCTION

This document has been developed for the guidance of faculty members and graduate students associated with the Marine Biology Interdisciplinary Degree Program (IDP) at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. For prospective students, it contains a brief overview of the program and instructions for applying for admission. For admitted students, it contains information about the requirements for successfully completing the degree, the course of study, selecting an advisor and a graduate committee, choosing a thesis/dissertation research topic, qualifying exams/admission to degree candidacy (Ph.D. students), the thesis/dissertation defense, and the final oral examination. It also contains detailed instructions for preparing the thesis/dissertation proposal and thesis/dissertation manuscript. Students associated with the M.S. and Ph.D. in Marine Biology (“MARB”) at TAMU-CC are required to follow these departmental and university guidelines and procedures. Additionally, general graduate school requirements and specific policies and procedures can be found in the TAMU-CC University Handbook.

The Marine Biology Interdisciplinary Degree Program is unique in that it combines the strengths of three universities within the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) including the Departments of Life Sciences at Texas A&M Corpus Christi, Marine Biology and Marine Sciences at Texas A&M University at Galveston, and Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, and Oceanography and Biology at Texas A&M University. Students can choose courses from any campus and form committees with any of the participating IDP faculty. The goal of the Marine Biology graduate program is to attract high-quality students interested in one or more of the sub-disciplines of marine biology who wish to pursue careers in higher education, government, or private industry. The principal strengths of this marine biology program lie in the international recognition, scholarly productivity, and extramural funding of its diverse faculty, as well as the strategic location of two of its campuses on the Gulf of Mexico.

ADMISSION TO THE MARINE BIOLOGY M.S. AND PH.D. PROGRAMS

Students seeking admission to the MARB Program must apply through the TAMU-CC Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). The application should be submitted using the Texas Common Application Service (Accessed via http://gradschool.tamucc.edu/).

A complete application consists of:

- Completed university graduate application form, include essay of about 1000 words describing educational and career goals, interests as they relate to the faculty in the MARB Program, and a list of names of faculty members contacted;
- Three letters of evaluation from people familiar with the applicant’s potential for graduate studies;
- Transcripts of all previous undergraduate/graduate work (including transcript evaluations of all work done at foreign institutions)*;
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores that are not more than 5 years old;
- Any relevant supplemental materials such as publications or resumes that include
information about relevant experiences; and,
- TOEFL scores from ETS taken within the last two years for students from countries where English is not the native language**.

* To be considered official, all required postsecondary academic records must come directly from the registrar’s office and bear the seal and signature of the registrar of the institution. In some foreign countries, the controller of examinations or principal may certify academic records. Official English translations, not interpretations, are required from most countries as well a course-by-course foreign transcript evaluation through an approved service (refer to the Admission section of this catalog).

**TOEFL must be taken within two years of the date the application was received, unless the applicant’s primary language of instruction was English or the most recent degree earned was from a U.S. institution of higher education.

It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that the application is complete by the deadline to ensure full consideration. Acceptance into the MARB Program is competitive and based on consideration of all application materials. Students accepted into the program will typically have demonstrated an ability to succeed in an academically rigorous environment through high GPA and GRE scores. Relevant life experiences may also provide a substantial basis for consideration. A campus visit with one-on-one interviews with prospective faculty mentors is highly recommended.

**APPLICATION DEADLINES**

Students are admitted into the MARB Program in the Fall or Spring semesters only; most students will begin in the Fall, and there may be no stipend funding availability for Spring admissions. Applications must be complete by the deadlines listed below to receive priority consideration. Applications completed after deadlines will not be considered until the next semester when students will be admitted. Admission to the program is decided independently of financial awards (see “Financial Support”) and applicants must apply separately for scholarships, assistantships, and fellowships.

**Students seeking full consideration for fellowships or assistantships MUST have a completed application file by February 1 (Fall admission only).** After this date, any awards will be made on a first come, first served basis. Students who have received offers for fellowships or assistantships must accept by notifying the University by April 15, otherwise, the University will assume that the offer has been rejected and will make offers to other deserving students.

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<tr>
<th>Application: Deadline for receipt of application</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<td>February 1</td>
<td>June 1</td>
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<tr>
<th>Completion: Deadline for applicant files to be completed (including TOEFL, GRE scores, transcripts &amp; letters of recommendation)</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>June 1</td>
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FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A limited number of fellowships and assistantships are available to MARB students. Assistantships are available at a half-time (20 hour/week) 9-month appointment. The application deadline for consideration (for fall semester) is Feb 1. Assistantship applications are available online at http://www.sci.tamucc.edu/stweb/students/funding/grad.html.

Students who hold fellowships must be enrolled as a full-time student (at least 9 hours/fall and spring semester, and 3 hours/summer) in the MARB Program in approved courses. Appointments are for two full semesters (fall and spring). Reappointment requires reapplication each year, and students should not assume that the appointment will continue automatically. Summer fellowships may be available but must be applied for separately. Check the OGS website for annual and summer application deadlines.

Fellowships
A limited number of research fellowships are available through the College of Science and Technology and the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI). College fellowships are advertised on the College of Science and Technology webpage (see http://www.sci.tamucc.edu/). HRI fellows are through the HRI Endowed Chairs in the Institute. Application is made directly with an HRI Endowed Chair (see http://www.harteresearchinstitute.org).

Teaching Assistantships
Teaching assistantships are available each year. Consult the College of Science and Technology for information about eligibility as well as application procedures and deadlines, appointment durations, and course-load requirements.

Research Assistantships
A limited number of research assistantships are available through individual faculty members and research institutes or centers; consult with institute or center directors and individual faculty members to identify these funding sources. Many graduate research assistantships are administered through the College of Science and Technology (see http://www.sci.tamucc.edu/).

Loans and Scholarships
Consult the Office of Financial Assistance for information regarding student loans. Most Graduate Scholarships for S&T students are administered through the College of Science and Technology (see http://www.sci.tamucc.edu/ and select “Student Funding”). The College routinely advertises information about many scholarships awarded by private organizations.

Fellowship and Assistantship Compensation
The College of Science and Technology has a consistent compensation structure for all
Fellowships and Assistantships. Master of Science students receive $1100.00/month. Doctoral students entering with a BS, but not yet passing the qualifying comprehensive exam receive $1500/month. Doctoral students entering with a M.S. (and students entering with a B.S. and having completed 36 hours in the doctoral program), but not yet passing qualifying comprehensive exam receive $2000/month. Doctoral students having passed the qualifying comprehensive exam receive $2100/month. All increases start the semester following change of status. Teaching awards require six contact hours per semester (i.e., either two 3-hr labs/semester; three 2-hr labs/semester; for Ph.D. students (2 or 3 labs/semester or 1 course/semester.

**Out-Of-State Tuition Waivers**

Out-of-state tuition waivers are available to any graduate student receiving a half-time assistantship or fellowship, or a University scholarship of $1,000 or more per year. To receive an out-of-state tuition waiver, students must maintain a course load of at least 9 hours during long semesters or 3 hours in summer session. To request an out-of-state tuition waiver, submit the completed form to OGS before registering for classes.

**Texas 99 Hour Rule**

The Texas State Legislature has enacted a rule that provides that students at all state universities with over 99 doctoral hours may be subject to the payment of nonresident tuition. A student will generally be able to study at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi full-time for five complete academic years, including summers, before being affected by the 99 hour rule. For students staying beyond five years, in a number of cases there is still the possibility of a programmatic or individual exemption from the rule.

**Important** – funding is contingent on satisfactory progress and adhering to milestone deadlines.

**Fulfilling MARB M.S. and Ph.D. Program Degree Requirements**

Completing a M.S. is a rigorous process consisting of the following milestones:

1. form a committee
2. create and complete courses on the degree plan
3. develop a prospectus
4. develop a proposal
5. conduct research
6. write thesis
7. give public seminar and defend thesis

**Important** – It is the student responsibility to ensure all forms, paperwork, and other degree requirements are completed in a timely manner.

Completing a Ph.D. is an equally rigorous and demanding process of transitioning from a student to a scholar and consists of major following milestones:
A. Pre-Qualification
   1. form a committee
   2. create and complete courses on the degree plan
   3. develop a prospectus
   4. develop a proposal
   5. pass comprehensive qualifying exams

B. Post-Qualification – (i.e., “Ph.D. Candidate”)
   1. conduct research
   2. write dissertation
   3. give public seminar and defend dissertation

Important – It is the student responsibility to ensure all forms, paperwork, and other degree requirements are completed in a timely manner.

REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

All students are required to maintain continuous registration until such time as they complete all requirements for graduation, unless a specific leave of absence is granted (in writing) by the department. Students on various assistantships and other funding sources are required to maintain a certain number of credit hours per semester. These requirements are detailed in the University Graduate Catalog, but students holding assistantship/fellowships must be enrolled as a full-time student (at least 9 hours/fall and spring semester, and 3 hours/summer).

THE GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

After being accepted into the MARB program and enrolling, the most important first step is forming the graduate advisory committee. Students should form a graduate advisory committee with the approval of their advisor by the end of their first semester in the MARB program to help guide them through their degree program.

Composition and size of the committee should reflect the scope of the intended graduate program and should be developed with substantial input from the student's advisor(s). The advisor(s) will serve as chair(s) of the committee. The committee must be selected from members of the Marine Biology Participating IDP Graduate Faculty (PGF) from TAMUS schools of TAMU-CC, TAMU, and TAMUG. Recognized scholars who are not a member of the PGF may serve as Adjunct Members of the Graduate Faculty following nomination and approval by LSCI MARB faculty and the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). Additional committee members (those who are not members of the PGF) may be added as "Special Appointments" by submitting a letter of request from the advisor, through the TAMU-CC Marine Biology Program Chair (currently Dr. Greg Stunz; greg.stunz@tamucc.edu; 361-825-3254), with the individual's resume attached.
Specially appointed members must be in addition to be to the required minimum committee composition.

For Masters of Science Marine Biology degrees, the committee shall consist of **no fewer than three members** of the Participating MARB IDP Graduate Faculty representing the student's field of study, including the advisor(s). The Chair (and/or Co-Chair) must be a member of the MARB graduate faculty.

Doctoral degree (Ph.D.) committees must include **at least four** members of the Participating MARB IDP Graduate Faculty, including the advisor(s), and at least one of the members is encouraged to be from a department other than the student's major department. The Chair (and/or Co-Chair) must be a member of the MARB graduate faculty.

The Graduate Advisory Committee will evaluate the student's past coursework and experience to determine whether additional coursework is prerequisite to the graduate program, and will identify the courses necessary for the degree plan. Remedial coursework not applicable to the graduate program will be required for students without proper graduate preparation in the chosen discipline, and it should **precede** major coursework and research where possible and will be in addition to the requirement of the degree. A written record of advisory committee meetings will be prepared by the student and approved by the committee chair, including conclusions reached relative to course requirements and research issues. Copies will be given to the student, committee members, and placed in the student's academic file. Although the student and advisor play the major roles in determining the research project and approaches, project identification and evaluation should incorporate continuing input from the entire advisory committee. The graduate advisory committee also approves the dissertation proposal and final manuscript, and administers the comprehensive/qualifying examination (Ph.D. students) and final dissertation defense/oral examination.

Upon submitting a degree plan for Ph.D. students, the OGS will appoint a Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) to the committee. The role of this appointee is to serve as an impartial member of the committee to ensure the integrity of University standards as they apply to the Ph.D. process. This member attends and participates in the oral portions of both qualifying examinations and final defense/oral examination.

**DEGREE PLAN**

The student's advisory committee, in consultation with the student, will develop the proposed degree plan **no later than the end of the first long semester (fall/spring)**. The plan must be on the official form approved by the advisor(s) and committee. It is then submitted electronically to TAMU-CC Marine Biology Program Chair (Currently Dr. Greg Stunz; greg.stunz@tamucc.edu; 361-825-3254) for LSCI, S&T, and OGS approval.

At least 36 semester credit hours of approved courses and research are required for the M.S. degree and can be taken from TAMU-CC, TAMU, or TAMU-G. The advisor and/or committee may require additional coursework. The program normally requires a minimum of 24 hours of
regular graded (non-research, non-variable credit) coursework to be on the degree plan for M.S. thesis and 36 for non-thesis students. Justification for exception to this rule should be prepared by the student and advisor(s), endorsed by the advisory committee, and attached to the degree plan when submitted for the department head's signature. For more details and limitations see the Graduate Catalog. To remain in good standing, the university requires students to maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 ("B") for all graduate work undertaken.

At least 64 hours of coursework and research are required on Ph.D. degree plans for students with an M.S. degree; students without an M.S. degree require 96 hours on the degree plan. The program normally requires a minimum of 18 credits (for students with an M.S. degree) or 39 hours (for students without an M.S.) of regular graded coursework taken at TAMU-CC, TAMU, or TAMU-G on a Ph.D. degree plan. Justification for exception to this rule should be prepared by the student and advisor(s), endorsed by the advisory committee, and attached to the degree plan when submitted for the department head's signature.

**THESIS/DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROSPECTUS AND PROPOSAL**

A Research Prospectus, a 1-page summary of the intended area of research, should be filed with the student’s degree plan and committee selections. The Prospectus is a prologue to the formal Research Proposal and should be presented to the graduate advisory committee at a meeting before the end of the 1st long semester.

The Research Proposal consisting of a maximum of ten pages of narrative, should summarize the Literature Review and Methods sections of the thesis or dissertation. The student with a required thesis or dissertation will develop a detailed proposal, before most of the research begins. At the latest, the proposal should be submitted to the College of Science and Technology before the end of the second long semester (fall or spring) for M.S. students and before the end of the third long semester for Ph.D. students:

1. Title page. See Appendix 2 for an example of a correctly spaced and formatted title page.

2. Project Summary. Like an abstract, the Summary should be a synopsis of the proposed activity suitable for publication and not more than one page in length. It should describe the activities of the project. The Summary must clearly address, in separate statements, the two merit review criteria that are used by national science programs: 1) the intellectual merit of the proposed activity; and 2) the broader impacts resulting from the proposed activity.

3. Background & Relevance. This section summarizes the available scientific literature related to the problem or topic and explains why the proposed research is necessary.

4. Purpose, Objectives and Hypotheses. This section explicitly states the purpose of the research project. The objectives provide the steps in the research (not explicit methods)
that will be used to answer the question. Hypotheses provide the explicit questions and predictions that will be tested in order to answer the larger research question.

5. Study site. If field research is planned, then a description of the study area including a map must be included. The study site should be briefly characterized in terms of physical and/or biological attributes.

6. Methods. This section describes in detail the methods of data collection and analysis you will use to meet each research objective or hypothesis. This is arguably the most important part of the proposal. Be sure to include how and when you will obtain any necessary permits.

7. Timeline. The timeline should be a table that includes distinct milestones showing the schedule for both research and academic work. Milestones should include completion of coursework, comprehensive/qualifying examinations, data-gathering for each objective or hypothesis, and analysis of each objective or hypothesis, writing of dissertation, submission to committee, and graduation.

8. Budget (Appendix 3). The budget should reflect an accurate assessment of the expenses that will be incurred during the research project and by whom they will be paid. Include financial or other support obtained from all sources.

Before a proposal involving research with vertebrate animals will be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, an Animal Use Protocol (AUP) that encompasses research described in the proposal must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). A copy of the form entitled, "Research Proposals Involving Animal Subjects", approved by IACUC, must be submitted to College of Science and Technology along with the proposal. Students should consult with their graduate advisor(s) concerning the status of an AUP related to their research. Details can be found in the Research section of the TAMU-CC homepage.

The research project should be designed to produce a publishable product for a refereed journal. And, it is in the best interests of the student and the committee to ensure the proposal is approved prior to the start of the research. The student should report regularly on research progress to the advisor and the advisory committee, to prevent last minute surprises or misunderstandings and to gain approval of any redirection.

**DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE/QUALIFYING EXAMS**

To be admitted to candidacy for the MARB Ph.D. degree a student must have a cumulative GPA and a degree plan GPA of at least 3.0, satisfy the residence requirement (completion of 9 credit hours in two consecutive long semesters), and pass the qualifying examination. Formal Comprehensive/Qualifying Examinations (often referred to as “preliminary exams”) for the Ph.D. may be given by the student's advisory committee if the student is within 6 hours of completing formal degree plan coursework (i.e., except research hours MARB 6398) but must be given before the end of the semester following completion of regular coursework on the
degree plan. An approved dissertation proposal must be on file prior to taking the qualifying exam. **A student must be admitted to degree candidacy at least 1 year before the date of the final dissertation defense/oral examination.** OGS will not authorize a final dissertation defense/oral examination for any doctoral student who has not been admitted to candidacy.

These qualifying exams will cover all areas within the scope of the student's doctoral program, and usually will involve written exams from each advisory committee member, followed by an oral exam administered by the committee as a whole. Typically, a student will have (at most) a single day to complete the written questions from each committee member. The exams are scheduled by submitting the appropriate paperwork to Ronnie Emanuel (Senior Academic Advisor, College of Science & Technology). Examinations by the Trans Texas Video Network (TTVN) must also be requested in advance with a statement indicating location of each member and the student.

The graduate advisory committee chairman will report the results of the examination in a form to the OGS signed by all committee members. **If the student successfully passes the Qualifying Examination, they will be advanced to candidacy. All remaining requirements for the degree must be completed within 7 years.**

Individuals unable to pass the Qualifying Examination(s) will be dropped from the program. If the student fails the Qualifying Examination, there is no obligation for a re-examination. At their discretion, the graduate advisory committee and the OGS may allow one re-examination when adequate time has passed to allow students to address inadequacies emerging from the first examination (normally six months). The advisory committee may request that the student retakes the entire exam or only those portions that were not passed, OR the committee may recommend that the student complete a master’s degree and be administratively withdrawn from the doctoral program. However, there is no guarantee of acceptance to master’s program.

**SEMINAR**

All students in residence are required to register for at least 1 credit of MARB 6102 (or other approved seminar course) during each academic year. All students are required to present a **Thesis or Dissertation Proposal Seminar** to fellow students and their Graduate Advisory Committee before most of the research begins. This will clarify objectives, justification, methods, logic, and provide project orientation. The timing, location, and format of this presentation will be cooperatively planned by the student and the advisor, but with a public announcement to allow interested persons to attend. No qualifying examination or final defense will be scheduled until this requirement is met.

All students will present a **Final Thesis or Dissertation Research Seminar** prior to the final examination. This too will be cooperatively planned and advertised to the academic community.
THESIS/DISSERTATION

The thesis/dissertation should be in a proper format for publication, and can be made more concise by use of appendixes for non-essential information. The major role of the student's Graduate Advisory Committee is to offer guidance on study design and interpretation of results. It is not the committee's responsibility to edit careless writing. A polished draft (including all manuscript components and page numbers) must be delivered to the advisory committee for review after the student and major advisor have agreed upon editorial changes; this should occur well before the anticipated date of the final examination. It is the student's and advisor(s)' responsibility to ensure that the document is in good form both in terms of grammar and scientific style. Committee members have the right to reject documents that fail to meet these guidelines. Committee members should be given at least 2 weeks to review the draft before the student attempts to schedule the final exam/defense. The final exam is to be scheduled only after the advisory committee agrees that the thesis or dissertation is ready for defense.

Appendix 2 outlines the guidelines for preparing the dissertation. Students may choose between two models of organizing the dissertation, the traditional model and the journal manuscript model. The traditional model presents the dissertation research in a single, cohesive manuscript. Information is presented sequentially and no section stands alone as a publishable document. The journal manuscript model presents dissertation research as several discrete articles (i.e., Chapters), each appropriate for submission to a journal, bound together as the dissertation document. In the journal manuscript model, information may be repeated as necessary between articles so that each can stand alone as an academic work. The journal manuscript format must also include an overarching introduction with a literature cited section that encompasses the entirety of the manuscript and a summary/conclusions section that brings the entirety of the research into context. Regardless of whether the traditional or journal manuscript model is chosen, the entire document must be submitted in one journal style. In other words, in the journal manuscript model, even though it is likely that articles will be submitted to several different journals, the entire dissertation must be presented in the style of only one journal. Headings and subheadings, punctuation, reference citations, and other details should follow the journal format exactly with few exceptions (details in Appendix 2).

The dissertation is a complete document that will be filed in the University Library. The dissertation must include certain accessory pages. An annotated list appears below, presenting the order of appearance in the manuscript of all pages and sections of the dissertation. The dissertation has three main parts: preliminary pages, main text (or chapters) and supplementary pages, organized as follows:

I. Preliminary Pages (both models)
a. Title Page (Appendix 4)  
b. Approval Page (Appendix 4)  
c. Abstract (Appendix 4)  
d. Table of Contents  
e. List of Tables (if more than one)  
f. List of Figures (if more than one)  
g. List of Appendices (if more than one)  
h. Acknowledgments  
i. Dedication (optional)  

II. Text  

a. Introduction (Overall introduction for journal manuscript model; may be repeated as necessary in each section)  
b. Materials and Methods (including study area in a separate section if acceptable in format journal; may be repeated as necessary in journal manuscript model)  
c. Results (may be repeated as necessary in the journal manuscript model)  
d. Discussion (may be repeated as necessary in the journal manuscript model)  
e. Summary and Conclusions (may be omitted in the traditional model if format journal does not include it; required in journal manuscript model)  
f. Literature Cited  

III. Supplementary Pages  

a. Appendices (if appropriate). Inclusion of data and lengthy statistical treatments and other metrics not deemed suitable for submission to a journal is strongly recommended. This provides the graduate committee with data to confirm analyses, and also serves as a permanent record for the student or other interested parties.  
b. Biographic statement  

When the draft is ready, the student must submit it to the chair of the advisory committee. The student should submit the draft as if it were the final ensuring that it is complete as possible with respect to writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling, journal formatting requirements, and with all figures and tables in final format. The student should be prepared to go through the revision process numerous times before the committee chair is comfortable letting the rest of the committee review the document.  

When the committee chair is ready for the document to be submitted to the rest of the committee, enough copies should be reproduced so that each member will have a copy. Ideally, committee members should return the corrected dissertation within two weeks of receipt. Students should check with committee members to ensure they have the time to review the document. A final draft delivered to the advisory committee one month prior to the dissertation seminar, would allow two weeks before the scheduled final defense/oral examination date for the student to make recommended changes. After the committee has returned the corrected draft, students should review suggested changes with their advisory committee chair, and make the suggested changes, unless the chair directs otherwise. Students should be prepared to go through the revision process more than once before the committee members are comfortable signing off on the final document.
**FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION**

**Once the thesis/dissertation is completed and approved by the advisory committee,** the results of the research must be presented orally and publicly. Schedule the Thesis/Dissertation Seminar and Final Defense and Oral Examination prior to April 15 for spring graduation, July 15 for summer graduation, and November 15 for fall graduation. The seminar should be scheduled and completed prior to the final defense/oral examination. The final defense/oral examination usually takes place immediately following the seminar.

The purpose of the final defense and oral examination is to allow advisory committee members to gauge the scope of the student’s understanding of the principles and significance of the discipline of the thesis/dissertation research. For Ph.D. students it complements the doctoral qualifying examination, which gauged overall knowledge in the field, by allowing a more detailed assessment of specific knowledge as it applies to the dissertation research. The exact format and scope will vary among students depending on both their advisory committee and the nature of their research. Although the final oral exam may focus on the thesis/dissertation, additional examination topics from the general sciences, biology, and marine biology may be addressed or develop as an outgrowth of the normal discussion of the student's research or professional activities.

The graduate advisory committee will decide whether a student has passed the final defense and oral examination. Regardless of whether the student passes or fails, the committee will discuss with the student their assessment of the student’s performance. If a student fails, the exam may be retaken only once after at least four months have passed and will require enrollment.

The final examination is scheduled by submitting the appropriate form to the College of Science and Technology via Ronnie Emanuel. The thesis/dissertation does not have to be signed at the final exam. Signatures may be obtained when the changes recommended by the committee have been made. Final oral examinations must be held on campus. Examinations via TTVN must also be requested through the OGS in advance with a statement indicating location of each member and the student.

**FINAL APPROVAL OF PROPOSALS, THESES, AND DISSERTATIONS**

Any member of the graduate committee, Department Chair, Dean of the College of Science and Technology, or Office of Graduate Studies can reject the dissertation at any stage of the submission and approval process. Rejection of the manuscript can occur for many reasons including (but not limited to):

1. The manuscript does not conform to the required format.
2. The manuscript is messy, poorly reproduced, or contains grammatical or spelling errors.
3. The manuscript describes scientific data inconsistent with the research project approved in the dissertation proposal.

4. The paper contains errors experimental and/or conceptual flaws, inappropriate analysis of data, erroneous conclusions, or other scientific inaccuracies.

5. The paper contains plagiarized work. The manuscript will be scrutinized by “Turn it in” or other similar software.

After a student has successfully presented the dissertation seminar, completed the defense/oral examination, and completed all changes to the dissertation manuscript that have been requested by the committee, the committee may sign the approval pages of the dissertation. At least four final copies of the document with original signatures will be required (one for the student, one for the library, one for the department and one for advisory committee chairperson). Check with the Mary and Jeff Bell Library and MARB Program Coordinator for requirements beyond those listed. Additional copies are typically provided to the advisory committee.

After the copies are signed, a student must pay the binding fee (Currently $15.00/copy) to the University Business Office and retain the receipt. Students should submit dissertation copies to the MARB Program Coordinator on or before the last day of classes for a given semester, to be forwarded to the Department Chair and Dean for approval and signature. The receipt showing payment for binding must accompany the dissertation copies. After obtaining the Dean’s signature, the student will be contacted to pick the copies up and deliver them to the Office of Graduate Studies.

Students will be notified when the bound copies are ready. It is the student’s responsibility to pick up the bound copies of the dissertation and distribute to the library, department and advisory committee chair. Students should also distribute other copies as needed to other committee members and funding entities.

Final approval of style and content for graduate student documents (proposals, theses, dissertations) is the responsibility of the Department Chair and College Dean. The department head and/or a designated representative will examine each document at the stage prior to "final" printing, to ensure that no obvious problems of style and/or content have been overlooked. Final deadline to submit documents for departmental approval is 1 week before the deadline published by TAMU-CC. The examination of the document will continue until the first substantive error is found. At this point the document will be returned to the student, without approval, until error(s) have been corrected. Students and their committees must allow time for this process before any document is transmitted out of the department.

**GRADUATION**

TAMU-CC confers graduate degrees at the close of each regular semester and 10-week summer session. Final degree audits are conducted by making an appointment with the College of Science and Technology Advising Center for clearance the semester prior to planned graduation. These deadline dates are published each semester in the OGS calendar.
**SUMMARY OF DEADLINES**

Marine Biology Faculty members normally serve on a number of graduate committees, both as advisors and as committee members. Thus, faculty members often have multiple proposals, theses and dissertations to review each semester, typically near the end of the semester. In addition, the department head and/or a designated representative must review all documents. It is in the best interest of the student to allow adequate time for review of these documents and adequate time for corrections to be made.

Specific guidelines are as follows:

a. Degree plan for both and prospectus for both the M.S. and Ph.D. should be submitted before the end of the first long semester of enrollment.

b. Research proposal must be submitted to the College of Science and Technology before the end of the second long semester for M.S. students and before the end of the third long semester for Ph.D. students.

NOTE: All degree plans and proposals must be submitted on the official forms and complete with signatures of all committee members to Dr. Greg Stunz for department head approval and submission to the College of Science and Technology.

c. Proposals, theses and dissertations will not be sent to committee members until the advisor has verified that all necessary corrections have been made. Committee members will be given a minimum of two weeks to review proposals and theses or dissertations.

d. The department head, or designee, will review final proposals, theses and dissertations only after all corrections have been made. The documents must be submitted at least one week prior to the deadlines specified by OGS.

Committee members and the department head will not accept documents turned in after deadlines. It is in the best interest of the student to allow time after committee and department head review to make corrections before the document goes to OGS.

**REGISTRATION AND BLOCK REMOVAL**

Students who fail to submit documents (degree plan, research prospectus, proposal, etc.) by departmental deadlines will be blocked from future registrations until documents have been submitted. Additionally continued funding is contingent on satisfactory progress and adhering to the milestone deadlines. Registration, without submission of these documents, will...
require a "Request for Removal of Registration Block" form submitted by the student, approved by the advisor, and routed through Ronnie Emanuel for department head approval.

**IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

MARB Program Chair (greg.stunz@tamucc.edu; 361-825-3254).

**GET CONNECTED**

Join the MARB listserv by sending a message with “Subscribe” in the subject to marblist@sci.tamucc.edu
APPENDIX 1

MARB Program Coursework Requirements
Degree Plan

Note: Please obtain the appropriate electronic version from Ronnie Emanuel
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>SCH</th>
<th>YR/SEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARB 5102</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARB 5315</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARB 5397</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Subtotal**: 8

**GPA (Min 3.0)**: 3.6

---

**Transfer Hours (9 Max)**

**Non-Degree to Degree hrs (9 max)**

**5000 level hours (Min 24)**

---

**Requirement Summary**

*These electives must be approved by the student's advisory committee*

---

**Directed Research**

**Date of Admission to Program**

**TOTAL HOURS** (36 min)

---

**Emphasis Area**

**Graduate Research Seminar**

**Statistical Methods of Research**

---

**Advanced Electives (28 hours Minimum)**

---

**Previous Degrees**

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI**

**COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MARINE BIOLOGY**

**DEGREE PLAN - NON-THESIS OPTION**

**Student ID ()** A#
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>SCH YR/SEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARB 5102</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 5315</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARB 5392</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MARB 5393</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARB 5394</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SUBTOTAL 11

GPA (Min 3.0)

THESIS TITLE:
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MARINE BIOLOGY

DEGREE PLAN - THESIS OPTION

Required Courses
- Graduate Research Seminar
- Statistical Methods of Research
- Thesis Proposal

Advanced Electives   (25 hours Minimum)

Non-Degree to Degree hrs (9 max)

Transfer Hours  (9 Max)

Minimum 19 hours MARB 5000 or > level not including Thesis Project Research (MARB 5940)

These electives must be approved by the student's advisory committee

TOTAL HOURS (36 min)
Name
Address
Discipline
Institution Year
Discipline
Institution Year
GRE (verb) quant
Required Courses:
Course Title Grade SCH YR/SEM
MARB 6102
2
MARB 6436
4
MARB 6397
Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal
3
MARB 6398
Ph.D. Dissertation Research
3
MARB 6399
Ph.D. Dissertation Submission
3
Select at least one of the Following:
MARB 6303
Systems Analysis
3
MARB 6323
Experimental Design
3
SUBTOTAL
18
Note: Students must maintain continual enrollment of 9 hours per regular semester (3hr summer)

GPA Min 3.0 SUBTOTAL

5000 and 6000 level hours only (may take 1/3 at 5000 level)
Approved By:
Com. Chair date Student date
Com. Member date S&T Dean date
Com. Member date Grad. Dean date
Com. Member date
Com. Member date                                          (Also, provide copy to Department Chair)

* See list for approved MARB 6000-level courses

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Date of Admission to Program

Previous Degree(s) 1.
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI
Ph.D. in Marine Biology

DEGREE PLAN

Telephone (work)

Non-Degree to Degree hrs (9 max)

Transfer Hours (12 Max)

Ph.D. Electives with M.S. (min. 10 hours; MARB 6000-level*) and Dissertation Project Research (MARB 6940)

Make all narrative material of the dissertation clearly understandable to the reader through careful, well-organized writing, meaningful figures and tables, and adequate utilization of references. Several publications available in the TAMU-CC library answer specific questions regarding the style of scientific writing, including the Council of Science Editors (CSE) Style Manual, the United States Government Printing Office Style Manual, and others. No corrections of letters or figures should be visible on the final copies.

Format Journal

When writing the dissertation proposal and dissertation, the student should follow the general format and style of for submitting manuscripts (“Guide/Instructions for Authors”) of a peer-reviewed scholarly journal in the field of his/her research. However, the student should not follow the final style of journals such as the use of double columns on a text page, literature citation methods other than the name-date system, etc., nor can the typed manuscript duplicate every printing technique. Do not follow the journal's "Instructions to Contributors" except with regards to formatting headings and subheadings, figures and tables, figure and table captions and text callouts, abbreviations, etc. These Instructions to Authors are primarily for the convenience of the editors and printers of the journal and do not necessarily apply to the format of dissertation proposals or dissertation manuscripts. The student’s committee must approve the Format Journal choice before beginning to write the manuscript. It is usually a good idea to use the same Format Journal for both the proposal and final manuscript.

Paper Size and Quality

Final print or duplicate dissertation manuscripts must be on clean, white paper. Paper with at least 25% rag content should be used; higher rag content is preferable. This paper may be difficult to obtain locally, and towards the end of each semester local office-supply stores are quickly depleted of stock by the demand from TAMU-CC graduate students. Therefore, student are encouraged to check with these stores well in advance.

Font Style

Print the manuscript using 10 or 12 characters-per-inch (cpi) type size with a plain book-type font such as Helvetica or Times Roman, not some unusual font. The same font must be throughout the paper including figures and tables; do not mix fonts. When using a computer printer students should make sure that (1) the manuscript is printed with a letter-quality or laser printer; (2) the paper meets the size and quality standards defined herein; and (3) the manuscript meets all other style and format conventions established in this guidebook. The type must be
clean.

ITALICS AND UNDERLINING

Follow the chosen format journal in italicizing or underlining scientific nomenclature, foreign words, abbreviations and titles. When underlining a word, use a continuous underline and do not leave a space in the underline between letters. Separately underline each word of a multiword term, leaving a gap between adjacent words.

SPACING

The thesis/dissertation proposal and manuscript should be double-spaced. The exceptions to this rule are for quotations exceeding six typed lines (inset and single-space these) and footnotes (which should be avoided). Figure and table captions should also be single-spaced. One line should separate a table caption from the table header and two lines should separate any embedded figure or table from text on the same page.

MARGINS

No letters may extend beyond a left-hand margin of 1.5 inches and a 1-inch margin along the other three edges of the page. The extra margin on the left side allows for binding of the completed dissertation. All figures and tables must also conform to these margins. Do not hyphenate (split) words between lines.

PAGINATION

Number all pages in the dissertation proposal or dissertation manuscript except the Title and Approval pages. Page numbers on all numbered pages should appear in the top right corner approximately 1 inch from the top and right-hand edges of the page.

Number the preliminary pages of the dissertation with lower case Roman numerals. The Abstract page is the first numbered page; it follows the Title and Approval pages and is numbered iii.

Number the text and supplementary pages of the dissertation proposal or dissertation manuscript with Arabic numerals. The first page of the narrative text begins with 1 and the numbering runs consecutively to the end of the manuscript.

HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS

The style and format for all headings and subheadings in the dissertation proposal and dissertation manuscript should follow the standard practice of the format journal. Start each major heading (i.e., Methods, Study Area, Results, Discussion, etc.) on a new page. Subheadings should fall naturally within the text, but should never appear alone as the last line on a page (“orphan”). If a subheading is the last line of text, start it at the beginning of the next page.
Appendices 3 and 4 provide examples of correctly spaced title pages for a research proposal, and a the title, approval, and abstract pages of the dissertation manuscript.

**TABLES & FIGURES**

Tables and figures, regardless of size, may appear on separate pages or within the text itself. Place them in the manuscript as close as possible to their first reference in the text (generally the page on or immediately following the first reference). Make sure that figures and tables are relevant and useful to the reader, and use as many as are necessary to fully report on the results of your research. If a figure or table is relevant, but represents ancillary information or “raw” data, include it in an appendix rather than in the main text of the manuscript. If you place tables or figures in landscape format on a page, the top of the table or figure should be on the binding side of the paper.

Give each table or figure a number and caption, and transcribe these exactly on the List of Tables or List of Figures page; if a figure or table caption is more than one sentence, then put only the first sentence into the list. Make captions as concise as possible, but clearly describe the content of the figure or table. Follow exactly the format and style for figures and tables prescribed by the Format Journal.

Construct tables using the “Table” function found in all word processors. Titles for tables must appear on the same page as the table, and should be placed above the table. Make horizontal rules mimic the Format Journal. Vertical rules should not be used. If a table is more than one page long, there should be no closing line on the first page and the second page of the table should have a caption reading “Table #. Continued.” Multi-page tables should always begin on a new page; in other words, the first few lines of a multi-page table should not appear embedded within the text.

Figures consist of graphs, maps, drawings, photographs, and other illustrations. All visual material that you prepare must be neat, clean, and professional in appearance; hand-lettering is unacceptable. **Avoid the use of color except when absolutely necessary.**

Consult the CSE Style Manual, U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual, or other scientific writing guides for suggestions concerning proper preparation of figures. Reproduce all figures on suitable paper for inclusion in the proposal or dissertation manuscript.

Photographs constitute a figure; either print digital photos on lightweight flexible paper (8.5 x 11 inches) or secure original prints to individual manuscript copies by use of rubber cement, spray cement, or photo mounting cement.

Type captions for figures below the figure (preferred) or place titles on a facing page. If the caption is placed on a facing page, it should be centered on the back side of a blank page (the caption should be in the center of the page, however, the type itself should not be formatted as “centered” but should be left flush as in all other cases, unless otherwise stated in the Format.
Journal). If placing captions on the facing page, margin requirements for the facing page are reversed; that is, the 1.5 inch margin of a facing page will be on the right side of the page. Place the page number, however, on the opposite (blank) side in the standard position.

If reduced, tables and figures must remain large enough to be easily read (no less than 10 point type). Large materials such as maps can be put as separate inserts in a pocket. Fold oversized materials, such as large maps or charts that you cannot reduce in size but must include in the dissertation, so that they measure no more than 7.5 x 10 inches. Enclose them in a close-fitting envelope and attach inside the back cover of the bound document.

FOOTNOTES

Footnotes should not appear within the regular text of the dissertation manuscript (they are permissible as explanatory notes in tables) except in rare circumstances. If they are absolutely necessary and the Format Journal permits their use, follow the journal format exactly.

CITING LITERATURE IN THE TEXT

Cite all references to the literature in the text using the name-date system which is the method most widely used in the sciences, e.g., Stilt (2000) or (Heron 1995; Seagull 1996; Seagull and Plover, 1996). Choose a Format Journal that uses this system. Do not cite sources by number, i.e. (1). If you use or adapt a figure from another author, cite the source in the figure caption.

LITERATURE CITED

Generally, follow the format in the Format Journal when you develop the Literature Cited section. Use the same system of abbreviations, punctuation, underlining, and italics as the Format Journal. There is one exception (mainly applies to chemistry Format Journals): if the Literature Cited section of your Format Journal does not list the title of an article, make sure that you do include it to enhance the usefulness of your citations to readers. Citation of web-based material should follow the style of the Format Journal; some journals treat these as references, while others permit reference to them only within the text. The last date the URL was accessed must be included.
APPENDIX 3

Format of the Research Proposal Title Page, Budget, and Seminar Announcement
Format of the Research Proposal Title Page

TITLE SHOULD APPEAR IN ALL CAPITALS

AND BE CENTERED

prepared by

YOU A. STUDENT

MONTH, YEAR

for

The Graduate Committee
Marine Biology Program
Department of Life Sciences
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Corpus Christi, Texas

Approved:

Dr. A, Chairperson

Dr. B, Member

Dr. C, Member

Dr. D, Member

Dr. E, Department Chairperson

Format: Title of Journal used as format.
Format of the Research Proposal Budget

Table 1. Proposed budget for dissertation research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>Cost ($)</th>
<th>TAMU-CC</th>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Other*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cryostat</td>
<td>1900.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographic light meter</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotting Scope, 45x</td>
<td></td>
<td>110.00</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expendables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petri dishes</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographic film (10, 36 exposure rolls Ektachrome, with mailers)</td>
<td></td>
<td>76.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microslides, cover glasses</td>
<td></td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagent grade ethyl alcohol</td>
<td></td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operational Expenses</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel, data collection</td>
<td>320.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Rental</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Preparation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation expenses</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication and reprints</td>
<td>300.00</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotals</strong></td>
<td>$2300.00</td>
<td>$660.00</td>
<td>$180.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Funds provided by student Grant-in-Aid-of Research from Sigma Xi
Format of the Research Proposal Seminar Announcement

(Note: Time, date and room are examples only)

RESEARCH PROPOSAL SEMINAR NOTICE
MARINE BIOLOGY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI

SUBJECT: Official Title of Your Research Proposal
SPEAKER: You A. Student
DATE: Tuesday, March 15, 2005
TIME: 3:00 p.m.
PLACE: Center for Instruction, TAMU-CC
        Room 109

ABSTRACT

A 50-200 word abstract of your research proposal should appear here.

[NOTE: Students should post this notice electronically to faculty members and graduate students involved in the MARB and other graduate programs via the typical listerves]
APPENDIX 4

Format of the Thesis/Dissertation Title Page, Abstract Page, and Seminar Announcement
Format of the Thesis/Dissertation Title Page

THE TITLE SHOULD APPEAR IN ALL CAPITALS
AND BE CENTERED

A Thesis/Dissertation

by

YOU A. STUDENT

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Month, Year

Major Subject: Marine Biology
Format of the Dissertation Approval Page

THE TITLE SHOULD APPEAR IN ALL CAPITALS
AND BE CENTERED

A Thesis/Dissertation

by

YOU A. STUDENT

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY/MASTER OF SCIENCE

Approved as to style and content by:

Dr. A
(Chair of Committee)

Dr. D
(Member)

Dr. B
(Member)

Dr. E
(Department Chair)

Dr. C
(Member)

Dr. F
(Dean, College of Science & Technology)

Month, Year

Major Subject: Marine Biology
Format of the Thesis/Dissertation Abstract Page

ABSTRACT

The Title Should Appear in Upper and Lowercase

and be Centered (Month, Year)

You. A. Student, B.S., University of Florida

M.S., University of Texas

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. A

The text of the abstract begins here, has indented paragraphs, and is double-spaced. It may be more than one page long if necessary to fully summarize the rationale for the study, the methods, results, and discussion, and a summary of the implications of the study.
Format of the Thesis/Dissertation Seminar Announcement

(Note: Time, date and room are examples only)

DISSERTATION SEMINAR NOTICE
MARINE BIOLOGY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI

SUBJECT: Official Title of Your Thesis/Dissertation

SPEAKER: You A. Student

DATE: Tuesday, March 15, 2005

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

PLACE: Center for Instruction, Texas TAMU-CC
        Room 109

ABSTRACT

The abstract of your dissertation or graduate project should appear here (shortened version if necessary). An abstract of 50-200 words length is recommended for inclusion in the Graduate Seminar Notice.

[NOTE: Students should post this notice electronically to faculty members and graduate students involved in the MARB and other graduate programs via the typical listerves.]
MARB PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Complete the Texas Common Application and submit the application fee. Online applications are preferred.

- Submit an essay of not more than 1000 words describing educational backgrounds, career interests, goals and challenges. Include any relevant supplemental materials such as publications or resumes of relevant experiences.

- Request 3 letters of evaluation/recommendation.
  - You should request evaluations/recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your academic achievement and potential and provide them with the required evaluation forms.
  - If you have been out of school for a number of years and are unable to contact former professors, you may request evaluations/recommendations from people such as employers who are familiar with you and who can comment on your potential to succeed in the program.
  - Completed evaluation/recommendations should be signed over the flap of the envelope by the person completing the form/letter and be mailed directly to OGS.

- Request official transcripts from all senior-level post-secondary institutions you attended. Transcripts must be sent directly to OGS. An official statement of the award of the degree or diploma is required for each degree completed.

- Request that the required test scores (GRE and/or TOEFL) be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service to OGS (Code 6849)
  - GRE and TOEFL scores must be not more than 5 and 2 yrs old, respectively.
  - International graduate students seeking assistantships must also obtain “English Proficiency Certification.”

- Apply separately for financial assistance. Deadline is February 1.

Application receipt deadlines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Students</td>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>June 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARB Ph.D. Program First-Year Checklist

- Meet with MARB Program Chair prior to enrolling for first semester classes

- Form Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) by end of first semester
  - Speak with individual faculty about research interests
  - Committee must include at least 3 (M.S.)/4 (PhD) MARB IDP faculty
  - Decide on a primary advisor (Committee Chair)
  - Form and meet your committee *no later than* end of second semester

- Prepare the Preliminary Degree Plan with the Office of Graduate Studies by end of 1st semester
  - Leveling coursework
  - Elective coursework
  - Dissertation topic
  - Formulate Research Prospectus

- Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) appoints a Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) – Ph.D. Students only.

- Meet GAC at least annually to update progress