TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF MARINE SCIENCES & MARITIME STUDIES

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

DEPARTMENT OF

MARINE & COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Marine and Coastal Environmental Science (MCES) Graduate Student Handbook is a guide to department-level policies specific to the Master of Marine Resources Management (MARM) and Ph.D. in Marine and Coastal Management and Science (MCMS) programs. This handbook contains details on program procedures including admissions, student advisory committees, degree plans, and program tracks and course offerings.

The interdisciplinary MARM and MCMS programs innovatively integrate marine and earth sciences with social sciences to equip students with knowledge and skills to solve the most pressing environmental problems facing our coastal and marine social-ecological systems. To that end, the programs are shaped around five program learning outcomes (PLOs). Upon graduation, students should demonstrate competency in the following:

1. Knowledge of laws, regulations, and policies governing coastal and marine systems.
2. An understanding of the interactions between the physical and human environments.
3. An ability to apply analytical methods and approaches appropriate for the problem or question being addressed.
4. An ability to integrate and analyze disparate data sources to reach valid conclusions.
5. Skills to effectively communicate, via written and oral delivery, research results or synthesis of information.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The MARM and MCMS graduate degree programs, which are overseen by the MCES Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Committee (GRAC) and two faculty coordinators. In addition, Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) staff advisors help guide students as they progress through their degree program. For contact information of program coordinators and staff advisors, see Appendix A, and for GRAC membership, see Appendix B.

ADMISSIONS

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Students seeking admission to MCES graduate programs must apply through the GraduateCAS portal (https://www.tamug.edu/grad/Prospective-Students/Applying-to-TAMUG.html) and comply with all requirements. Applicants must submit the following:

1. a resume or CV,

2. personal statement,
3. three references (to provide letters of recommendation), and
4. unofficial copies of their college transcripts.

Applicants who intend to conduct research (master's thesis or doctoral dissertation) should identify potential advising MCES faculty member(s) in their application materials (i.e., personal statement and answer to application question about faculty advisors).

Personal Statement

Personal statements are an integral part of applications to MCES graduate programs because they provide information faculty need to make decisions about the prospective student's skill set and interests. Faculty seeks out students who have good analytic, research, and writing skills and whose interests align with theirs so that they may provide expert guidance on the prospective student's independent research as a graduate student.

For the MARM program, the required personal statement should be **1 page in length** and address the following:

a) the applicant's interest in the graduate program to further their career goals;
b) the applicant's ability to pursue graduate study; and
c) the applicant's research interests and possible faculty members to advise them (*only* if the applicant would like to conduct independent research for a thesis).

For the MCMS program, the required personal statement should be **2 pages in length** and address the following:

a) the applicant's interest in the graduate program to further their career goals;
b) the applicant's qualifications for graduate study (e.g., prior research experience, conference presentations, publications, awards); and
c) the research area of interest, research questions the applicant will pursue in their dissertation research, and faculty members they would like to advise them.

APPLICATIONS FROM CURRENT TAMU GRADUATE STUDENTS

Students currently or recently enrolled in a graduate program at Texas A&M University may apply to MCES graduate programs through a streamlined process. The break in enrollment between the two programs (current/past and MCES graduate program) must be less than one calendar year, and submission should occur no earlier than one year from the requested semester start date.

To pursue this application option, students should email the program coordinator (see Appendix A) the following:

1. a personal statement adhering to the above requirements and
2. unofficial copies of graduate transcripts.

RGS will provide the student's original application. Following review of these materials by the GRAC, the applicant will receive a letter notifying them of the outcome by RGS. If accepted, they will be instructed to submit a Letter of Intent with the TAMU Graduate and Professional School (see: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/forms/letter-of-intent).

APPLICATIONS FOR 3+2 PROGRAM

Current MCES undergraduate students majoring in Coastal and Environmental Science and Society (CESS) may apply for the MARM program through a streamlined process. The MARM 3+2 Program enables students to earn a CESS bachelor's degree and the MARM degree in five years. To be eligible for this program, students must have:

1. a minimum 3.25 GPA,
2. completed of all prerequisite courses, and
3. completed 101 or 102 hours by the Fall semester of their fourth academic year.

MARM 3+2 applicants should submit (by email) the following to the MARM program coordinator:

1. 3+2 application (see Appendix D),
2. a resume or CV,
3. a personal statement (adhering to the above requirements),
4. three recommendations (see Appendix E), and
5. copies of their unofficial transcript.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

Applications for fall semester admission must be submitted by **January 10** and for spring semester by **October 1**. Exception to this is MARM Professional Track applications for fall semester admission, which are due by April 15. Applications are evaluated by members of the GRAC. Admission decisions are based on consideration of all application materials.

STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

MCES graduate students are primarily supported through Graduate Research Assistantships (GARs) and Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GATs). These are paid positions that require 20 hours of work per week on research (GAR) or teaching (GAT) duties. Students must be enrolled full-time to be eligible for these assistantships. In addition to a monthly stipend, they provide optional insurance benefits and qualify students for in-state tuition rates. Doctoral students serving in graduate assistantships may also have their tuition and mandatory fees covered by their assistantship.

GAR positions are typically offered by individual faculty members and tied to research grants. GAT positions are secured through the MCES department head and are typically in support of classes in the Department of Foundational Sciences (see Appendix A for contact information of department head). Doctoral students are given priority for assistantships. For more information on graduate student assistantships and financial support, see: https://www.tamug.edu/grad/Incoming-Students/Student-Financial-Support.html

GARs must complete a mandatory annual evaluation with their supervising faculty member. These evaluations are filed with the graduate program coordinators (see Appendix A). Unsatisfactory performance on the annual evaluation may be grounds for non-renewal of a GAR position.

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Once admitted to the degree program, MCES graduate students must assemble a Student Advisory Committee (SAC) who is a group of graduate faculty members to guide their graduate education. A minimum of three committee members is required for each SAC in the MARM program; the MCMS program requires four committee members (see Table 1).

Table 1. Student Advisory Committee (SAC) Requirements

DEGREE	COMMITTEE MEMBERS	AFFILIATION
MARM	Minimum of three	Chair must have Graduate Faculty Committee (GFC) membership in MCES; one member must have a GFC membership outside MCES
MCMS	Minimum of four	

The chair of the SAC must be a faculty member of the MCES Department and have Graduate Faculty Committee (GFC) membership in the MCES Department. Faculty who have GFC membership (with MCES or other units) but are members of other departments may serve

as co-chair with a MCES faculty member. Additional members of the SAC may be faculty of MCES or come from other academic departments, provided they are a member of the GFC. At least one SAC member must have GFC membership in a department outside of MCES. A list of GFC members at Texas A&M University (TAMU) can be found in online: https://gradcom.tamu.edu/faculty

DEGREE PLANS

MCES graduate students must submit a degree plan that declares the membership of their SAC and outlines the courses that they will complete. For MARM students, degree plans must be submitted by the end of the student's **second long semester or completion of 18 credit hours**, whichever comes first. For MCMS students, degree plans must be submitted by the end of the student's **fourth long semester**. Students should work with RGS staff advisors to develop and submit their degree plan in compliance with TAMU Graduate and Professional School policies and procedures.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

MCES graduate students are expected to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0, make steady progress toward completion of degree requirements, and uphold the Aggie Code of Honor in all circumstances: *An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal or tolerate those who do.*

TAMU RULES & POLICIES

MCES graduate students are responsible for adhering to all TAMU rules of conduct and TAMU Graduate and Professional School policies and procedures. To ensure awareness and compliance with these, graduate students should consult the following:

1. Texas A&M University Student Rules Handbook: http://student-rules.tamu.edu
2. Texas A&M University Graduate Catalog: https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/
3. Texas A&M University Graduate and Professional School Policies: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/grad-student-resources
   Texas A&M University at Galveston Research and Graduate Studies Handbook: https://www.tamug.edu/grad/blocks/Graduate%20Handbook%202024-2025%20Update.pdf

MASTER OF MARINE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The MARM degree gives students a knowledge of interactions across the natural, built, and social environments. Students learn skills applicable to coastal and marine policy and management. Viewed as an MBA for people wanting to work in marine and coastal industries, this rigorous degree prepares students for a successful career in upper management and policy building, in both the private and public sectors.

PROGRAM TRACKS & CURRICULUM

The MARM Program requires completion of 36 hours. Current course offerings are shown in Table 2; these are subject to change. "Core" courses are those courses that students are highly encouraged to take but may be replaced with courses recommended and approved by the student's SAC chair. Additional restrictions on course credit toward degree are detailed in the information on each track of the program.

The MARM Program offers two tracks: 1) Research Track and 2) Professional Track. Students seeking Research Track must submit a separate Letter of Intent (see Appendix C) by the end of their first long (Fall/Spring) semester. Students who do not submit the Letter of Intent will default into the Professional Track.

Research Track

Students in the Research Track develop and carry out an independent research project (thesis) under the advisement of their SAC chair. Students in this track complete **22 hours of core and 14 hours of optional elective courses**. Electives may include up to a maximum of 12 credit hours of 691 (Research) and 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies) as long as the combination of 691 and 685 does not exceed 12 hours. No credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship) or 693 (Professional Studies) may be used for the Research Track.

A thesis is required for students who select the Research Track option. A thesis proposal (and accompanying form indicated SAC approval) is due at the end of the student's third long semester. The thesis should address a well-defined research question that is answered with original research. It should reflect a comprehensive understanding of the pertinent literature and clearly describe the data, and the method of analysis used as well as clearly express the findings and significance of results. The finished work must demonstrate competency in all MCES PLOs and conform to research standards. After successful defense (final exam) and approval by the student's SAC and department head, students must submit their thesis to the Thesis Office. Students should consult RGS staff advisors and the TAMU Graduate and

TABLE 2. MARM COURSE OFFERINGS

			PROFESSIONAL TRACK	RESEARCH TRACK
Course No.	**Course Title**	**Semester**	**Hours**	**Hours**
CORE COURSES			**24 hours core**	**22 hours core**
MARS 603	*Quantitative Methods for Resource Management*	F	3	3
MARS 625*	*GIS Based Modeling for Coastal Resources*	F/Sp	3	3
MARS 635	*Environmental Impact Statements & NRDA*	Sp	3	3
MARS 642	*Coastal Resilience and Sustainability*	Sp	3	3
MARS 651	*Coastal Ecosystem Management & Planning*	F	3	3
MARS 660	*Environmental Conflict Resolution*	F	3	3
MARS 675	*Environmental Management Strategies*	Sp	3	3
MARS 680	*Integrative Analyses in Marine Resources*	F/Sp	2	----
MARS 681	*MARM Introduction Seminar*	F/Sp	1	1
ELECTIVE COURSE EXAMPLES			**12 hours elective**	**14 hours elective**
MARS 626*	*Advanced GIS*	Sp	3	3
MARS 652	*Sustainable Management of Coastal Margins*	F	3	3
MARS 676	*Environmental Policy*	F	3	3
MARS 684	*Professional Internship*	F/Sp/Su	1-6	----
MARS 685	*Directed Studies*	F/Sp/Su	1-6	1-6
MARS 689	*Special Topics in Marine Sciences*	F/Sp/Su	1-6	1-6
MARS 691	*Research*	F/Sp/Su	----	1-12
MARS 693	*Professional Studies*	F/Sp/Su	1-3	----
ESSM 652*	*Advanced GIS*	Sp (web)	3	3
GEOG 665*	*GIS Modeling*	F (web)	3	3
TOTAL			**36 hours**	**36 hours**

F-Fall; Sp-Spring; Su-Summer; *Required course for GIS certificate, for more information see: https://geography.tamu.edu/graduate-student-resources/graduate-certificate-programs/gis-certificate.html

Professional School to comply with all required forms and deadlines. For more information on deadlines, see: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center.

Professional Track

The Professional Track curriculum is structured with **24 hours of core courses and 12 hours of optional elective courses**. Up to 4 credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship) and 3 hours of 693 (Professional Studies) may be counted towards elective course requirements. No more than 9 hours of 685 (Directed Studies) may be used, and no 691 (Research) credit hours may be counted. A professional paper is required for Professional Track students to meet graduation requirements. Because the professional paper should demonstrate the student's competency in MCES graduate program PLOs, students are highly encouraged to build upon their final paper for MARS 603 *Quantitative Methods*. Students should get approval of their professional paper topic from their SAC chair prior to beginning work. Students should also make sure to regularly update and seek feedback from their SAC prior to their defense (final exam).

FINAL EXAMINATIONS

The final examination entails an oral presentation (including Q&A) of the student's written thesis (Research Track) or professional paper (Professional Track) to the members of their SAC. Students must pass the final examination by deadlines published in the TAMU Graduate and Professional School calendar (see: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center). No student may be given a final examination unless their GPR is 3.0 or above and there are no grades of D, F or U for any course listed on the degree plan. If you earn a D, F, or U on any course in your degree plan you must retake the course and earn at least a C or remove the course from your degree plan. Following the final examination, students should complete any requested revisions made by members of their SAC. Theses must adhere to all requirements set by the Graduate and Professional School.

PROGRAM DEADLINES

Important deadlines are noted in Table 3. In addition to this, students should remain aware of deadlines required by the TAMU Graduate and Professional School, particularly in their last semester as graduation approaches. Many of these approaches are earlier than expected and vary from semester to semester. Student should consult RGS staff advisors and the TAMU Graduate and Professional School to comply with all requirements and deadlines: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/dates-and-deadlines

TABLE 3. DEADLINES FOR MARM PROGRAM BY TRACK

ITEM	PROFESSIONAL TRACK	RESEARCH TRACK
Student Advisory Committee formed	End of second long semester/18 hours	End of second long semester/18 hours
Research Track Letter of Intent	n/a	End of first long semester
Degree Plan filed	End of second long semester/18 hours	End of second long semester/18 hours
Thesis Proposal Form	n/a	End of the third long semester
Request for permission to schedule final exam	At least 10 working days before final exam date	At least 10 working days before final exam date
Upload approved, completed thesis and signed approval page to Thesis Office	n/a	Varies, see Graduate School Calendar

PH.D. MARINE AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND SCIENCE

The Marine and Coastal Management and Science (MCMS) PhD program is an interdisciplinary program with an applied research focus. The program emphasizes the study of problems - climate change, marine pollution, natural disasters, and more - in coastal and near-shore marine environments where natural, social, and built systems interact in complex ways. Students are mentored to analyze the scope and management of these problems through the integration of social science, marine science, and rigorous research methodology.

PROGRAM TRACKS & CURRICULUM

Total hours required to complete the MCMS Ph.D. are 90 for students entering with a bachelor's degree and 60 for students entering with an existing master's degree. There are two tracks in the MCMS program: 1) Physical Science Track and 2) Social Science Track. The distribution of graded and nongraded courses are shown in Table 4 for each track.

Table 4. MCMS Program Tracks

	PHYSICAL SCIENCE TRACK		SOCIAL SCIENCE TRACK	
	With bachelor's	**With master's**	**With bachelor's**	**With master's**
Graded Courses	12 hours	12 hours	62 hours	32 hours
Nongraded Courses	78 hours	48 hours	28 hours	28 hours
Total	*90 hours*	*60 hours*	*90 hours*	*60 hours*

Core Block of 12 Graded Course Hours

Students in both tracks must complete a core block of 12 graded course hours that include four 3-hour courses with one each in physical science, social science or policy, research design and communication, and specialty methods. The current options for these courses are provided in Table 5.

Social Science Track students are highly encouraged to take MARS 644 *Research Methods for Coastal Resources* to satisfy the research methods and communication requirement. While replacement of courses on this list is discouraged, students may make substitutions if needed. Substitutions should be discussed with the MCMS Program Chair and must be approved by the student's SAC chair.

Table 5. Required 12 Graded Course Hours

Domain	Course	Course Title	Hours
Physical Science (3 hours) – one of the following:			
	MARS 689	*Coastal Ocean Modeling*	3
	MARS 689	*Coastal Oceanography*	3
	MARS 689	*Coastal Hydrology*	3
	MARS 689	*Water Quality*	3
Social Science (3 hours) – one of the following:			
	MARS 642	*Coastal Resiliency and Hazard Mitigation*	3
	MARS 651	*Coastal Ecosystem Management and Environmental Planning*	3
	MARS 675	*Environmental Management Strategies*	3
Research design and communication (3 hours) – one of the following:			
	MARS 644	*Research Methods for Coastal Resources*	3
	OCNG 603	*Communicating Ocean Science*	3
Specialty methods course (3 hours) – TBD in consult with SAC chair, example options include:			
	GEOG 651	*Remote Sensing for Geographical Analysis*	3
	OCNG 669	*Python for Geosciences*	3
	PSAA 615	*Policy Analysis*	3
	SOCI 633	*Demographic Methods*	3

Physical Science Track

In addition to core block of 12 graded course hours, Physical Science Track students are required to complete **78 hours (with bachelor's degree) or 48 hours (with master's degree) of nongraded coursework** for research (MARS 691 Research).

Social Science Track

In addition to core block of 12 graded course hours, Social Science Track students are required to complete **50 hours (with bachelor's degree) or 20 hours (with master's degree) of graded courses**. This should include the following "core" courses:

- MARS 603 *Quantitative Methods for Resource Management I* (3 hours)
- MARS 604 *Quantitative Methods for Resource Management II* (3 hours)
- MARS 625 *GIS Based Modeling for Coastal Resources* (3 hours)
- MARS 681 *Seminar* – 2 semesters (2 hours)

While replacement of courses listed above is discouraged, students may make substitutions in consultation with the MCMS Program Chair and approval by the student's SAC chair. For the remaining graded course hours, students should consider the course list provided in

Table 2 and consult their SAC chair for guidance. All Social Science Track students must also complete **28 hours of nongraded coursework** for research (MARS 691).

TRANSFER CREDITS

Students transferring into the program from another graduate program will be required to meet the same admissions requirements as other applicants. Transfer students may be allowed to transfer graded coursework credits completed with a **grade B or greater**, up to 18 credit hours (approximately one year of coursework), from another accredited graduate program that have not been used toward another degree. This depends on the advice and approval of the student's SAC and TAMU Graduate and Professional School.

DOCTORAL CANDIDACY

According to TAMU policy, doctoral students are eligible to advance to candidacy when they have met the following requirements:

a) completion of all graded coursework in the Degree Plan excepting any remaining seminars or research hours;
b) 3.0 GPA and no grade lower than a C on the student's Degree Plan;
c) successful completion of the preliminary examination (see Appendix F);
d) submission of an approved dissertation proposal; and
e) all residency requirements met.

A student should complete a preliminary examination no later than the end of the semester following the completion of formal coursework on the degree plan, which should be by the end of the student's sixth long semester. The preliminary examination contains a written and oral portion. The student's SAC chair is responsible for the administration of both portions.

For the written portion of the preliminary examination, questions are submitted by each committee member and focus on topics germane to the committee members' expertise, doctoral program curriculum, and the student's dissertation research topic. Questions should be accompanied with expectations for time spent in completion; a reasonable expectation is 6-8 hours for completion. Exam questions should be provided by each member of the SAC to the SAC chair in advance of the start of the exam; time in advance is determined by the SAC chair.

The SAC chair administers the preliminary exam, including the delivery of all questions to the student, the receipt of student responses, and the sharing of all responses with committee members. The SAC chair decides on the approach for scheduling the exam in consultation with the student and SAC members. The oral defense typically takes place 3-5 days after the

last exam response is returned. This gives sufficient time for SAC members to review all responses and the student to prepare for the oral defense.

The oral examination will be held only if the written portion is deemed satisfactory by all committee members. Results must be received by the Graduate and Professional School 10 working days after the exam date. For guidance on the preliminary examination process, see: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/grad-student-resources/what-are-the-steps-to-fulfill-preliminary-exam-requirements. For more guidance on the preliminary examination content and preparation, students should consult their SAC chair.

In addition to the preliminary examination, students must successfully pass their dissertation proposal. This involves oral presentation and discussion of the student's written dissertation proposal. Upon approval of the written proposal, the student initiates the Research Proposal Approval Form in ARCS to file the proposal with the TAMU Graduate and Professional School: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/forms/research-proposal-approval-form. Proposals should be submitted by the end of the student's eighth long semester and must be approved at least 20 working days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

For all processes related to doctoral candidacy, students should consult RGS staff advisors to ensure they are in compliance with policies and procedures of the TAMU Graduate and Professional School (see: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center).

FINAL EXAMINATION

The final examination involves the student's dissertation defense. Students must pass the final examination by deadlines published in the TAMU Graduate and Professional School calendar (see: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center). No student may be given a final examination unless their GPR is 3.0 or above and there are no grades of D, F or U for any course listed on the degree plan. If you earn a D, F, or U on any course in your degree plan you must retake the course and earn at least a C or remove the course from your degree plan. Following the final examination, students should complete any requested revisions made by members of their SAC and work to meet requirements by the Graduate and Professional School in completion of their dissertation. For more guidance on steps to graduation, see: https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#stepstofulfilladoctoralprogramtext.

PROGRAM DEADLINES

Key program deadlines are listed in Table 6. In addition to these, students should remain aware of specific deadlines required by the TAMU Graduate and Professional School. Many

of these approaches earlier than expected and vary semester to semester. Student should consult RGS staff advisors and the TAMU Graduate and Professional School to comply with all requirements and deadlines: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/dates-and-deadlines

TABLE 6. DEADLINES FOR THE MCMS PROGRAM

ITEM	DEADLINE
Student Advisory Committee formed	End of 4th long semester
Degree Plan filed	End of 4th long semester
Preliminary Examination	End of the 6th long semester
Dissertation Proposal Approval	End of the 8th long semester
Request for permission to schedule final examination	At least 20 working days prior to submission of the Request and Announcement of Final Examination
Approved, completed dissertation submitted to Thesis Office	Varies, see Graduate School Calendar

APPENDIX A: CONTACT INFORMATION

Role	Faculty/Staff	Email
PROGRAM COORDINATORS		
Ph.D. Marine & Coastal Management & Science	Dr. Ashley Ross	ashleydross@tamug.edu
Master of Marine Resources Management	Dr. Meri Davlasheridze	davlashm@tamug.edu
RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES ADVISORS		
Director of Graduate Studies (Advises last name A-M)	Holly Richards	richardh@tamug.edu
Assistant Director of Graduate Studies (Advises last name N-Z)	Andrew Reitberger	areitberger@tamug.edu
GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS		
Department Head Marine and Coastal Environmental Science	Dr. Melanie Moser	moserm@tamug.edu

APPENDIX B: GRADUATE RECRUITING AND ADMISSION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Member	Email
Dr. Dini Adyasari	dini.adyasari@tamug.edu
Dr. Sam Brody	brodys@tamug.edu
Dr. Meri Davlasheridze	davlashm@tamug.edu
Dr. Tim Dellapenna	dellapet@tamug.edu
Dr. David Retchless	retchled@tamug.edu
Dr. Ashley Ross	ashleydross@tamug.edu

APPENDIX C: MARM RESEARCH TRACK LETTER OF INTENT

This letter of intent provides an authorization process for students to pursue the thesis-based Research Track as part of their course of study in the MARM program. It should be completed by the student with the chair of their Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and returned to the MARM program coordinator (see Appendix A). This should be completed by the end of the student's second long semester or completion of 18 hours (whichever comes first).

Student Name:

Student Email:

UIN:

Faculty Chair of SAC:

In an attachment (no more than 1 page in length), please describe the general topic of interest for your thesis and, if applicable, identify support for your research (e.g., graduate research assistantship, data collection expenses).

_____ _____

Student Signature Date

_____ _____

Student Advisory Committee Chair Signature Date

APPENDIX D: MARM 3+2 APPLICATION

Students interested in the MARM 3+2 should complete this application and email it to the MARM program coordinator (see Appendix A). Additional application materials include: a resume or CV, three letters of recommendation, a personal statement (see page 2 for requirements), three recommendations (see Appendix E), and copies of unofficial transcript(s).

Student Name:

Student Email:

UIN:

Current Overall GPA:

In an attachment (no more than 1 page in length), please provide a statement describing your interest in the MARM program and how it aligns with your professional goals.

APPENDIX E: MARM 3+2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Students applying to the MARM 3+2 program must submit three recommendations, which may use this form rather than a letter. All recommendations should be emailed to the MARM program coordinator (Appendix A).

Student Name:

Recommender Name:

Recommender Title:

Recommender E-Mail:

Date Completed:

Please rate the student based on your knowledge of their abilities.

	Not Observed	*Below Average*	*Average*	*Good*	*Exceptional*
a) Baseline knowledge *of coastal* resources and *marine processes*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) Adequate written and oral communication for graduate level	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) *Motivation towards* professional *goals* and interest in program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) *Ability to work independently* and be self-taught	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) *Ability to work on a team* or in collaboration while showing *respect for others*	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you would like, you may elaborate on the student's application in an attached file.

APPENDIX F: DOCTORAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The preliminary examination is a significant milestone in a doctoral student's academic career that marks mastery of knowledge essential to the student's field(s) of study. The exam is written by the SAC. The committee also determines the format of the exam in terms of limits to the time and resources allowed for completion.

Preliminary exam questions are submitted by each committee member and focus on topics germane to the committee members' expertise, doctoral program curriculum, and the student's dissertation research topic. Questions should be accompanied with expectations for time spent in completion (typically 6-8 hours). Exam questions should be provided by each member of the SAC to the SAC chair in advance of the start of the exam.

The SAC chair administers the preliminary exam, including the delivery of all questions to the student, the receipt of student responses, and the sharing of all responses with committee members. The SAC chair decides on the approach for scheduling the exam in consultation with the student and SAC members. The oral defense typically takes place 3-7 days after the last exam response is returned. This gives sufficient time for SAC members to review all responses and the student to prepare for the oral defense.

The format of the exam is up to the discretion of the SAC chair. For example, the SAC chair may release to the student one question set a day, with instructions to submit a response within 24 hours. Or the SAC chair may provide the student the exam questions in its entirety on Day 1. In this case, it is up to the student to determine how much time to spend on each part of the exam.

To initiate the preliminary examination process, the SAC chair notifies all SAC members of the student's intent to move forward with the exam. If no committee member objects, a date for the exam is agreed upon. At this point, it is advisable that the student prepares a readings list in consultation with each committee member to prepare for the exam.

As specified by the Texas A&M University Graduate and Professional School, the student should complete the preliminary examination no later than the end of the semester following the completion of the formal coursework on the degree plan. Results must be received by the Graduate and Professional School 10 working days after the exam date. Required forms and due dates may be found on the Graduate and Professional School website: https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center. Students should also work closely with RGS to ensure they are meeting all deadlines and filing appropriate forms.