

**GRADUATE STUDENT
SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**
Department of Environmental Science and Public Policy

Ph.D. Students

- 1. During the first two semesters after admission:**
 - ***Transfer of credit:*** If applicable, apply for transfer of credit for coursework taken before admission that was not part of a degree program. You will need to provide an official transcript of coursework to the ESP Graduate Coordinator after review by your advisor. (GMU 2002-2003 Catalog, p. 39; <http://jju.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/studyelsewhere.html> and <http://mason.gmu.edu/~espp/transferoftcredit.pdf>). Student should complete the Arts and Sciences Graduate Request for Transfer of Credit form available from the ESP Graduate Coordinator.
 - ***Reduction of credit hours:*** Apply for reduction of credit hours for M.S. degree if not accomplished at the time of admission to the program. You will need an official transcript showing when you obtained your degree. This transcript must be reviewed and evaluated by the ESP Graduate Coordinator.
 - ***Completion of provisional admission requirements:*** If you were admitted on a provisional status, complete any requirements that were part of the provisional status and provide proof of completion—generally an official transcript of coursework—to the ESP Graduate Coordinator. You may request removal of the provisional status by providing the Arts and Sciences Graduate OneForm and a copy of your official transcript showing satisfactory completion of the required coursework to the ESP Graduate Coordinator. The ESP Graduate Coordinator will then request removal of the provisional status from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
 - ***Coursework Proposal:*** In consultation with your advisor, prepare a Coursework Proposal for approval by the ESP Director and your advisor (GMU 2002-2003 catalog, p. 92-93, http://jju.gmu.edu/catalog/cas/envs_phd.html, and ESP Policies available at: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~espp>). The Coursework Proposal form can be found at the ESP web site. The Coursework Proposal lays out the sequence of courses you will use to achieve your academic and research goals and meet program requirements. The Proposal may be modified at the request of the student with concurrence of the advisor and subject to review by the ESP Graduate Coordinator. Part-time students should complete the Coursework Proposal within the first 12 credits of coursework.

- 2. By the end of the fourth semester after admission:**
 - ***Establish a dissertation committee:*** Assemble a dissertation committee of at least four graduate faculty members with representation from at least two academic departments. Graduate faculty are full time tenure or tenure-track faculty members or others designated by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Members of the committee should be selected on the basis of their

knowledge and interest in the dissertation research topic. The student should obtain agreement from each proposed member of the dissertation committee and, after review and approval of the student's advisor, submit an e-mail request to establish the committee to the ESP Graduate Coordinator. The request should include the name and affiliation of each member and identify the committee chair. If non-GMU faculty members are included, the e-mail should include their full address and business phone number. After review by the ESP Graduate Coordinator, the request will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. A letter from the Dean's Office to the student will officially establish the committee. Student initiated changes in the dissertation committee may occur only with the approval of the ESP Graduate Coordinator and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences in consultation with the committee. For part-time students, the dissertation committee should be formed before all proposed coursework is completed.

- **Program of Study:** With approval of the dissertation committee, prepare the Program of Study for approval by the ESP Graduate Coordinator and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (GMU 2002-2003 Catalog, p. 93, http://jju.gmu.edu/catalog/cas/envs_phd.html). The Program of Study should be submitted by the student to the ESP Graduate Coordinator who, upon approval, will forward it to the Dean's Office. This document represents your official coursework requirements for graduation. A copy is maintained in the Dean's Office. The Program of Study must be completed before advancement to candidacy. Modifications to the Program of Study are subject to review and approval by the advisor, dissertation committee, Program Director, and Dean. For part-time students the Program of Study should be prepared before all proposed coursework is completed.
- **Re-enrollment:** You must apply for re-enrollment if you fail to register for two consecutive semesters at George Mason University. To apply for re-enrollment, use the "Student Information Update—Graduate Re-enrollment" form available at: <http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/ReenrollGrad.PDF>.

3. Within six years of admission:

- **Qualifying examinations:** Upon completion of all or nearly all coursework outlined in the Program of Study, the student should request to take the oral and written qualifying examination. The written portion consists of questions submitted by the dissertation committee. The oral portion should follow within one month of successful completion of the written portion. The qualifying examination may be repeated once at the discretion of the student's committee. If all requirements for advancement to candidacy have been met at the time of the successful completion of the oral examination (all coursework, except dissertation credits, completed; signed program of study; formally established dissertation committee; and successful completion of oral and written examination) the student's advisor should obtain a letter from the ESP Graduate Coordinator recommending advancement to candidacy to be signed by the dissertation committee at the successful conclusion of the oral examination (this letter may be requested as soon as the date for the oral examination is set). This letter should be

sent to the ESP Graduate Coordinator who will forward it to the CAS Dean's Office.

- ***Advancement to candidacy:*** Upon completion of: (1) all coursework, (2) passage of the qualifying examination, and (3) submission of the Program of Study, the student is recommended for advancement to candidacy to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences by the ESP Graduate Coordinator. The student's advisor should obtain a letter for signature by the dissertation committee recommending advancement to candidacy from the ESP Graduate Coordinator (the same letter described in *Qualifying examinations*). The ESP Graduate Coordinator will forward the request to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The Dean's Office will send an official notice of advancement to candidacy to the student, the EVPP Program and the committee. **You must advance to candidacy within six years of first enrollment in the Ph.D. degree program (if you were enrolled as a Ph.D. student and obtain an M.S. degree along the way, the 6 year period begins when you were originally admitted to the program). If you go beyond the six years, you must request an extension of timelimits (see <http://mason.gmu.edu/~espp/Extension%20Requests1.pdf>)**

4. **Within five years of advancement to candidacy:**

- ***Dissertation Proposal:*** Before the student may enroll in doctoral dissertation research (EVPP 999), a dissertation proposal must be approved by the dissertation committee and the ESP Graduate Coordinator. A copy of the signed approval page and the proposal will be kept on file by the EVPP Program and a copy of the signed approval page will be sent by the Program to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The student may enroll in dissertation proposal credit (ESPP 998) if you have advanced to candidacy or if approved by the ESP Graduate Coordinator (**to be approved, you must have an established dissertation committee and an approved Program of Study**), but no more than half of the credits specified on the Program of Study for dissertation credit may be used for the proposal. The student should contact his/her dissertation committee chair and notify them that they are planning to register for EVPP 998 for a specific number of credits. Then, the student should contact the ESP Graduate Coordinator at rstewart@gmu.edu to obtain the call number for the course. With this information, the student may register using 4GMU. Registration for doctoral research proposal (EVPP 998) courses must be completed during early registration or by the end of the schedule adjustment period. If this date is missed, students must register for these courses the following semester. Information on the dissertation proposal format and content requirements is available in the *Guide for Preparing Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Projects*, from the Johnson Center course materials store. It is also available at: <http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/dtwebguide.htm>. You can also obtain a summary of procedures for theses and dissertations from the College of Arts and Sciences at:

http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/D_Tdchecklist.doc.

Helpful advice on the dissertation proposal and formatting is available from Robert Vay, Theses and Dissertation Electronic Text Coordinator, C201 Fenwick Library [703-993-2222 or rvay@gmu.edu].

- **Doctoral Dissertation:** To enroll in doctoral dissertation research (EVPP 999), the student must have: (1) an approved dissertation committee; (2) advanced to candidacy; (2) a dissertation proposal approved by the dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator, and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, with a signed cover page on file in the Dean's Office; and (3) an approved Program of Study on file in the Dean's Office. Registration for EVPP 999 is initiated by emailing your request to the Dean's Office at casdiss@gmu.edu. The email should request registration in EVPP 999 and specify the number of credits and the name of the student's advisor. You will not be approved for registration if you do not meet the three requirements as listed above. You will be emailed the call number for the course and you may then register using 4GMU. Registration for doctoral dissertation (EVPP 999) courses must be completed during early registration or by the end of the schedule adjustment period. If this date is missed, students must register for these courses the following semester.
- **Continuous dissertation registration:** All registration for doctoral dissertation research (EVPP 999) must be planned with the dissertation director and EVPP doctoral coordinator. Students must register for a minimum of three credits per semester (six credits per semester is required to be considered full time) until the last three dissertation credits are reached. Once the student has three or fewer credits remaining, a student may register for one credit of EVPP 999 and be considered a full-time student as long as his/her advisor and ESP Graduate Coordinator certify each semester that the student is working full time on the proposal or dissertation.
- **Format review:** Your dissertation format must be reviewed by Robert Vay, Theses and Dissertation Electronic Text Coordinator, C201 Fenwick Library [703-993-2222 or rvay@gmu.edu], at least one month prior to the last day of classes in the semester that you plan to graduate and before your defense. He will sign the transmittal letter that you will submit with the final copies of your dissertation as described below.
- **Public copy of dissertation:** Provide a draft of your dissertation on plain paper to the Johnson Center Library Circulation/Reserves Desk at least two weeks before your defense so that it can be made available for members of the GMU community to read and review prior to your defense. Once the date, time, and location have been established, but at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled defense, the student should email the EVPP Graduate Coordinator with the following information: (1) student name, (2) advisor's name, (3) full title of dissertation, (4) date of defense, (5) time of defense, and (6) location of defense. The Graduate Coordinator will list this information on the EVPP website, email it to the EVPP graduate students, and send it to the CAS Dean's Office. The Dean's Office will send out the official notification campus-wide.
- **Defense of Dissertation:** The student must present the completed dissertation in a public seminar and defend the work before the dissertation committee. Awarding of the degree is contingent on approval of the dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator, and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. **The dissertation and defense must be completed within five years of advancement to candidacy. If you will exceed the five year limit, you must seek an**

extension of timelimits (see

<http://mason.gmu.edu/~espp/Extension%20Requests1.pdf>)

5. Scheduling graduation:

- Graduation information is provided inside the front cover of the Schedule of Classes for each semester. For a detailed list of deadlines, refer to Graduation Timelines at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/gradchek.html>. Also see: <http://registrar.gmu.edu/grad/graduation.html> and the College of Arts and Sciences theses and dissertations checklist at: http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/D_Tdchecklist.doc. You must meet all requirements well in advance of the conferral (graduation) date.
- To be eligible for conferral of a degree you must be an active student that semester, either by being enrolled for classes or through special registration.
- Confirm your intent to graduate by visiting the web site: <http://registrar.gmu.edu/gradchek.html> and completing the Graduation Intent Form. You will **not** receive any graduation material through the mail. Step 2 and 3 of the Graduation Intent Form will give you instructions for your particular major.
- Process your paper Graduation Application through the ESPP program director to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. 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 EVPP Program), one photocopied copy of the dissertation, and the submittal sheet must be provided for approval to the ESP Graduate Coordinator and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. After the Dean's approval, the following documents should be submitted to Robert Vay, C201 Fenwick Library, by the last day of classes of the semester of graduation [**5 P.M. on the Friday before the last day of Spring Semester classes** as published in the Schedule of Classes for May graduation and participation in Commencement Ceremony (**April 1 for inclusion in Commencement Program**); **5 P.M. on the Friday before the last day of Summer Term or Fall Semester classes** for August or January graduation, respectively]: (1) Two copies of the dissertation on cotton bond paper and two completed signature sheets; (2) Completed Transmittal Sheet; (3) Required University Microfilms International (UMI) paperwork, including \$55 fee; and (4) Completed "Survey of Earned Doctorates" (NORC). All copies of the dissertation must be submitted and fees paid before the doctoral degree is awarded. You also should complete the national "Survey of Earned Doctorates" (NORC).

Summary of Ph.D. Program Timeline

Timeline	Event	Approvals	Form or Paperwork
First two semesters after admission to program	Apply for transfer of credit, if applicable	Advisor, ESP Graduate Coordinator and CAS Dean's Office	CAS Graduate Request for Transfer of Credit form and official transcripts
	Apply for reduction of credit, if applicable	ESP Graduate Coordinator and CAS Dean's Office	Graduate Reduction of Credit for Doctoral Program official transcripts
	Completion of provisional admission requirements, if applicable	ESP Graduate Coordinator and CAS Dean's Office	
	Coursework Proposal	Advisor and ESP Graduate Coordinator	Coursework Proposal
Second two semesters after admission to program	Establish a dissertation committee	Advisor, all committee members, ESP Graduate Coordinator, CAS Dean's Office	E-mail request to the ESP Graduate Coordinator to establish a committee. Letter from CAS Dean's Office establishing the committee
	Program of Study	Dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator, CAS Dean's Office	Program of Study
Within six years of admission to program	Qualifying examinations	Dissertation committee	
	Advancement to candidacy	Dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator, CAS Dean's Office	Letter from dissertation committee to CAS Dean's Office through ESP Graduate Coordinator

Timeline	Event	Approvals	Form or Paperwork
Within five years of advancement to candidacy	Enroll in EVPP 998 and prepare dissertation proposal	Advisor, dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator	Email request to ESP Graduate Coordinator and a copy of signed cover page from dissertation proposal to CAS Dean's Office
	Enroll in EVPP 999 and prepare dissertation	Advisor, dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator, CAS Dean's Office	Email request to CAS Dean's Office, casdiss@gmu.edu
	Apply for graduation		Graduation Intent Form (Registrar) and Graduation Application (CAS Dean's Office)
	Dissertation format review	Robert Vay, Theses and Dissertation Electronic Text Coordinator, C201 Fenwick Library	Transmittal Sheet
	Defend dissertation	Dissertation committee, ESP Graduate Coordinator, CAS Dean's Office	Required number of copies signed by dissertation committee to Dean's Office and library
	GRADUATION		