



Environmental Science and Policy

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Approved 8.15.11 by the ESP Executive Graduate Committee

MS

GUIDELINES

AND

TIMELINES

GRADUTE STUDENT SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Environmental Science and Policy

M.S. Students

1. During the first year after admission:

- **Transfer of credit:** Apply for transfer of credit for coursework taken before admission that was not part of a degree program, if applicable. To be eligible, the coursework must be taken within six years prior to first enrollment in the M.S. degree program, must be related to your program of study, must be at the graduate level, and must have a minimum grade of 3.00 or better. You will need to provide an official transcript of coursework to the ESP Graduate Coordinator after review by your advisor. (See the University Catalog for your year of admission for all academic policies). You should complete the Graduate Transfer of Credit Request form at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/index.html>.
- **Completion of provisional admission requirements:** If you were admitted provisionally, please complete any requirements and submit an official transcript of coursework to the Environmental Science and Policy Graduate Office. The Graduate Coordinator will submit a form necessary to remove the provisional status.
- **Committee Formation:** With the assistance of your advisor, form a committee within the first 12 credits of coursework. This only applies to students who are writing a thesis or doing an individual project. This committee consists of at least three faculty members. One must be a member of the graduate faculty from the candidate's department, while two may come from outside of the department. Graduate faculty are full time tenure or tenure track faculty members or term faculty who have been graduate faculty status by the Dean. One member of the committee can be a specialist from outside of the University. Such specialists must possess a terminal degree (PhD or equivalent) and must provide a CV and be approved by the Dean of the College of Science. Non-GMU committee members who have been approved as ESP affiliate faculty are considered pre-approved outside specialists. The form to formally establish your committee is located at <http://www.gmu.edu/depts/espp/graduate/forms/index.html>.
- **Program of Study:** In consultation with your advisor and committee members, prepare a Program of Study that is available at our website at <http://www.gmu.edu/depts/espp/graduate/forms/index.html>. The Program of Study lays out the sequence of courses you will use to achieve your academic and research goals and meet program requirements. This must be submitted and approved by your advisor, committee members, and the Graduate Program Director before you can graduate.
- **Declaration of a Concentration:** All students must declare a concentration with the Registrar's Office and the College of Science. These forms are available in the Graduate Office (see attached form).

2. Time Limits and Re-Enrollment

- **Time limits:** You must complete all degree requirements within six years from the date of initial registration as an admitted degree or provisional graduate student. Even though you may take time off, the deadline ends from the date of the initial registration.

- **Re-enrollment:** If you fail to register for two consecutive semesters, you will be required to complete a Graduate Reenrollment form available on the Registrar's website at <http://www.gmu.edu/depts/espp/graduate/forms/index.html> . Please fax the form to the ESP Graduate Office for the Graduate Program Director's signature at 703-993-1066.

3. Thesis Proposal/ Scholarly Project – Completion of Coursework within six years of admission:

- **Thesis Proposal:** Before you enroll in thesis research (EVPP 799), your thesis proposal must be approved by the thesis committee, Graduate Program Director, and the Department Chair. The signature page for this proposal is located on the ESP website at <http://www.gmu.edu/depts/espp/graduate/forms/index.html>. A copy of the proposal is put into your student file and the original is taken to the Dean of the College of Science.
- **Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB):** The primary goal of the HSRB is to assure that the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted at and/or under the auspices of George Mason University are adequately protected. The HSRB reviews all planned research involving human subjects prior to the initiation of the research, approves research that meets Federal regulations and Mason policies for the protection of human subjects and monitors approved research to ascertain that human subjects are indeed protected. This includes all research by Mason faculty, staff, and students conducted at Mason or at off-campus sites, with the exception of some classroom projects. As well, any research conducted at Mason by outside researchers, must be reviewed and approved by the HSRB. All researchers must receive written approval from the Office of Research Subject Protections prior to conducting either exempt or non-exempt research. The form for submission can be found at their website at <http://research.gmu.edu/ORSP/HumanFormsAndInstructions.html> . All research activities must abide by University protocols.
- **Animal Use in Research:** All work with live animals, whether for research, teaching, or testing, must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) prior to initiation of the work. All care and use of animals at Mason must be carried out under the supervision of a faculty member who is qualified and experienced in the work being conducted and assumes responsibility for legal and ethical conduct. Further information and submission forms can be found at the Office of Research Subject Protections web site at www.gmu.edu/research/ORSP/AnimalCareAndUse.html.
- **Thesis research – EVPP 799:** Once the thesis proposal has been approved and returned to the graduate office, you may enroll in EVPP 799 at the beginning of the next semester. The Graduate Office is the only office that can give you a CRN for registration.
- **Scholarly Project – EVPP 798:** If you are fulfilling the research requirement with EVPP 798, you are required to take a comprehensive examination administered by your committee as well as producing a project. The purpose of the examination is not to simply re-hash information or skills learned in class, but rather is to allow the student the opportunity to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the pertinent subjects in the discipline. When the exam and project have been satisfactorily completed, an email should be sent to the graduate office at espgrad@gmu.edu.

4. Defense of Thesis

- **Continuous thesis registration REQUIRED:** All registration for thesis research (EVPP 799) must be planned with your thesis committee chair and registration is coordinated with the ESP Graduate Coordinator. You must register for a minimum of three credits in the first semester after which you may register for one credit of EVPP 799 per semester. It is required that you continuously register until after you have defended your thesis.
- **Format review:** Your thesis format must be reviewed by the Theses and Dissertation Electronic Text Coordinator, C201 Fenwick Library at 703-993-2222, at least one month prior to the last day of classes in the semester that you plan to graduate and before your defense. The Coordinator will sign the transmittal letter that you will submit with the final copies of your dissertation as described below. You are solely responsible for coordinating the formatting procedure with the Thesis and Dissertation Coordinator in Fenwick Library, C201. For more information regarding this process, please visit the website at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/udts>.
- **Website posting of thesis:** You must coordinate the date and time of the defense with your committee members. Once the date and time have been agreed upon, you must email the Graduate Office with the request to reserve a room (preferable at least 3 weeks before the defense) on any of the three campuses. To post your thesis defense to the ESP and COS websites, you must email the Graduate Office at espgrad@gmu.edu with the following information: In the SUBJECT line: “your name” thesis defense, date, time, and location. In the BODY of the email, please state your name, Thesis Chair, Thesis Committee Members names, Date, Time, Location, Title of Defense, and an abstract (to be sent as a separate Word attachment).
- **Defense of Thesis:** You must present the completed thesis in a public seminar and defend the work before the thesis committee. Awarding of the degree is contingent on approval by the thesis committee, ESP Department Chair, and Dean of the College of Science. The defense must be completed within six years of admission (degree or provisional) to the M.S. program.

5. Scheduling graduation:

- **Filing for Graduation:** Graduation information is provided on the Registrar’s website at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/graduation/index.html>. You are only required to file your Intent to Graduate in PatriotWeb. The conferral form is sent to the Graduate Office where a Graduation Audit is performed. All requirements for graduation must be met before the Degree Conferral date in the semester you graduate.
- **Registration:** To be eligible for conferral of a degree you must be an active student in that semester either by being enrolled for classes or through special registration.
- **Thesis Submission:** Three original copies of the signature page (all original signatures in **black ink** only) and dissertation on 20 to 24 weight 100 percent cotton bond (two for the library and one for the ESP Program), one CD copy of the dissertation, and the submittal sheet must be provided for approval to the ESP Department Chair and the Dean of the College of Science. After the Dean’s approval, the following documents should be submitted to the Theses and Dissertation Electronic Text Coordinator, C201 Fenwick Library at 703-993-2222, C201 Fenwick Library. Submission dates are posted on the UTDS website at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/udts>



College of Science
Office of Academic Affairs
 4400 University Drive, MS 6A3
 Fairfax, VA 22030
 Phone: 703-993-3430, Fax: 703-993-9034
<http://cos.gmu.edu/>

Declaration of Concentration Form

(Please submit upon admission to program)

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

E-mail: _____

Date: _____

Degree: _____Certificate _____MS _____Ph.D.

Program: _____ Program Code: _____

Concentration: _____ Code: _____

Catalog Term: _____

Departmental Authorization

 Graduate Program Director Date

 Associate Dean for Graduate Studies Date

Original to Registrar – MS 3D1
 Copy to Student File

