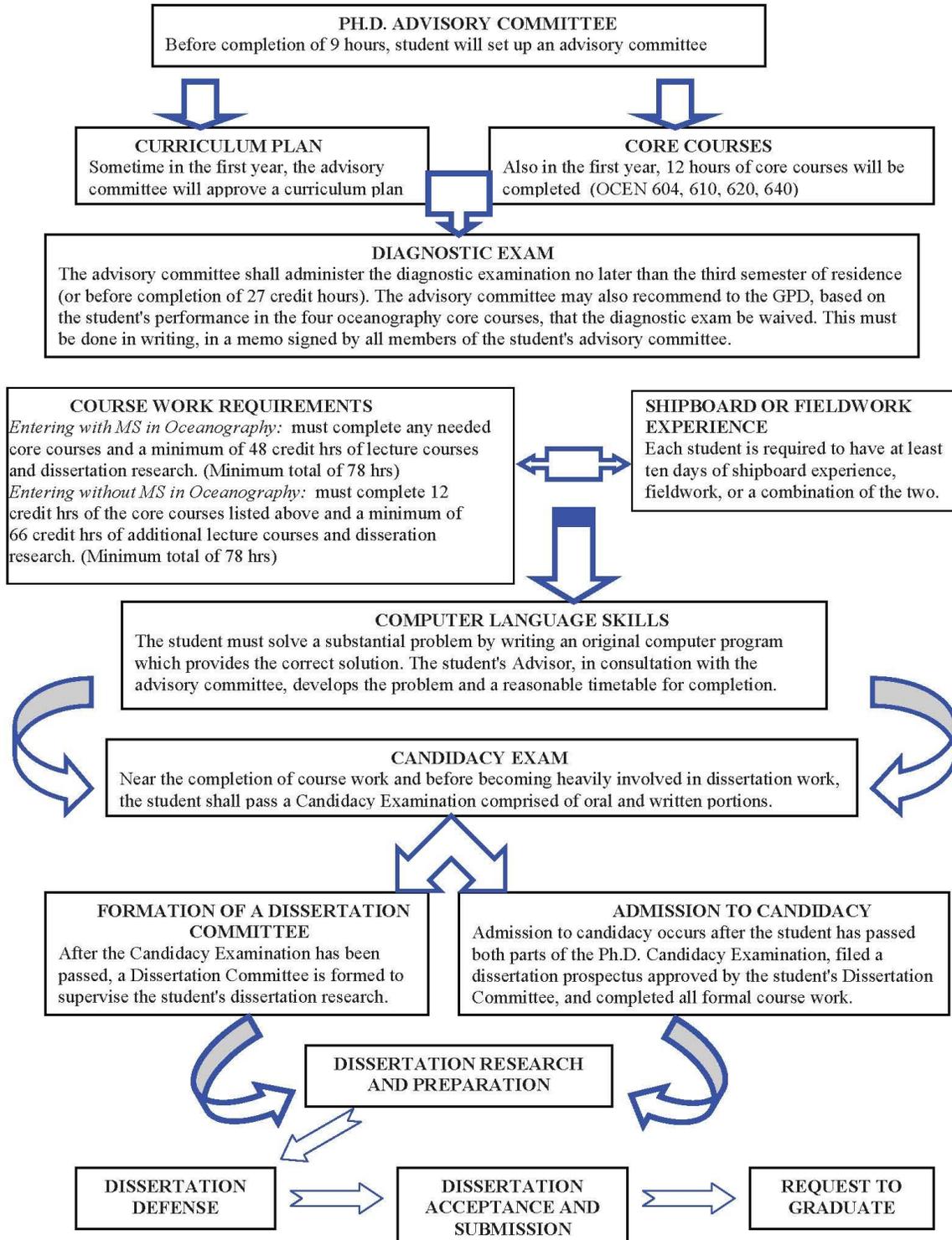


# 1. INTRODUCTION

All students in the Oceanography Ph.D. Program are responsible for reading and understanding the regulations and policies set forth in this document and in the University Catalog regarding requirements for the Ph.D. degree. See below for a graphical summary of all the following:



## **2. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

All requirements for the Ph.D. degree that are described below are recorded on the Check List for Doctoral Students, a copy of which is kept in the student's file along with all relevant forms and memos regarding the student's progress in the Ph.D. program.

## **3. MAJOR ADVISOR AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

A major advisor must be identified to the Graduate Program Director (GPD), at least provisionally, prior to admission to the program. After receiving admission to the program and enrolling, students consult with the GPD and their major advisor about initial course work.

Before completion of nine semester hours (i.e., before the end of the student's first semester) the student will form a advisory committee in consultation with their major advisor. The committee will consist of enough faculty members to provide guidance to the student's particular plan of work; there must be at least two members from the student's major area of interest and at least one representative of each minor area, and the minimum size of the committee must be three regular faculty members. All members must be approved graduate faculty. When a minor area of interest is not designated, the advisory committee will include at least one person from outside the student's major area of interest. [Graduate Form D1](#) is used to set up an advisory committee and to change the membership of a student's advisory committee.

The advisory committee is responsible for administering the Diagnostic Exam, and the written and oral parts of the Candidacy Examination. The committee continues to serve until the latter has been passed and the Dissertation Committee formed. The committee is responsible for guiding and directing the academic program of the student during this period and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. The advisory committee, as a group and as individual members, is responsible for consulting with the student on academic matters and, in the case of academic deficiencies, initiating recommendations to the GPD, the Dean of the College, and the Associate Vice President if necessary. The advisory committee shall periodically inform the GPD and College Dean of concerning the candidate's progress.

## **4. PLAN OF STUDY - CURRICULUM PLAN**

Sometime in the first year of study the student shall prepare a plan of study with the aid and approval of the advisory committee. When appropriate, a diagnostic examination may also be used in developing a plan of study. This plan of study must meet the course work requirements outlined below, and include a timetable for completion of all course work, the computer language requirement and the candidacy exam. A proposed dissertation topic should also be included on this course plan. The plan of study must be approved by the GPD to ensure that it meets established requirements for the degree. Before approving the plan the GPD will also verify that a set of transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate work the student has taken is on file. The successful completion of all work indicated on the approved plan of study is a fundamental prerequisite to the granting of the Ph.D. degree.

## **5. COURSE WORK REQUIREMENTS**

Students who do not have a M.S. degree in oceanography normally complete the 12 hours of core courses (OEAS 604, 610, 620 and 640) within the first year. However, waiving the requirement to take any of these core classes requires the approval of the GPD. A student must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.0 in each of the core courses. A student whose GPA is below 3.0 in any core class will be required to repeat the class.

In consultation with their advisor and advisory committee, the students will plan a complete program of course work designed to meet their objectives (see the section above). The essential credit requirement for the Ph.D. are as follows: The student shall complete 48 credit hours beyond the master's degree or 78 credit hours for students admitted to the program with a bachelor's degree. Up to 24 credits can be granted for dissertation.

A maximum of 12 graduate credit hours may be transferred into a graduate degree program from non-degree status at Old Dominion University or from another accredited institution, except in the case of an approved inter-institutional program.

## **6. RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR) TRAINING**

All ODU graduate students that enrolled during or after Fall 2010 are required to complete Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training, via the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), during their first year at ODU (see <http://www.odu.edu/ao/research/compliance/conduct.shtml>). Once a student has completed the CITI training, a certificate generated by the process is placed in the student's file.

## **7. DIAGNOSTIC EXAMINATION**

The advisory committee shall administer a written and oral Diagnostic Examination during the first semester of residence (or before 9 credit have been completed) for students entering the program with a M.S. degree in oceanography. For students matriculating with a Bachelors degree or a M.S. degree in another field, the advisory committee shall administer the diagnostic examination no later than the third semester of residence (or before completion of 27 credit hours). The Diagnostic Examination will be prepared by the student's advisory committee in consultation with the GPD. The results of this examination are used as guidance for the curriculum plan. The advisory committee may also recommend to the GPD, based on the student's performance in the four oceanography core courses, that the diagnostic exam be waived. This must be done in writing, in a memo signed by all members of the student's advisory committee. [Graduate Form D3](#) (signed by all members of the advisory committee) is used to report the results of the Diagnostic Exam.

### **8. COMPUTER LANGUAGE SKILLS**

To satisfy this requirement the student must solve a substantial problem by writing an original computer program which provides the correct solution. The student's Advisor in consultation with the advisory committee develops the problem and a reasonable timetable for completion. The problem must be solved independently with no help from others. The results will be evaluated by the Advisor and advisory committee who will determine whether the student has solved the posed problem to their satisfaction.

Alternately, the student may satisfy the requirement by passing (B or better) the MATLAB programming course offered by the department. Other programming courses will be considered by the Graduate Program Director as sufficing in this regard.

However the requirement is met, [Graduate Form D3](#) is used to report the results of this exam. This requirement should be completed before taking the Candidacy Exam.

### **9. SHIPBOARD EXPERIENCE AND FIELDWORK**

Each student is required to have at least ten days of shipboard experience, fieldwork, or a combination of the two. Scheduled class field trips may not be counted towards this requirement. [Graduate Form D3](#) and the [Departmental Ship Time/Fieldwork Form](#) must be completed to indicate that a student has satisfied this requirement.

### **10. COMPETENCY IN ORAL COMMUNICATION**

In 2010, the OEAS faculty revised the Department's implementation of this University requirement. It is the faculty's contention that Ph.D. students will meet this requirement in multiple ways and venues during the course of their time in our program.

### **11. PROFICIENCY IN WRITING**

This can be established by the satisfactory evaluation of a student's refereed papers, professional paper, or dissertation by the faculty. Generally, completion of the dissertation satisfies this requirement

### **12. CANDIDACY EXAM**

Near the completion of course work and before becoming heavily involved in dissertation work, the student shall pass a Candidacy Examination designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge of oceanography. The student will be examined in the several areas, not merely in her or his special field of concentration. Through the Candidacy Examination the student's advisory committee should be satisfied the student has demonstrated the following qualifications: mastery of the subject matter in all fields in the program; adequate knowledge of the literature in these fields; and the powers of bibliographical criticism.

The Candidacy Exam has both written and oral portions constructed by the advisory committee. In order to be eligible to take the candidacy examination, the student must have achieved a grade point average of at least 3.00 on all course work completed. In addition, this average must be attained on all graduate residence units and on all combined transferred and residence units.

When the student and the advisory committee have determined the examination should be taken, the student's major advisor is to notify the GPD via email, specifying the place and time of the written examination. Once notified, the GPD will verify the student meets the prerequisites for the Candidacy Examination. The examination must be taken during the semester for which it was planned. Postponement of the examination must have the approval of the GPD. The written and oral portions (see next paragraph) of the examination must be completed within one month's time of one another.

After successful completion of the written portion of the exam, an oral examination is given covering topics discussed in the written exam and possible additional materials. The questions will be free-style and open-ended with regard to subject matter. The primary focus will be on general knowledge of oceanography, skills in the student's specialty areas, and weaknesses demonstrated on the written examination. The fact that a student has done well on the written examination does not mean that the oral examination is to be a pro forma exercise. The oral examination is a serious and integral part of the qualifying procedure.

A student must pass both the written and oral sections of the Candidacy Exam. More than one negative vote from the advisory committee on either part constitutes a failure for that section of the candidacy examination. The student has two opportunities to pass the written portion of the exam, which must be passed before the oral part may be taken. A student who passes the written portion on the first try need not repeat that part in the event of failing the oral portion. A failed written part must be retaken successfully within a period of not less than six months nor more than one year from the date of the first examination. A failed oral portion, which may also be attempted a second time, must be taken within one month of the first attempt.

No part of the candidacy examination can be passed conditionally. A pass cannot be made contingent upon completing extra courses, additional projects, etc. The Chair of the student's advisory committee will report, in writing, to the GPD the results of the examination using Graduate Form 10. The advisory committee, through the Chair, must also make recommendations regarding admission to candidacy.

### **13. FORMATION OF A DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

After the Candidacy Examination has been passed and the Dissertation Committee formed, the advisory committee's responsibilities are completed. The Dissertation Committee is a new committee and is formed to supervise the student's dissertation research. The committee must have approval of the GPD and the College Dean using [Graduate Form D2](#). The committee should have at least three members, and one member must be from outside the student's major department. The Chair of the advisory committee may become the Director of the Dissertation Committee. The Director must be certified for graduate instruction and be an authority in the field of specialization of the proposed dissertation. Membership may be extended to a non-University person with special knowledge of the dissertation subject area. Voting privileges can be provided to such specialists upon the recommendation of the Chair and approval of the GPD and the College Dean. Adjunct faculty members who are certified for graduate instruction may be appointed as voting members of the committee upon the recommendation of the Director of the Dissertation Committee and approval of the GPD and the College Dean. The dissertation and the final oral defense of the dissertation must have the majority approval of the Dissertation Committee.

Changes to the Dissertation Committee must be made in advance of the oral dissertation defense. Such changes are made only with the approval of the GPD and College Dean. [Graduate Form D2](#) is used to request these changes.

### **14. ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

Admission to candidacy is a formal step that occurs after the student has:

- a. passed both parts of the Ph.D. Candidacy Examination,
- b. filed a dissertation prospectus approved by the student's Dissertation Committee,
- c. completed all formal course work.

The student must be admitted to candidacy at least 12 months before the time the degree is expected to be received, but usually not before the completion of one-and-a-half years of graduate work. [Graduate Form D3](#) must be submitted to the GPD along with a copy of the approved dissertation prospectus.

It is assumed that dissertation research will be supported using contract or grant funds obtained by the student's advisor. In the event that such funds are not available request for departmental support for dissertation research must follow the procedures outlined in item #6 in the section Guidelines for Advising M.S. students.

### **15. DISSERTATION PREPARATION**

General regulations and procedure governing the submission of a doctoral dissertation are given in the [Guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#). Before beginning to write your dissertation please read this guide carefully. Writing the dissertation as chapters that can be submitted for publication is encouraged.

Please note that the thesis and dissertation guide in place at the start of the semester will remain in force for the entire semester, and any changes made to the guide over the academic year (and the dates of these changes) will be listed on the cover page of the guide. Changes to the previous guide will also be noted on the cover page of the

guide, or in a separate document that can be downloaded from the same site as the complete guide. For more information on dissertation preparation and approval in the College of Sciences see [College of Sciences' Thesis and Dissertation Preparation](#).

## **16. DISSERTATION DEFENSE**

At least two weeks prior to the dissertation defense the student must provide the GPD Assistant with the proposed date and time of the dissertation defense, along with a brief abstract of the dissertation, so that an announcement of the defense can be posted. Room assignments are harder to come by now so additional time may be needed in obtaining a room for the defense. Check with the GPD Assistant for further details. The oral dissertation defense is open to the University community; all interested members are encouraged to attend the examination.

The format of a dissertation defense is determined by the Dissertation Committee with the approval of the GPD. The defense is chaired by the Director of the Dissertation Committee. The Chair will act as moderator, ruling on questions of procedure and protocol that may arise during the defense. The chair of the defense represents the College Dean, to whom he or she makes a complete and prompt report on the defense using [Graduate Form D3](#).

The aim of the defense is to explore with the candidate the methodological and substantive contributions of the dissertation. Majority approval by the examiners constitutes successful completion of the defense of the dissertation, and is so reported by the Defense Chairman to the College Dean. In case of failure, the Dissertation Committee may recommend that the candidate either be dropped from the program or be allowed re-examination.

Satisfactory performance on this examination (oral dissertation defense) and adherence to all regulations outlined above complete the requirements for the degree. [Graduate Form D5](#) (Thesis/Dissertation Acceptance and Processing) and [Graduate Form D6](#) must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar with the complete dissertation upon completion of all requirements for the degree. Students should have all Dissertation Committee members sign the Dissertation cover page (several copies are recommended) as well as [Graduate Form D5](#).

All requirements for a doctoral degree must be completed within eight calendar years from the date of initial registration in the program.

## **17. DISSERTATION ACCEPTANCE AND SUBMISSION**

Once all corrections recommended by the Dissertation Committee are made and the entire committee has approved the dissertation (see #15 above), the student and major advisor must go over the entire dissertation to ensure it adheres to the format described in the [Guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations](#) (see #14 above). Both the student and advisor must sign off on the college's [Thesis and Dissertation Checklist](#) before submitting the dissertation to the GPD for review. Please allow 3 days for this review. Once the GPD has approved the dissertation, the student next submits the dissertation and [Graduate Form D5](#) to the Associate Dean in the College of Sciences for approval. All approvals must be completed by the day before commencement. However, the Associate Dean generally requires dissertations be submitted to his office no later than 3 weeks earlier. Check with the GPD for further details.

## **18. REQUEST TO GRADUATE**

The student should obtain information on graduation from the [Registrar's Office](#) and complete this application. The deadline for submitting this application is listed in the class schedule each semester and usually falls near the end of the semester preceding the one during which graduation is anticipated. It is the student's responsibility to meet these deadlines and submit the necessary paperwork for graduation.

## **19. REMOVAL OF INCOMPLETES**

At least one month prior to graduation all incomplete grades should be cleared. An Academic Record Change form is used for this, and the instructor of the course and the Department Chair need to sign this form.

Office of Graduate Studies "Forms" page (<http://www.odu.edu/ao/gradstudies/forms/index.shtml>)