

**MARINE BIOLOGY INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

for

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

The Department of Marine Biology (MARB)

And

The Department of Marine Science (MARS)

Texas A&M University at Galveston (TAMUG)



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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 Graduate Program (MARB IDP) at the Texas A&M University at Galveston (TAMUG) campus. For prospective students, it contains a brief overview of the program and instructions for applying for admission and selecting an advisor. For admitted students, it contains information about the requirements for successfully completing the degree, the course of study, selecting a graduate committee, preliminary exams/admission to degree candidacy (Ph.D. students), the defense, and the final oral examination. Students associated with the M.S. and Ph.D. in the MARB IDP at TAMUG 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 TAMUG Graduate Student Handbook and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) website <http://ogaps.tamu.edu>.

The MARB IDP is unique in that it combines the strengths of three campuses and six departments within the Texas A&M University System. These departments include: Marine Biology and Marine Sciences at TAMUG, Life Sciences at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC), and Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Oceanography, and Biology at Texas A&M University (TAMU). Students can choose courses from any campus and form committees with any of the participating MARB IDP faculty. The goal of the proposed graduate program is to attract high-quality students interested in one or a combination of the subdisciplines 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 campuses on the Gulf of Mexico.

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

The following is for prospective students who plan to attend the MARB IDP in Galveston and have selected a faculty advisor whose home campus is TAMUG. For prospective MARB IDP students needing to apply at TAMU or TAMU-CC, please contact the Staff Graduate Advisor. Students seeking admission to the MARB IDP must apply through the TAMUG Enrollment Services. The application should be submitted using the Apply Texas <http://www.applytexas.org>.

#### **A complete application consists of:**

1. Identifying a faculty member who has agreed to be a Graduate Advisor/Chair. For a TAMUG application, the faculty member's home campus must be TAMUG and part of the MARB IDP Participating Faculty. The name of the Graduate Advisor should be provided on the personal statement. Non-thesis applicants are assigned a faculty advisor.
2. An Apply Texas application

3. A personal statement containing a narrative explaining the reasons why you are applying to the MARB IDP. Personal statements must be submitted through the Apply Texas application.
4. Three recommendations of evaluation from people familiar with your potential for graduate studies. Recommendations from the academic community are preferred, and should be submitted electronically through the TAMUG Application System. Applicants will get access to the TAMUG Application System once their applications are processed by the Admissions Office.
5. Transcripts of all previous undergraduate/graduate work (including transcript evaluations of all work done at foreign institutions). \* Please allow extra time for review of transcripts from foreign institutions.
6. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores that are not more than 5 years old. The code for submitting GRE Scores to TAMUG is 6835.
7. For international applicants whose native language is not English, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required. TOEFL must be taken within the last two years.

\*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.

It is the applicant's responsibility to make sure that the application is complete by the deadline to assure full consideration. Acceptance into the MARB IDP is competitive and based on consideration of all application materials. Relevant life experiences may also provide a substantial basis for consideration. A campus visit with personal interviews involving prospective faculty advisors is highly recommended.

#### APPLICATION DEADLINES

Students are admitted into the MARB IDP in Fall or Spring semesters only; most students will begin in the Fall, and there may be no stipend funding availability for Spring admissions. **Application and all required supplemental information must be submitted AND reviewed by the deadlines listed below to receive priority consideration.** Applications completed after deadlines will not be considered. Admission to the program is decided independently of financial awards (see "Financial Support") and applicants must apply separately for scholarships, assistantships, and fellowships.

#### **Fall**

There are three times during the fall admission season when the Graduate, Recruitment, and Admissions Committee get together to review applications. All applicants are invited to submit their applications and supplemental items early but not required until May 1.

- December 1    Early decision deadline for Ph.D. or M.S. applicants (who would like an early decision)  
                     The faculty admissions committee review applications in January.

- February 15    Deadline for Ph.D. applicants who are competing for the TAMUG MARB IDP Teaching Assistantship funds  
The faculty admissions committee review applications in February.
- May 1            Final deadline for all applicants  
The faculty admissions committee review applications in May.

### **Spring**

- October 1        Final deadline for all applicants  
The faculty admissions committee review applications in October.

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

A limited number of assistantships are available to MARB IDP students at TAMUG. Assistantships are available at a half-time (20 hour/week) 9-month or 12-month appointment.

Students who hold assistantships must be enrolled as a full-time student (at least 9 hours/fall and spring semester, and 6 hours/summer) in the MARB IDP. Appointments are for 9 months (fall and spring) or 12 month (fall, spring, summer). Some assistantships have reappointments, which require reapplication each year, and students should not assume that the appointment will continue automatically.

### ***MARB IDP Teaching Assistantship Funds***

A limited number of assistantships are available through the MARB IDP for incoming doctoral students. This award is faculty nominated. The assistantship is a 12-month appointment and not eligible for reappointment. The Research and Graduate Studies Office notifies the faculty members of the MARB IDP funds, and faculty advisors submit a letter of support and admissions application of the student to the Research Advisory Council (RAC). For doctoral applicants interested, please contact your faculty advisor.

### ***2 Year Competitive Graduate Student Fellowship Funds***

A limited number of assistantships are available through the Research and Graduate Studies Office (RGSO) for all incoming students to the TAMUG campus. This award is faculty nominated. The assistantship is a 24-month appointment and not eligible for reappointment. RGSO notifies the faculty members of the funds and faculty advisors submit a letter of support and admissions application to the respective Department Head for ranking. From there, the final approval of awards is determined by the Research Advisory Council (RAC). For applicants interested, please contact your faculty advisor.

### ***Teaching Assistantships***

Teaching assistantships are available each year. Consult your faculty advisor 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 research institutes or centers, and individual faculty members; consult with institute or center directors and individual faculty

members to identify these funding sources.

### ***Loans and Scholarships***

Consult Financial Management Systems (FMS) for information regarding student loans and scholarship information.

### ***Fellowship and Assistantship Compensation***

First year Master of Science students receive \$1700/month. Doctoral students entering with a BS receive \$1700/month. Doctoral students entering with a M.S. receive \$1800/month. Doctoral students having passed the preliminary exam as indicated in Compass receive \$1850/month. All increases start the semester following change of status.

### ***Texas 99 Hour Rule***

Doctoral students have 7 years (21 semesters) to complete their doctoral degree without being penalized. During the 7 years, students who are otherwise eligible for in-state tuition will be charged as such, even if they accumulate more than 99 doctoral hours. After 7 years (21 semesters), students who have accumulated more than 99 doctoral hours will be charged tuition at a rate equivalent to out-of-state tuition regardless of funding. Students who have been granted individual exemptions for the doctoral hour cap limit by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and those students in programs which have receive programmatic exemptions have 130 doctoral hours and 21 semesters before they are penalized with a higher tuition rate.

Please note that all graduate courses are not coded as doctoral courses. At the time a course is approved, the level of the course is determined by the highest level of degree in that major. In addition, the count does not begin until a doctoral student is classified as a G8 student. Students may view their hour count through the Howdy Portal.

## **FULFILLING MARB IDP M.S. AND PH.D. PROGRAM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Completing a M.S. requires completing the following milestones:

1. Select a Graduate Advisor/Chair (done during the admissions process)
2. Form a Student Advisory Committee
3. Create and complete courses on the degree plan
4. Develop a proposal (M.S. thesis-option only)
5. Conduct research (M.S. thesis-option only)
6. Write a professional paper (M.S. non-thesis option only)
7. Write thesis (M.S. thesis-option only)
8. Thesis defense (M.S. thesis-option only)

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

Completing a Ph.D. requires completing of the following milestones:

1. Select a Graduate Advisor/Chair (done during the admissions process)
2. Form a Student Advisory Committee
3. Submit a degree plan
4. Develop a proposal
5. Pass preliminary examination
6. Conduct research
7. Write dissertation
9. Dissertation Defense

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

### ***Common Body of Knowledge (CBK)***

The Common Body of Knowledge for the MARB IDP is comprised of six areas of study: (1) *Marine ecosystems*, (2) *Statistical methods*, (3) *Molecular biology*, (4) *Evolution*, (5) *Integrative and comparative biology*, and (6) *Ecology*. During their tenure in the MARB IDP program, students must demonstrate graduate-level proficiency in *Marine ecosystems* and *Statistical methods*, plus at least three of the following four areas of biology: *Molecular biology*, *Evolution*, *Integrative and comparative biology*, and *Ecology*. Proficiency can be demonstrated by completing an appropriate graduate-level course, by participating in a seminar course or workshop, through research activities, or through classroom teaching experience. Proficiency will be evaluated and approved by the student's committee Chair and reported on the annual progress report.

Appendix 3 contains a partial list of courses that can fulfill the CBK areas. This course list is not comprehensive, and not all courses are available each year.

### STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

After being accepted into the MARB IDP and enrolling, the most important first step is forming the student advisory committee (SAC). Students should form a SAC to guide them through their degree program by the end of their first semester in the MARB IDP.

Composition and size of the committee should reflect the scope of the intended graduate program and should be developed with the student's faculty advisor. The advisor(s) will serve as chair/co-chair of the committee. The committee must be selected from members of the Participating MARB IDP Graduate Faculty (PGF) from TAMU, TAMU-CC and/or TAMUG. A recognized scholar who is not a member of the PGF may serve as a Special Appointment or Adjunct Member of the Graduate Faculty following nomination and approval by the Chair of the MARB IDP and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS). To add Adjunct Members or Special Appointments, please contact the Staff Graduate Advisor.

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 Chair. The committee Chair (or Co-Chair) must be a member of the MARB IDP graduate faculty. One member must be from a department other than the student's major department.

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

The Chair 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 should **precede** major coursework and research where possible. 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 SAC also approves the degree plan, thesis/dissertation proposal and final manuscript, and administers the preliminary examination (for doctoral students) and final thesis/dissertation defense. Students will inform OGAPS of the members of the SAC through the online Degree Plan Submission System (DPSS).

#### DEGREE PLAN

The SAC, 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 submitted to the online Degree Plan Submission System (DPSS). To log onto DPSS as well as locate the DPSS Handbook, please visit <http://ogs.tamu.edu/current/degreeplans.html>. Before submitting the degree plan, it is advised that a student meets with their SAC for the degree plan development and approval. Once a degree plan is submitted, it will be approved by the Staff Graduate Advisor, SAC, Chair of the MARB IDP, and OGAPS.

#### *M.S. (Non-thesis option)*

At least 36 semester credit hours of approved courses are required for the M.S. (non-thesis) degree and can be taken from TAMUG, TAMU-CC, or TAMU. The Chair and/or committee may require additional coursework. The program requires a minimum of 34 hours of regular graded (non-research, non-variable credit) coursework to be on the degree plan for M.S. thesis as well as 2 hours of seminar. For more details and limitations see the TAMUG Graduate Catalog <http://www.tamug.edu/catalog>. In order 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.

#### Required Courses:

MARB 606	Advanced Concepts in Marine Population Biology (3 hours)
MARB 620	Marine Biological Resources (3 hours)

MARB 640                                    Ecosystem Functions in Marine Environments (3 hours)  
MARB 668                                    Marine Evolutionary Biology (3 hours)  
MATH 5315 or STAT 651                Statistics I (3 hours)

***M.S. (Thesis-option)***

At least 32 semester credit hours of approved courses and research are required for the M.S. (thesis-option) degree and can be taken from TAMUG, TAMU-CC, and TAMU. The Chair and/or committee may require additional coursework. The program normally requires a minimum of 22 hours of regular graded (non-research, non-variable credit) coursework to be on the degree plan for M.S. thesis as well as 2 hours of seminar and 8 hours of research hours. For more details and limitations see the TAMUG Graduate Catalog <http://www.tamug.edu/catalog>. In order 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.

Required Course:

MATH 5315 or STAT 651                Statistics I (3 hours)

***Ph.D.***

At least 64 hours of a combination of graded courses and research hours are required on Ph.D. degree plans for students with an M.S. degree; students without an M.S. degree require a combination of 96 hours on the degree plan. For students coming in with a M.S. degree, the program suggests 17-23 credits of regular graded coursework taken at TAMU-CC, TAMU, or TAMUG and 2 hours of seminar and 6 hours of statistics (see below), with the balance being 69 research hours. For students coming in with a B.S. degree, the program suggests 39-55 hours of regular graded coursework taken at TAMU-CC, TAMU, or TAMUG that includes 2 hours of seminar and six hours of statistics (see below), with the balance made up of research hours, unless determined otherwise by the student's advisory committee. In order to remain in good standing, the university requires students to maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 ("B") for all graded courses.

Required Courses:

MATH 5315 or STAT 651                Statistics I (3 hours)  
MATH 5316 or STAT 652                Statistics II (3 hours)

**ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

The SACS report and 18 Characteristics is provided to the MARB IDP Executive Committee during the summer meeting. Data for this report is collected during the spring semester by the Staff Graduate Advisor. Faculty members and students are required to submit an annual progress report during the spring semester with instructions coming from the Staff Graduate Advisor.

**ANNUAL RETREAT**

An annual retreat for students and faculty of the MARB IDP will be held every winter. The location of the retreat will rotate among the three campuses. During this retreat, the MARB IDP

Executive Committee will conduct their winter meeting. Students will have the opportunity to present their research during the retreat. Students should present their work at the retreat once every two years at a minimum.

#### REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

A student in a graduate degree program requiring a thesis or dissertation, who has completed all coursework on his/her degree plan other than 691 (Research) is required to maintain continuous registration until all requirements for the degree have been completed. The continuous registration requirement may be satisfied by registering in residence. For more information on these types of registration, please visit the TAMU Graduate Catalog <http://catalog.tamu.edu>. Students on various assistantships and other funding sources are required to maintain certain number of credit hours per semester. Students holding assistantship/fellowships must be enrolled as a full-time student (at least 9 hours/fall and spring semester, and 6 hours/summer).

If a student requests to take a course within the MARB IDP at TAMU and/or TAMU-CC, then the student needs to contact the Staff Graduate Advisor who will coordinate with the appropriate offices for registration. If a student takes a defined MARB IDP course at TAMU and/or TAMU-CC, the student is charged TAMUG tuition and fees. For courses not defined as a MARB IDP at TAMU and/or TAMU-CC, students are charged tuition and fees at that partner institution.

#### CROSS CAMPUS REGISTRATION GUIDELINES

##### **For Students:**

If a student requests to take a course within the MARB IDP at TAMU and/or TAMU-CC, then the student needs to contact the Staff Graduate Advisor who will coordinate with the appropriate offices for registration. If a student takes a defined MARB IDP course at TAMU and/or TAMU-CC, the student is charged TAMUG tuition and fees. For courses not defined as a MARB IDP at TAMU and/or TAMU-CC, students are charged tuition and fees at that partner institution. See Appendix 3 for a list of current courses defined under the MARB IDP.

##### **For Faculty:**

Course advertising – It is suggested that faculty provide either an advertisement and/or syllabus to the Staff Graduate Advisor to assist with advertising the course to the three campuses.

Course creation –The Staff Graduate Advisor will work with both the student's home and partner campus for proper registration and billing. A course section will be created at the student's home campus and a section will be created at the student's partner campus. In other words, **two sections will be created.**

Instructional needs – Sometimes getting the same resources for the student registered cross campus can be challenging. If an instructor needs assistance with getting a student access to course materials and/or general IT access, the instructor should contact the Staff Graduate Advisor.

#### THESIS/DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The format of the Research Proposal is determined by the student's advisor and SAC. The student with a required thesis or dissertation will develop a detailed proposal, **before research begins. At the latest, the proposal title page (along with the entire proposal) should be submitted to the Staff Graduate Advisor before the end of the second long semester (fall or spring) for M.S. (thesis-option) students and before the end of the fourth long semester for Ph.D. students.** To locate the proposal title page, please visit <http://ogaps.tamu.edu>. The Chair of the MARB IDP acts as the Department Head for forms provided by OGAPS. The student should report regularly on research progress to the Chair and SAC, to prevent last minute surprises or misunderstandings and to gain approval of any redirection.

#### DOCTORAL PRELIMINARY EXAMS

To be admitted to candidacy for the MARB Ph.D. degree you must satisfy all requirements on the preliminary examination checklist. All committee members must participate in the preliminary examination. If a committee member needs to be substituted or if a member plans to participate via distance, please inform the Staff Graduate Advisor **prior to the preliminary examination.** After passing the required preliminary examination for the doctoral degree, the student must complete all remaining requirements within four calendar years. Please give the completed checklist and preliminary examination report to the Staff Graduate Advisor. **The preliminary examination should be completed by the end of the fifth long semester.**

Preliminary exams will cover all areas within the scope of the student's doctoral program, and will involve written exams from each advisory committee member, followed by an oral exam administered by the committee as a whole. To schedule the oral preliminary examination, please contact the Staff Graduate Advisor to determine how to schedule a room. At their discretion, the SAC and OGAPS may allow one re-examination when adequate time has passed to allow students to address inadequacies emerging from the first examination (normally six months).

#### SEMINAR

All students are required to register for at least 2 credits of seminar, MARB 681, (or another approved seminar course).

#### THESIS/DISSERTATION

The role of the student's advisor is to work with the student on study design, interpretation of results, and professional development, which includes guidance on writing, presenting and publishing their data. The SAC's role is to supplement the guidance of the advisor, and in some cases offer specific expertise that will assist and enhance the student's research program.

The thesis/dissertation is a complete document that will be bound and filed in the TAMU Library. The Thesis Office <http://thesis.tamu.edu> at TAMU assists students with the preparation of their electronic thesis/dissertation. The Thesis Office provides advice and handouts during the writing process, and publishes the Thesis Manual, which includes rules for format. The Thesis Office also holds a pre-submittal review as you prepare to defend and format the final version of

your document. After the manuscript is submitted electronically, the Thesis Office reviews your document for university formatting standards.

When the draft is ready, submit it to the chair of your advisory committee. Submit the draft as if it were the final – make it as perfect as possible with respect to writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling, journal formatting requirements, and with all figures and tables in final format. 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.

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

Any member of the graduate committee 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, inappropriate analysis of data, erroneous conclusions, or other scientific inaccuracies
5. The paper contains plagiarized work

After a student has successfully completed the defense/oral examination and all changes to the thesis/dissertation manuscript that have been requested by the committee, the committee may sign the approval form of the dissertation. The approval form is submitted to the Thesis Office via the Staff Graduate Advisor. In addition, the student must submit an electronic version of the thesis/dissertation in the format specified by the Thesis Office and sample journal article to the Thesis Office. The Marine Biology Department will request a copy of the final manuscript. Prior to submitting the thesis/dissertation, the Thesis Office recommends that students have a pre-submittal conference in order to minimize the number of revisions. The Thesis Office comes to TAMUG every fall and spring semester to hold the pre-submittal conference, which can also be held online.

#### GRADUATION

OGAPS at TAMU and TAMU-CC confer graduate degrees for every student in the MARB IDP at the close of each regular semester and 10-week summer session. Students expecting to complete work at the end of a given semester, must apply for graduation through the Howdy portal by the deadline published each semester in the OGAPS calendar. Final degree audits are done when application is made. Students should notify the Staff Graduate Advisor of anticipated graduation date. Students graduating are required to conduct an exit interview with the Staff Graduate Advisor.

#### SUMMARY OF DEADLINES

MARB IDP 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 Chair of the MARB IDP 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 should be submitted before the end of the first long semester of enrollment.
- b. Research proposal form (along with the entire the proposal) must be submitted via the Staff Graduate Advisor to OGAPS before the end of the second long semester for M.S. (thesis-option) students and before the end of the fourth long semester for Ph.D. students.
- c. Preliminary examinations for doctoral students must be done by the end of the fifth long semester.

The Chair of the MARB IDP will not accept documents turned in after deadlines. It is in the best interest of the student to allow time after committee and the MARB IDP Chair review to make corrections before the document goes to OGAPS. Students make take into account the distance of documents getting to TAMU where OGAPS is located and should plan accordingly.

#### REGISTRATION AND BLOCK REMOVAL

Students who fail to submit documents (degree plan, research proposal, etc.) by the MARB IDP deadlines will be given a warning. The warning status is placed for the next long semester where students are required to meet with the Staff Graduate Advisor to discuss progress toward reaching the deadline. Students who are on warning must meet the deadline near the end of the second long semester to avoid a block from future registrations. The block will be removed once the student submits the documents required.

#### IMPORTANT CONTACTS

MARB IDP Chair Dr. Anna Armitage (armitaga@tamug.edu; 409-740-4842)  
MARB IDP Staff Graduate Advisor Holly Richards (richardh@tamug.edu; 409-740-4957)  
Graduate Studies Director, Nicole Kinslow (kinslown@tamug.edu; 409-740-4937)

#### GET CONNECTED

Important information is frequently sent out through email. If your email changes, please make sure to notify the Staff Graduate Advisor of your new email address. Also through the Howdy portal, an eLearning site for the MARB IDP was created as a one stop shop of information regarding the program.

## APPENDIX 1

### MARB Program Coursework Requirements Degree Plan

#### Credit Hours Required for Master of Science Degree

	Thesis	Non-thesis
Courses	22	34
Seminar	2	2
Research hours	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	32	36

#### Credit Hours Suggested for Doctor of Philosophy Degree

	With M.S.	Without M.S.
Courses	17-23	39-55
Seminar	2	2
Research hours	<u>39-45</u>	<u>39-55</u>
Total	64	96

#### Master of Science - Thesis Option Degree Requirements

**Time Limits:** All requirements for the degree must be completed within seven consecutive years.

**Degree Plan:** A Graduate Degree Plan of at least 32 hrs must be completed with a minimum GPR of 3.000 and no grade lower than C. At least eight hours of 691 (Research) must be included. The degree plan must be submitted by the end of the first long semester to avoid warning and possible block on future registrations.

**Course Limitations:** Courses exceeding limits below will not be considered for meeting degree requirements.

1. Only approved courses on the degree plan will be considered for this program.
2. No more than 12 hrs or one-third of the total hours on the degree plan, whichever is greater, may be used. Transfer course work must be completed at an accredited institution with a grade of B or better.
3. No more than 12 hrs taken in a non-degree seeking (G6) classification may be used.
4. No more than 12 hrs may be used in any combination of the following categories:
  - a. Not more than 8 hrs in the combination of 691 (Research) or 684 (Professional Internship) may be used.
  - b. Not more than 8 hrs of 685 (Directed Studies) may be used.
  - c. Not more than 3 hrs of 690 (Theory of Research) may be used.
  - d. Not more than 3 hrs of 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used.
5. No more than 2 hrs of 681 (Seminar) may be used.

6. No more than 9 hrs of advanced undergraduate courses (300-499) may be used.
7. No correspondence study may be used.
8. No credit hours of extension course work may be used.
9. No credit hours of FREN 601 or GERM 603 may be used.

**Advisory Committee:** The Advisory Committee consists of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty, one of which must be from outside the student's major department.

**Residence Requirement:** During one semester or 2 consecutive 5-week summer terms, 9 hrs of resident credit must be completed.

**Research Proposal:** A thesis proposal approved by the advisor, Advisory Committee, MARB IDP Chair and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies is required. The proposal title page form and the entire proposal must be submitted via the Staff Graduate Advisor by the end of your second long semester to avoid a warning or possible block on future registrations.

**Thesis Defense:**

To be eligible to hold the defense, the student:

1. must have a graduate GPR of at least 3.000 (listed as "Program GPA" on Howdy Degree Evaluation),
2. must have a Degree Plan GPR of at least 3.000 with no grade lower than a C in any course on the degree plan,
3. must have an approved research proposal,
4. must have completed or be registered for all remaining degree plan course work,
5. must be registered in the university,
6. must have the thesis in final form and ready for distribution to all committee members,

**Thesis:** The final version of the thesis must be cleared by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies no later than one year after the defense or within the seven year time limit, whichever is first.

**Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements**

**Time Limits:** All requirements for the degree must be completed within ten consecutive years.

**Degree Plan:** A Graduate Degree Plan of at least 96 hrs beyond a baccalaureate degree or 64 hrs beyond a master's degree from a U.S. institution. The degree plan must be submitted by the end of the first long semester to avoid warning and possible block on future registrations.

**Course Limitations:** Courses exceeding limits below will not be considered for meeting degree requirements.

1. Only approved courses on the degree plan will be considered for this program.
2. No correspondence study may be used.
3. No credit hours of FREN 601 or GERM 603 may be used.
4. No credit hours of extension course work may be used.
5. For other course exclusions refer to the Graduate Catalog.

**Advisory Committee:** The Advisory Committee consists of at least four members of the Graduate Faculty, one of which must be from outside the student's major department.

**Residence Requirement:** If entering with a baccalaureate degree, one year plus one semester must be spent in resident study. If entering with a master's degree from a U.S. institution, one year must be spent in resident study. One year may include two adjacent long semesters or one long semester and one adjacent 10-week summer term of 9 hrs each.

**Research Proposal:** A dissertation proposal approved by the advisor, Advisory Committee, MARB IDP Chair and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies is required. The proposal title page form and the entire proposal must be submitted via the Staff Graduate Advisor by the end of your fourth long semester to avoid a warning or possible block on future registrations.

**Preliminary Examination:** The result of the Preliminary Examination must be received, along with the Checklist, by OGAPS within ten days of the oral examination date. All degree requirements must be completed within a four year time period following the preliminary exam or the preliminary exam is voided and must be repeated. Preliminary exam must be completed by the end of the fifth long semester in order to avoid a warning and possible block for future registrations.

To be eligible to hold a preliminary exam, the student:

1. must have a Degree Plan approved by OGAPS no later than ninety days prior to the preliminary exam,
2. must have a graduate GPR of at least 3.0 (listed as "Program GPA" on Howdy Degree Evaluation),
3. must have a degree plan GPR of at least 3.0,
4. must be registered in the university,
5. must be within 6 hrs of completing all formal (graded) course work on the degree plan (i.e., all course work except 681, 684, 690, and 691).

**Admission to Candidacy:** To achieve Admission to Candidacy, the student:

1. must have completed all formal course work on the degree plan with the exception of any remaining 681, 684, 690 and 691,
2. must have a graduate GPR of at least 3.0 (listed as "Program GPA" on Howdy Degree Evaluation),
3. must have a Degree Plan GPR of at least 3.0 with no grade lower than C in any course on the degree plan,
4. must have passed the preliminary examination (written and oral portions),
5. must have an approved dissertation proposal,
6. must have met the residence requirements.

**Dissertation Defense:** The doctoral student is allowed only one opportunity to take the dissertation defense. The request to hold and announce the defense must be submitted to OGAPS a minimum of 10 working days in advance of the scheduled date.

To be eligible to hold the defense, the student:

1. must have a graduate GPR of at least 3.0 (listed as "Program GPA" on Howdy Degree Evaluation),
2. must have a Degree Plan GPR of at least 3.0,
3. must be admitted to candidacy,
4. must have completed or be registered for all remaining degree plan course work,
5. must be registered in the university.
6. must have the dissertation in final form and ready for distribution to all committee members,
7. must complete all degree requirements within a four year period following the preliminary exam.

**Dissertation:** The final version of the dissertation must be cleared by OGAPS no later than one year after the defense or within the ten year time limit, whichever is first.

**APPENDIX 2**

**MARB IDP Application Checklist**

**MARB IDP First-Year Checklist**

## MARB PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Select a faculty member who has agreed to be a Graduate Advisor/Chair. For a TAMUG application, the faculty member's home campus must be TAMUG and part of the MARB IDP Participating Faculty. The name of the Graduate Advisor should be provided on the personal statement. Non-thesis applicants are assigned a faculty advisor.
  
- Complete the Apply Texas Application and submit the application fee available through <http://www.applytexas.org>
  
- Submit an electronic personal statement describing educational backgrounds, career interests, research experience, goals and challenges through the Apply Texas application. Include any relevant supplemental materials such as publications or resumes of relevant experiences. Also, ***include the name of the faculty advisor*** who has agreed to work with you should you be accepted.
  
- 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.
  - Letters should be addressed to the Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee of the MARB IDP.
  - Completed evaluation/recommendations may be sent electronically through the OAR System.
  
- Request official transcripts from all senior-level post-secondary institutions you attended. Transcripts must be sent directly to the Research and Graduate Studies Office.
  
- Request that the required test scores (GRE and/or TOEFL) be sent directly to TAMUG (Code 6835)
  - GRE and TOEFL scores must be not more than 5 and 2 yrs old, respectively
  
- Application receipt deadlines:
 

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Early Decision Deadline	December 1	
Ph.D. Funding Deadline	February 15	
Final Deadline	May 1	October 1

## MARB PH.D. PROGRAM FIRST-YEAR CHECKLIST

- Meet with MARB Faculty Advisor prior to enrolling for first semester classes
- Meet with the Staff Graduate Advisor to make sure you start off on the right track (recommended not required)
- Form Student Advisory Committee (SAC) by end of first semester
  - Speak with individual faculty about research interests
  - Names of committee members will be submitted through the online Degree Plan System
  - Form and meet your committee *no later than* end of second semester to avoid registration blocks
- Prepare a Degree Plan with your advisor and SAC
  - Leveling coursework
  - Elective coursework
  - Submit the final degree plan no later than the end of the first long semester
- Meet with your SAC at least annually to update progress

### APPENDIX 3

#### Defined MARB IDP Courses

The following courses are defined as MARB IDP courses at TAMUG and TAMU:

- All 300, 400, and graduate level courses in TAMUG - MARB, MARS, TAMU -BIOL, OCNG, WFSC
- All 400 and graduate level courses in TAMU- ESSM
- STAT 651, 652, 653

For course descriptions, please visit the online catalogs of TAMU and TAMUG.

For TAMU-CC, MATH 5315, MATH 5316, MATH 6316, and MARB 6590 are defined MARB IDP courses for TAMUG students. For course descriptions, please visit the online catalog of TAMU-CC.

#### Common Body of Knowledge

The Common Body of Knowledge for the MARB IDP is comprised of six areas of study: (1) *Marine ecosystems*, (2) *Statistical methods*, (3) *Molecular biology*, (4) *Evolution*, (5) *Integrative and comparative biology*, and (6) *Ecology*. During their tenure in the MARB IDP program, students must demonstrate graduate-level proficiency in *Marine ecosystems* and *Statistical methods*, plus at least three of the following four areas of biology: *Molecular biology*, *Evolution*, *Integrative and comparative biology*, and *Ecology*. Proficiency can be demonstrated by completing an appropriate graduate-level course, by participating in a seminar course or workshop, through research activities, or through classroom teaching experience. Proficiency will be evaluated and approved by the student's committee Chair and reported on the annual progress report.

#### Marine Ecosystems

Course #	Host Campus	Distance Option	Course Title	Most Recent Offering
MARB 6590/CMSS 6359	Corpus Christi	Possible in Fall 16	Marine Ecosystem Dynamics	Fall 15
OCNG 620	College Station	Yes	Biological Oceanography	Spring 15
Appropriate 300, 400, and graduate level courses in TAMUG – MARB, MARS, TAMU – BIOL, OCNG, WFSC, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate 400 and graduate level courses in TAMU – ESSM, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate graduate level courses at TAMUCC, with approval of graduate advisor				

**Statistical Methods**

<b>Course #</b>	<b>Host Campus</b>	<b>Distance Option</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Most Recent Offering</b>
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	Yes	Bayesian Statistics	Fall 15, offered odd fall
MATH 5315/6315	Corpus Christi	Yes	Statistical Methods in Research I	Fall 15, offered every fall
MATH 5316/6316	Corpus Christi	Yes	Statistical Methods in Research II	Spring 15, offered every spring
MATH 6316/6317	Corpus Christi	Yes	Mixed Effects Models for Scientists	Fall 14, offered every even fall
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	No	Experimental Design	Spring 15
STAT 651	College Station	Yes	Statistics in Research I	Fall 15
STAT 652	College Station	Yes	Statistics in Research II	Fall 15
STAT 653	College Station	Yes	Statistics in Research III	Spring 15

### **Molecular Biology**

<b>Course #</b>	<b>Host Campus</b>	<b>Distance Option</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Most Recent Offering</b>
BIOL 609	College Station	No	Molecular Tools in Biology	Fall 15
BIOL 611	College Station	No	Developmental Genetics	Fall 15
BIOL 625	College Station	No	Structural & Molecular Biology	Fall 15
BIOL 650	College Station	No	Genomics	Fall 15
BIOL 606	College Station	No	Microbial Genetics	Spring 15
BIOL 613	College Station	No	Cell Biology	Spring 15
BIOL 635	College Station	No	Plant Molecular Biology	Spring 15
WFSC 633	College Station	No	Conservation Genetics	Fall 15
BIOL 5371	Corpus Christi	Possible in Fall 16	Evolutionary Genetics	Fall 15
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	Possible in Spring 16	Marine Genetics	-
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	Possible in Spring 17	Intro Informatics	-
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	Possible in Fall 16	Comparative Genomics	-
Appropriate 300, 400, and graduate level courses in TAMUG – MARB, MARS, TAMU – BIOL, OCNG, WFSC, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate 400 and graduate level courses in TAMU – ESSM, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate graduate level courses at TAMUCC, with approval of graduate advisor				

**Evolution**

<b>Course #</b>	<b>Host Campus</b>	<b>Distance Option</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Most Recent Offering</b>
BIOL 610	College Station	No	Evolution	Spring 15
MARB 668	Galveston	Yes	Marine Evolutionary Biology	Fall 15, offered every odd fall
BIOL 5371	Corpus Christi	Possible in Fall 16	Evolutionary Genetics	Fall 15
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	No	Ecology & Evolution of Fishes	Spring 16
Appropriate 300, 400, and graduate level courses in TAMUG – MARB, MARS, TAMU – BIOL, OCNG, WFSC, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate 400 and graduate level courses in TAMU – ESSM, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate graduate level courses at TAMUCC, with approval of graduate advisor				

**Integrative and Comparative Biology**

<b>Course #</b>	<b>Host Campus</b>	<b>Distance Option</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Most Recent Offering</b>
MARB 635	Galveston	No	Marine Invertebrate Zoology	Fall 16, offered every even fall
BIOL 5432	Corpus Christi	No	Ichthyology	Fall 15
Appropriate 300, 400, and graduate level courses in TAMUG – MARB, MARS, TAMU – BIOL, OCNG, WFSC, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate 400 and graduate level courses in TAMU – ESSM, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate graduate level courses at TAMUCC, with approval of graduate advisor				

**Ecology**

<b>Course #</b>	<b>Host Campus</b>	<b>Distance Option</b>	<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Most Recent Offering</b>
MARB 606	Galveston	Yes	Advanced Concepts in Population Dynamics	Fall 14, offered every even fall
MARB 654	Galveston	Yes	Coastal Plant Ecology	Fall 15, offered every odd fall
MARB 640	Galveston	Yes	Ecosystems Functions in Marine Environments	Fall 14, offered every even fall
WFSC 613	College Station	Yes	Animal Ecology	Spring 15
WFSC 622	College Station	Yes	Behavioral Ecology	Spring 15
WFSC 624	College Station	Yes	Dynamics of Populations	Fall 15
MARB 6327	Corpus Christi	Possible in Fall 16	Marine Restoration Ecology	Fall 15
MARS 655	Galveston	No	Wetlands Management	Fall 15
MARB 6428	Corpus Christi	No	Fisheries Ecology	Fall 15
MARB 6436	Corpus Christi	Possible in Fall 16	Marine Ecological Processes	Fall 15
MARB 6590	Corpus Christi	Possible in Spring 16	Oceans & Human Health	Spring 15
MARB 6590/CMSS 6362	Corpus Christi	Possible in Spring 17	Global Change and Its Impact on Aquatic Ecosystems	Spring 13
Appropriate 300, 400, and graduate level courses in TAMUG – MARB, MARS, TAMU – BIOL, OCNG, WFSC, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate 400 and graduate level courses in TAMU – ESSM, with approval of graduate advisor				
Appropriate graduate level courses at TAMUCC, with approval of graduate advisor				