



Environmental Science and Policy Department Graduate Student Handbook

*Created by the Environmental Science and Policy Graduate Student
Association and approved by the Graduate Program
Updated February 2017*

**Welcome to the Department of Environmental Science and Policy at
George Mason University**

As Graduate Program Director it is my pleasure to welcome all new graduate students entering our graduate programs in the Department of Environmental Science & Policy. The Graduate Student

Association in our Department has done a masterful job in compiling very useful information into a handbook that will facilitate your progress toward your graduate academic goals. I urge you to familiarize yourself with its content as it will help you get the most out your graduate experience and avoid problems and headaches down the road. Also, do not hesitate to contact either our Graduate Coordinator (Sharon Bloomquist, sbloomqu@gmu.edu) or myself (atorzill@gmu.edu) if you have additional questions. Again, welcome to GMU and the Graduate Program in the Department of Environmental Science & Policy.

Cordially,
Albert P. Torzilli, Ph.D.
Graduate Program Director
Department of Environmental Science & Policy

Table of Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <u>Graduate Policies</u> | 4 |
| <u>Your Mason ID</u> | 7 |
| <u>MyMason</u> | 9 |
| <u>Textbooks</u> | 10 |
| <u>Libraries</u> | 11 |
| <u>Health Services</u> | 14 |
| <u>Important Forms</u> | 16 |
| <u>Student Organizations</u> | 19 |
| <u>Financial Aid</u> | 22 |
| <u>Teaching Assistantships</u> | 23 |
| <u>Additional Resources for Graduate Students</u> | 24 |
| <u>Fellowships and Scholarships</u> | 25 |
| <u>Smithsonian Courses</u> | 27 |
| <u>Transportation and Parking</u> | 28 |
| <u>Housing</u> | 29 |
| <u>Dining</u> | 31 |

Graduate Policies

<http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4068>

Academic Programs

At the graduate level, Mason offers certificates, master's, and doctoral degrees. Environmental Science and Policy only has master's and doctoral degrees. The doctoral degree is titled Environmental Science and Public Policy with an emphasis on Environmental Science or Public Policy. There are currently seven concentrations within the Masters in Environmental Science and Policy, they are: Aquatic Ecology (AQEC), Conservation Science and Policy (COSPP), Earth Surface Processes and Environmental Geochemistry (ESEG), Environmental Biocomplexity (EVBC), Environmental Management (EVMG), Environmental Science and Policy (EVSP) and Environmental Science Communication (ESCM).

Full-Time Classification

1. Graduate students are full time if they are enrolled in at least 9 graduate credits per semester. Students holding an assistantship is full-time when enrolled in at least 6 graduate credits per semester and hold a full-time assistantship (20 hours a week).
2. Doctoral students need 72 credits to graduate, 30 credits of which can be transferred from a previous Master's degree.
3. Master's students must complete 33 credits to graduate, except for the environmental management concentration which requires 37 credits.

Academic Advising

1. When a student is admitted to graduate study they must have secured a faculty advisor in the academic program responsible for the student's program of study. In the Environmental Management concentration the Graduate Program Director is the student's academic advisor.
 - a Note: Those who select this concentration must be aware that this is a terminal degree and is not the pathway to a Ph.D.
2. After being admitted to a graduate program students should visit to their academic advisor where they can obtain information about specific courses, degree requirements and develop an individual program of study.
3. The graduate student is responsible for compliance with the policies and procedures of the college, school, or institute, and all applicable departmental requirements that govern the individual program of study.

Degree Progression and Evaluation: Bloom's evaluation form

1. The ESP department uses the **Blooms evaluation form** to standardize evaluation of students for the completion of their degrees.
2. For MS, the Bloom's evaluation form is necessary during the comprehensive exam (for those completing an individual project) and at the Thesis defense.
3. For PhD students, the Bloom's evaluation form is necessary for the completion of the comprehensive exam, the dissertation proposal and the dissertation defense.
4. The form must be completed by the student's committee chair and all committee members.
5. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with the form in advance of any major degree completion events.
6. The form and more details of its use can be found at <http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/forms/>
7. Additional requirements for degree progression can be found in the guidelines and timelines documents produced by the department and available at <http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/guidelines/>

Transfer of Credits from Non-degree Program

1. A student admitted for graduate study in non-degree program is eligible to apply to degree program.
2. Non-degree students must officially apply to the program and if admitted, 12 of their non-degree credits can be transferred into their program of study after approval by the department. The credits must have been earned within six years prior to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific certificate or degree program, and a minimum grade of B (3.00) must have been earned.

Transfer of Credit from another University

1. Graduate credit earned prior to admission to the master's or doctoral program is eligible to transfer up to 12 credits from another institution if the credits have been earned within six years prior to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific certificate or degree program, and a minimum grade of B (3.00) must have been earned. Please note these 12 credits are separate from the 30 credits that doctoral students may use to reduce their credit requirement (see below)
2. Transfer of credit requires the approval of the Graduate Program Director and Dean of the College of Science. **Note: Credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any Mason GPA.**

3. Credit is usually considered for transfer at the student's request at the time of initial registration as a degree-seeking student. Students must supply official transcripts.
4. For transcripts from outside the United States, students must supply an official transcript evaluation and an official translation for transcripts not in English if these documents were not supplied in the admission process.
5. To be eligible for transfer credit, the credit must be graduate credit earned at another accredited university, or earned at Mason while in a non-degree status.

Reduction of Credit for the Doctoral Program

1. The number of credits required by a doctoral program may be reduced by up to 30 credits on the basis of a previously earned master's degree.
2. Reduction of credit requires the approval of the Graduate Program Director and the Dean of the College of Science. Credits used in reduction of credit are not subject to time limits, and the credits must have been applied to a previous degree.
3. Students requesting a reduction of credit must supply official **final** transcripts.
4. All the other conditions given above for eligibility of transfer of credit apply also to reduction of credits.

Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area

1. Students enrolled in a degree program may take graduate courses at another accredited institution and apply these credits to a master's or doctoral degree with prior approval.
2. First semester students are not eligible for registration in this program.
3. Students must be in "good standing" academically.
4. The career maximum of 6 consortium credits can be taken.
5. Credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any Mason GPA.
6. George Mason Consortium students pay the George Mason tuition rate
7. The George Mason University Consortium Coordinator: Stephanie Zeher, SUBI, Room 2101, (703) 993-2454, gmucons@gmu.edu

Your Mason ID

<http://masonid.gmu.edu/photoid/>

How to Get Your Mason ID

1. Students must be registered for the current semester
2. Electronic approval process must be complete for faculty/staff, contract employees, and affiliates
3. Some form of picture ID (i.e. current driver's license, military ID, Visa, Passport) must be presented before obtaining the first Mason ID
4. Students need their "G" number. Your G number was provided in your acceptance letter
5. The first Mason ID is free and should last for a student's entire career at George Mason
6. If lost, damaged, or stolen the replacement card fee is \$10
7. The ID office on the Fairfax campus is located on the lower level of the HUB also known as SUB II.

Uses

1. Free Cue Bus Rides
2. Access to Mason Shuttles often Requires ID
3. Discounts and/or priority seating at specified Patriot Center events
4. Library Privileges
 - a. The Mason ID serves as a library card for George Mason University and the Washington Research Library Consortium: University of DC, Catholic University, Marymount University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, American University, Gallaudet University, Howard University
5. Check cashing at the Campus Chevy Chase Bank
6. Admissions and use of the Field House
7. Free entry into the Fairfax Aquatic & Fitness Center and the RAC
8. 15 free visits to the Prince William Freedom Aquatic & Fitness Center
9. Free admittance to specified Concert Hall performances
10. Free admittance into the Johnson Center Cinema
11. Photo copying and computer lab printing
 - a. Both Mason IDs and Patron cards can be used for copying and printing. Patron cards can be purchased for \$1 at any of the Card Management Centers located within each library. You must first add money to the card to purchase anything See the "Dining" section for more information.
12. Meal Plan and Mason Money

- a. Students can purchase any food on campus using their Mason ID which accesses Mason Money or Meal Plans.

Mason Money

1. This is Mason's prepaid debit card program using your student Mason ID which can be used on and off campus
 - a. How to put money on your Mason ID:
 - i. Online with Visa or MasterCard
(<http://masonid.gmu.edu/masonmoney/newmasonmoneyonline.html>)
 - ii. Mason Money Office
 1. Located in the Hub, Room 1103
 2. Using Visa, MasterCard, Cash, or Check
 - iii. Card Management Centers (CMCs) located in each of the libraries,
 1. Accepts cash only
 - iv. Mason Money Stations
 1. Next to the Mason Money Office, accepts Visa or MasterCard
 - v. iPhone app (version 4.3) can be used to replenish your Mason Money
2. Can be used at most On Campus Dining options, retail options, making copies and printing, and at some off campus dining locations (i.e. Chili's)

| Fairfax Campus | Hours of Operation | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Mason ID Office MSN 5A5 | Monday | 8:30am - 5:00pm |
| The HUB | Tuesday | 8:30am - 7:00pm |
| Lower Level Room 1014J | Wednesday | 8:30am - 5:00pm |
| (703) 993-1004 | Thursday | 8:30am - 5:00pm |
| | Friday | 8:30am - 5:00pm |
| | Saturday and Sunday | Closed |

MyMason

<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

MyMason

MyMason is a joint website that allows any student to access the three most important University websites a graduate student will need; Masonlive, Patriot Web, and Blackboard as well as keeping track of daily campus events.

1. Masonlive
 - a. This is a university based email used by professors to communicate with students. Staff also uses this email to remind students of upcoming school and social events as well as potential internship or jobs.
 - b. Alternatively, a student can also access each web page independently.
 - i. Patriot Web <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>
 - c. A self-service website for students to help manage personal information, register for classes, view transcripts, review charges, make payments, apply for financial aid, review status of financial, and accept financial aid.
 - d.
2. Blackboard
 - a. A tool that allows faculty to post class resources such as readings and homework, as well as class grades online for students to obtain at home.
 - b. Can only be accessed through MyMason

Note: The passwords for Masonlive, Patriot Web, and Blackboard are all the same.

MyMason

1. Once you log into the MyMason homepage you will find a list of that week's events, university wide announcements, and links.
2. If you need to activate your account go to the below website.
 - a. <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>
 - b. Above the space to enter your username and password it says
 - i. "If you need to activate your PatriotPass account or forgot your password, click [here](#). For Non-Mason users, you may continue to log in with the username and password that you were provided."
 - ii. Click the link attached to the word "here" and follow all prompts.

If you have any problems please email support@gmu.edu or call at (703) 993-8870. Hours are Monday – Friday 8:30 am to 7:00 pm.

University Wide Campus Events

1. Once you log into the MyMason homepage you will find a list of that week's events, university wide announcements, and links.
2. For a list on the entire semester's events, scroll down and click on "View Full Event Calendar" for events.
3. GMU Graduate Student Life is a site listing all events, announcements, and services for graduate students (<http://gradlife.gmu.edu/>)
 - a. Graduate Student Life hosts the annual "Gradstravaganza" Event in September and Graduate Student Appreciation week in the Spring among other events

GMU Bookstore and Textbooks

Bookstore - <http://gmu.bncollege.com/>

Renting Textbooks -

<http://gmu.bncollege.com/docs/rentaldocs/morefaqtextbookrNew.html>

Bookstore

The George Mason University Bookstore is found in the Johnson Center and encompasses two floors. The top floor contains merchandise including jackets, shirts, hats, and banners. The bottom floor comprises textbooks, backpacks, and school supplies. Some classes require Scantrons and Blue Books that can be purchased at the bookstore.

| Hours of Operations | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Monday | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Tuesday | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Wednesday | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Thursday | 8:00am - 8:00pm |
| Friday | 8:00am - 4:00pm |
| Saturday | 10:00am - 5:00pm |
| Sunday | Closed |

Textbooks

George Mason University in conjunction with Barnes and Noble operates a bookstore and textbook website that are available to students for the purpose of searching and buying textbooks. To perform customized textbook searches go to <http://gmu.bncollege.com/>. Textbooks can be purchased in the bookstore with some being available as an eBook. There is also an option to rent your textbooks from the bookstore.

Renting Textbooks

1. The GMU bookstore is where you can rent textbooks you need at the beginning of the semester and return them at the end.
2. You can use any form of payment including financial aid but a credit card is required.
3. A list of all textbooks available to be rented can be found on the bookstore website.
4. Normal use of a highlighter and pencil is permitted in a rented textbook but it must still be in good condition.

For questions please contact the bookstore's customer service line at (703) 993-2666.

Libraries

<http://library.gmu.edu>

George Mason Fairfax Campus Libraries

1. Two libraries on campus
 - a. Fenwick, located in the north of campus center near the quad
 - b. Johnson Center (JC), located in the center of the campus, is on the second floor on the south side of the building
2. Access to the University's online library system is found on Mason's homepage (www.gmu.edu)
3. **Workspace:** graduate students can reserve carrels in the Fenwick or Arlington libraries.
 - a. Spaces are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis until filled each term. Carrels assignments will be determined by a drawing during the early part of each academic term. Submit the form at the Information Desk of the requested library.
 - b. To apply for a carrel space, fill out the online application: <http://library.gmu.edu/for/students/dwr>

Fenwick Library

1. Fenwick Library is the main research library in the GMU Library System and houses most of the libraries' print collections like journals, maps, and also includes electronic resources like microform and electronic formats, CD-ROMs, the libraries' online catalog, a number of databases available through the libraries' membership in various consortia, and Internet access.
2. Reference librarians in Fenwick teach classes about information research strategies and resources: <http://library.gmu.edu/workshops/list>
3. Interlibrary Loan (ILL) offers access to research materials not available through the George Mason University Libraries or the Washington Research Library Consortium libraries.
 - a. Scholarly books and journal articles not owned by GMU Libraries are available through Interlibrary Loan.
 - b. Electronic delivery is preferred and usually arrives much faster and is free of any cost.
 - c. Books can be borrowed up to 4 weeks with an approximate delivery time of 5-7 days.
 - d. There is NO cost to the student for these books
 - e. Students establish a logon for access using GMU email user ID and password: <https://gmu.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/VGM/logon.html>
 - f. For additional information: www.library.gmu.edu/services/ill.html
 - g. For assistance, in Fenwick (behind Circulation Desk), call: 703-993-2228, or email: illoan@gmu.edu
4. Materials in the Fenwick Library may be checked out with a valid Mason ID card at the Circulation Desk located at the entrance to the building.
5. For more information about services and resources available at Fenwick Library,
 - a. Phone: Circulation Desk: 703-993-2240
 - b. Phone: Reference Desk: 703-993-2210
 - c. For directions, maps, hours of operation, and additional information go to the library website. Note: hours change with each semester and holidays so it is always best to check library hours when planning time for library research.

Research Points of Contact

4. Sally Evans, University Dissertation & Thesis (UDTS) Services Coordinator
 - a. The purpose of UDTS is to help Mason graduate students prepare, format, and complete their theses, dissertations, and projects, and to turn them in CORRECTLY and ON TIME.

- i. To answer any questions go to (<http://thesis.gmu.edu/faqs.html>)
 - ii. To help walk you through the process go to (<http://thesis.gmu.edu/process.html>);
 - iii. To review your document to make sure the formatting is correct go to (<http://thesis.gmu.edu/review.html>);
 - iv. To make sure you have all of the resources you need go to (<http://thesis.gmu.edu/resources.html>)
 - v. Fenwick Library, Phone: 703-993-2222
 - vi. Email: sevans13@gmu.edu
5. Kathy Butler, Librarian for Environmental Science & Policy
- a. Collaborates with students and faculty, instructs classes, and provides one-on-one research assistance
 - b. Selects books, journals, multimedia, online sources and other scholarly materials for the library's Environmental Science and Policy collection
 - c. A244 Fenwick Library, Phone: 703-993-3341
 - d. Email: kbutle18@gmu.edu

Johnson Center Library

1. The Johnson Center Library (JCL) provides access to library resources through the internet and Mason libraries local area network of resources.
2. JCL offers a variety of course related instructional classes on library research skills and in using electronic resources. These are conducted by the liaison librarians for specific subject departments (ESP liaison librarian - Andrea Baruzzi).
3. The Johnson Center Library provides the following collections and services:
 - a. Adaptive Technology to assist persons with disabilities
 - b. Core Reference Collection, Curriculum Collection, International Newspapers, Course Reserves
 - c. Instructional Classes (<http://library.gmu.edu/research/classes.html>)
 - d. Media Collections and Equipment (<http://infoguides.gmu.edu/>)
4. Materials in the Johnson Center Library may be checked out with a valid Mason ID card at the Circulation Desk
5. For more information regarding the Johnson Center Library,
 - a. Phone: Circulation Desk: 703-993-9060/Reference Desk: 703-993-9070
 - b. For directions, maps, hours of operation, and additional information go to: www.library.gmu.edu/libinfo/hours.html and scroll down to Johnson Library information which is below Fenwick Library.

ZOTERO

1. Zotero is George Mason's version of Endnote and is used as a bibliographic information and citation management program.
2. The easiest way to access Zotero is to go directly to their website: <http://www.zotero.org/>. Links to this website can also be found on the library website.
3. Note: It is strongly suggested that you start using and familiarizing yourself with Zotero now as you likely will be using it for your thesis or dissertation.
4. The Library offers a one-hour training class with hands-on learning but you must sign up for the class when it is offered. There also free online tutorials <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/citationmanagement/ZoteroTutorials> or call IT Training at 703-993-3426 for assistance.

Health Services

<http://shs.gmu.edu/>

Fairfax Campus Clinic

1. The clinic at GMU is a fully functioning health clinic with board certified healthcare providers. It offers the same types of services as a regular doctor's office. All services are confidential. Most services and procedures are free. Procedures that require labs tests come with a nominal fee.
2. Fairfax Campus Clinic is located in SUB I, Room 2300.
For questions please contact the clinic at (703) 993-2831

| Student Health Services | Hours of Operations | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Sub I, Room 2349 | Monday | 8:30 am - 7:30 pm |
| 4400 University Dr. 2D3 | Tuesday | 8:30 am - 4:30 pm |
| Fairfax, VA 22030 | Wednesday | 8:30 am-7:30 pm |
| Phone: (703) 993-2135 | Thursday | 8:30 am - 7:30 pm |
| Fax: (703) 993-4053 | Friday | 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm |
| | Saturday | 9 am - 12:30 pm |
| | Sunday | Closed |

Medical Insurance

1. Available through Aetna Student Health
 - a. For information on the policy see:
http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com/stu_conn/student_connection.aspx?groupID=724536
 - b. For info on the subsidy through GMU see:
http://provost.gmu.edu/support/sghi/subgradhi_eligibility.html
 - c. For Masters and Doctoral students the premium for 2014-2015 was \$2,522 for the annual plan. More info and rates can be found here:
<https://shs.gmu.edu/insurance/domestic/>
 - d. For Doctoral students a 100% subsidy is awarded if:
 - i. Full time doctoral student as defined by University Catalog
 - ii. Tuition waiver granted to cover fulltime course load
 - iii. Fulltime GTA (20 hours a week and more than \$10,000 in stipend / year)
 - iv. Subsidy is available for 3 cumulative years

Immunization Forms

1. Immunization Record Form
 - a. Record form is due by October 1st for fall's incoming students
 - i. <http://eli.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/5.-George-Mason-Immunization-Form.pdf>
 - b. **This form is very important! If this form is not submitted to Health Services there will be a hold on your account and you will not be allowed to sign-up for classes**
 - c. Note: A student can get most of these immunizations at Student Health Services for a fee

Important Forms

<http://esp.gmu.edu/graduate/forms/index.html>

1. At George Mason there are important forms that are necessary to submit to move along in you graduate career. All of the forms you will need are listed in the table below and can be found on the Environmental Science and Policy website under “Forms and Policies

<http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/> or from the Registrar's site at <http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/index.html> .

- All forms MUST be submitted to the Graduate Office for processing. Sharon Bloomquist can help facilitate the submission of forms.

| Forms used by Doctoral Students | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of Form | Description | Processing Notes |
| Advancement to Candidacy | To be used for doctoral students to be at the time of advancement to candidacy | MANDATORY: Submit after completion of all coursework, dissertation proposal, and passing of written and oral exams |
| Doctoral Dissertation Research (DDR) FT Equivalent Status | Grace period for Full-Time Equivalent, Used by international students to maintain visa status and for students who have advanced to candidacy. | Submit after you have completed your dissertation credits |
| Coursework Proposal | To be used as a planning tool with an advisor | Work with advisor to select courses; a planning tool. |
| Program of Study | Required to Advance to Candidacy | MANDATORY: Submit before advancing to candidacy |
| Reduction of Credits | Used to reduce the number of credits in your program. Must have earned a previous master's degree. | Initiated by the Graduate Office after admitted to the program |
| Dissertation Proposal Signature Page | Required to Advance to Candidacy Used as a cover page when submitting your dissertation proposal | Submit to the Graduate Office. Will be included in your advancement to candidacy packet |
| Final Dissertation Signature Page | Required to submit your dissertation in its final version. (Dean Chandhoke is listed on this form). | Submit to Sally Evans, the University Dissertation/Thesis Coordinator, in a required appointment and after a successful defense |
| Ph.D. Guidelines and Timelines | A document approved by the Executive Graduate Committee outlining policies and procedures of your program. | This document is your primary "rule" book. It is best to visit it frequently since many of your questions are documented in this brochure! |

| Forms used by Masters Students | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of Form | Description | Processing Notes |
| Declaration of Concentration | You must have a declared concentration in order for your Degree Evaluation to work in PatriotWeb. | MANDATORY: Submit to Graduate Office after being admitted to the program |
| Master's Non-Course Requirements (ONLY for students taking a Comprehensive Exam) | This form is used ONLY for students doing a PROJECT to report the comprehensive exam results. | MANDATORY for PROJECT students only: Submitted by the Graduate Office after you pass your comprehensive exam |
| Master's Thesis Research (for FT Equivalent Status) | This form is used by international students to maintain visa status or by current students who need to conduct research after completing ALL of your thesis credits. | Submitted by the graduate office for approval to maintain full-time status. |
| Conservation Science & Policy (COSP) - Program of Study | <u>New program as of Fall 2012.</u> Used in planning your coursework selection and degree requirements | Submit to Graduate Office by the end of your second year |
| Environmental Science and Policy (EVSP) – Program of Study | Used in planning your coursework selection and degree requirements | Submit to Graduate Office by the end of your second year |
| Environmental Management (EVMG) – Program of Study | New requirements as of Fall 2012. Two forms exist (post Fall 2012 and prior Fall 2012) Used in planning your coursework selection and degree requirements | Submit to Graduate Office by the end of your second year |
| MS Program of Study - Environmental Complexity | Used in planning your coursework selection and degree requirements | Submit to Graduate Office by the end of your second year |
| Earth Surface Processes & Environmental Geochemistry (ESEG) – Program of Study | Used in planning your coursework selection and degree requirements | Submit to Graduate Office by the end of your second year |
| Environmental Biocomplexity (EVBC) – Program of Study | Used in planning your coursework selection and degree requirements | Submit to Graduate Office by the end of your second year |
| Master's Thesis Proposal Signature Page | To be used as a cover page when submitting your thesis proposal. | Submit to Graduate Office for processing |
| Final Master's Thesis Signature Page | To be used to submit your thesis in its final version. Includes the Dean of the College of Science, Dr. Chandhoke's signature | Submit to Sally Evans, the University Dissertation/Thesis Coordinator, in a required appointment and after a successful defense |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| M.S. Guidelines and Timelines | A document approved by the Executive Graduate Committee outlining policies and procedures of your program. | This document is your primary “rule” book. It is best to visit it frequently since many of your questions are documented in this brochure! |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| Forms used by both master’s and doctoral students | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of Form | Description | Processing Notes |
| <i>Committee Formation Form</i> | Required by all students doing a thesis, project or dissertation | MANDATORY: Submit to Graduate Office by the end of the second semester |
| <i>Blooms Evaluation</i> | Evaluation tool for committee members to evaluate the student. To be used for comprehensive exams/ dissertation proposal and at dissertation/Thesis defense | MANDATORY. This form must be completed by all committee members both to advance to candidacy and to graduate. |
| <i>Graduate Transfer of Credit</i> | Used to transfer credit from another institution if taken within 6 years and to transfer in non-degree courses taken at Mason | Submit to Graduate Office after being admitted to the program |
| <i>Individualized Section</i> | This form is initiated by a faculty member so students may study with that faculty member (EVPP 693). It is also used to initiate an Internship (EVPP 894). The instructor must submit a short paragraph/syllabus explaining the course and create a title of 30 or less characters. | Faculty member must submit a paragraph/syllabus to the Graduate Office. Chair approval is required. Additional paperwork is required for the Internship and Director approval is required. |
| <i>Special Registration for Graduation Request</i> | Used when students are not taking any classes and want to continue to use the library and University Resources. | Submit to the Graduate Office. This request will allow you to remain active in the University system, without being registered for an actual course. Students must pay a \$45 processing fee before the form will be processed. NOTE: This special registration will not suffice for the university’s continuous enrollment requirement while you are finishing your Thesis or Dissertation. Students working on a Thesis or Dissertation must be |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | enrolled in Thesis (799) or Dissertation (999). |
| <i>Teaching Assistantship Application</i> | Used to apply for a teaching assistantship. Send to the Graduate Programs Coordinator, Sharon Bloomquist AND the Undergraduate Biology Office Manager Joanne Zimmerman when applying. | Anyone interested in either being renewed or interested in applying for the first time, must use this form to be eligible. Teaching Assistantships occur every Fall but occasionally a few have occurred in the Spring |
| <i>Immunization Form</i> | This form details all required vaccinations received upon entrance to GMU. Failure to submit this form will result in a hold on your account which includes registration! | REQUIRED BY ALL MASON STUDENTS: Due by October 1st to Student Health Services |
| <i>Re-Enrollment Form (Graduate or Graduate Non-degree)</i> | Students must complete this form after being out for 2 consecutive semesters – the Virginia In-State Tuition form should be attached to the form | Submit to the Graduate Office if you have not registered for more than two consecutive semesters to update your status to active |

Student Organizations

GSA - <http://esp.gmu.edu/news/groups/index.html>

GAPSA - <http://gapsa.gmu.edu/>

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

1. The GSA of the Environmental Science and Policy (ESP) Graduate Program is a student run organization with the goal of fostering a sense of community, increasing communication with faculty, the ESP Department, and the College of Science, advocating for graduate student concerns, and planning social and academic extracurricular activities for graduate students, faculty, and staff. For more information, please see: <http://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/>
2. Membership dues are \$10 per semester due to the GSA treasurer (see below on how to join)
3. Why become a member? Benefits of membership include:
 - a. Invitations to GSA sponsored events
 - b. The ability to vote in matters of importance both to the GSA and to the graduate students of ESP
 - c. Access to travel grants
 - d. Access to a GSA sponsored Webinar service
4. Grants Available

- a. The GSA administers a conference travel assistance grant twice a year
 - i. It is *up* to \$300 to defray the cost of travel to conferences to present research
 1. Conference presenters are given preference over conference attendees
 2. Awards are decided April 1 and October 1 of each year for conferences attended in the six months *prior* to the due date
 - ii. Contact the GSA for more information

How to join the Environmental Science & Policy Graduate Student Association (ESP GSA)*

1. Go to: <http://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/>
2. Download the membership form (the membership form can also be found on the GMU ESP GSA Facebook group).
3. **Email the completed form to:** espgsa@gmu.edu
4. **Pay your dues!** Dues are \$10 for per semester, \$20 for 1 year membership. You have 2 options for paying dues:
 - a. Pay by CASH: submit payment in person to any member of the ESP GSA board (Rachel Golden Kroner, Blake Klocke, Casey Pehrson, Elly Roland, or Betsy Collins; **OR** Sharon Bloomquist & she will give us your dues)
 - b. Pay by CHECK: Write checks out to “ESP-GSA Dues” and **mail** your check to:

ESP GSA co/o Margot Thoresen
Office of Student Involvement
MSN 2D6
George Mason University
4400 University Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

5. Join our Facebook group to stay up to date with GSA announcements & events! Search GMU ESP GSA & click "Join." An administrator of the group (a GSA board member) will approve you.

*Anyone can come to our events even if you do not join the ESP GSA; the more the merrier! However, ***if you would like to be eligible for the travel grant***, you ***must*** pay dues (either per semester or annually), attend at least 1 event during the semester, & be a graduate student in ESP, in addition to of course attending a conference or workshop that supports your academic progress.

Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA)

1. The GAPSA is a GMU wide group that works to unite and support the needs of graduate and professional students across the university
 - a. The GAPSA website is very helpful for general information about this area, housing, transportation etc.
 - i. They have a Graduate Student Travel Fund (<http://gstf.gmu.edu/>)
 - ii. Read directions and stipulations very carefully when applying to ensure that you get your reimbursement
 - iii. Applications should be sent in through the portal on the GSTF website
 - iv. Funds available range from \$50 - \$1000 to defray the cost of travel for research, conferences etc.
 - v. Students can apply once per fiscal year
 - vi. International Travel Grants: up to \$1000 in travel support for students presenting the results of original research at international conferences as first authors
 - vii. Regular Graduate Student Travel Fund:
 1. Students presenting in conferences held in DC, Maryland, or Virginia (DMV):
 - a. up to \$150 - non GAPSA member
 - b. up to \$200 - GAPSA member
 2. Students presenting outside of the DMV
 - a. Poster Presentations
 - i. up to \$350 - non GAPSA members
 - ii. up to \$400 - GAPSA members
 - b. Oral Presentations
 - i. up to \$450 - non GAPSA members
 - ii. up to \$500 - GAPSA members

Financial Aid

<http://financialaid.gmu.edu/>

1. The financial aid office helps you with your financial aid questions and concerns. Please include your G# (student ID number) when contacting the office. Financial aid counselors' case loads are arranged alphabetically by students' last names.
 - a. For questions or concerns you can call the main number at (703) 993-2353 or contact your individual financial aid counselor by using the email address below.

- b. Open Monday-Friday from 9:00am – 5:00pm and located on the 1st floor of SUB I

| Your Financial Aid Counselor | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| If your last name begins with... | Your counselor is... | Email Address |
| A, B, X, Y, Z | Dan Frank | dfrank3@gmu.edu |
| C, D, E, F | Kerstin Alston | kalston3@gmu.edu |
| G, H, J, K | Kevin Mayer | kmayer4@gmu.edu |
| L, M, N | Tom Perdiou | tperdiou@gmu.edu |
| O, P, Q, R, W | Star Greene | lgreene6@gmu.edu |
| I, S, T, U, V | Bob Smith | rsmithz@gmu.edu |
| Scholarships | Roz Moore | rmoore11@gmu.edu |
| Graduate Grants/Waivers and Athletic Scholarships | Larry Atienza | latienza@gmu.edu |

1. Application is used to apply for federal student financial aid, such as grants, loans and work-study
 - a. You should file the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.gov, and sign it with a PIN number from pin.ed.gov.
 - b. **Applications received by the processing center after March 1st are considered late, and will not be given priority consideration**, but will be reviewed for Federal Pell Grants, Federal Stafford Loans, and Federal Parent PLUS Loans.
 - c. You must reapply for aid every year
 - d. You must send your FAFSA to George Mason by entering our school code: 003749
 - e. After reviewing your FAFSA, financial aid will assemble a Financial Aid Award Package for you.
 - f. You will receive an email notifying you to view and accept your package on patriotweb.gmu.edu. The package will show all the available aid for which you are eligible.
 - g. If you need additional funds, you may look into applying for PLUS Loans, private loans, outside scholarships, and student employment.

Teaching Assistantships

<http://esp.gmu.edu/students/financial-aid/graduate-student-funding/>

Environmental Science and Policy TA's

1. While limited in number, the ESP and Biology departments offer several teaching assistantship opportunities (in areas of biology, ecology, and geology disciplines) to qualified graduate students.
2. Deadline for applications for fall assistantships is January 31st but applications will be accepted until all positions have been filled.
3. Graduate Teaching Assistants receive a fixed stipend of \$14,500 and typically teach 3 lab sections per semester, but assignments may vary.
4. GTA's qualify for tuition remission for up to 6 hours of tuition per semester (subject to availability of funds) from a tuition remission budget.

TA Application

1. For a copy of the Teaching Assistantship Form follow the link below:
<http://esp.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/TAApplicationFormJan2014.docx>
2. If you are a student in the Environmental Science and Policy Department, send the application to the Graduate Program Coordinator, Sharon Bloomquist and the Undergraduate Biology Office Manager, Joanne Zimmerman.
3. It is also beneficial to send a follow up email to make sure that your application has been received and processed.

Sharon Bloomquist

Graduate Program Coordinator, Environmental Science & Policy

3039 David J. King Hall, Fairfax Campus,
MSN: 5F2

George Mason University

Fairfax, VA 22030

Phone: (703) 993-3187

Fax: (703) 993-1066

[Email: sbloomqu@gmu.edu](mailto:sbloomqu@gmu.edu)

Joanne Zimmerman

Office Manager, Undergraduate Biology Program

3005 David J. King Hall, Fairfax Campus,
MSN: 3E1

George Mason University

Fairfax, VA 22030

Phone: (703) 993-1039

Fax: (703) 993-1046

[Email: janders8@gmu.edu](mailto:janders8@gmu.edu)

Resources for teaching assistants:

1. The Center for Teaching and Faculty Excellence (CTFE) provides workshops and support materials for professors and teaching assistants. See their website with links to all resources here: <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/>

Additional Resources For Graduate Students

1. The CTFE and the Provost Office offer excellent professional development courses for graduate students. Interested students must apply, but if accepted, students enroll in the course for free and receive credit.
 - a. PROV 601: Thriving in Graduate School <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/prov-601/>
 - b. PROV 701: Preparing for Careers in the Academy <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/prov-701/>
2. Additional resources for graduate students can be found here:
 - a. Graduate student workshops to maximize productivity <http://gradlife.gmu.edu/maximizing-productivity-workshops/>
 - b. Write-ins for graduate students to achieve writing goals <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/for-graduate-students/graduate-write-ins>
 - c. Workshops at the library (Zotero, Library Skills, Writing Groups): <http://library.gmu.edu/workshops>
 - d. Publishing in the Journal of Mason Graduate Research <http://journals.gmu.edu/jmgr>
 - e. And many many more resources! <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/>

Fellowships and Scholarships

<http://esp.gmu.edu/fellowships-and-scholarships/>

Presidential Scholarship

1. The Presidential Scholarship is a program of support for first-time Ph.D. students.
2. This scholarship is offered to students by the Office of the Provost. Students are nominated for this scholarship by the department they have applied to.
3. Each Ph.D. program may have up to two Presidential Scholars per academic year. Nominations are to be submitted for a fall semester start. If a spring semester start is necessary in order to recruit a high-potential student, accommodations can be made.
4. Scholarship requirements:
 - a. First-time Ph.D. student, and
 - b. Minimum GPA of 3.5 in the most recently earned degree, and

- c. Minimum combined math and verbal GRE score of 1,200 on exams taken prior to August 1, 2011; combined score of 310 on the new revised GRE scale for exams taken August 1, 2011 and beyond. Scores must have been earned within the last five years.
5. For more information, please see the following links:
<http://esp.gmu.edu/fellowships-and-scholarships/#Presidential>
<http://provost.gmu.edu/support/presidentialscholar.html>

Provost's Award

1. The Environmental Science and Policy PhD Provost Fellowship was awarded to 3 students who applied in the Fall of 2014. This is a 3 year fellowship.
2. This fellowship offers a 15 credit tuition waiver for the academic year, which also covers the educational resource fee, and a stipend of \$19,000.
3. In addition to the stipend, fellows will be awarded research funding amounting to \$2,000 for the first year, and \$3,000 for years 2 and 3.
4. This fellowship may be renewed in future semesters upon availability of funding.
5. For more information, please see the following link:
<http://esp.gmu.edu/fellowships-and-scholarships/#Provost>

Other Funding Opportunities through the Provost's Office

Contingent on funding availability, the Provost office may offer additional sources of funding for graduate students including dissertation completion grants, summer fellowships, and other awards. The ESP department will advertise these opportunities via email as they become available. See this website for more information: provost.gmu.edu/graduate-education/grad-ed/

Office of Graduate Fellowships

1. The Office of Graduate Fellowships offers resources for students that are looking for fellowships and grants: <http://gradfellows.gmu.edu>
2. Personal assistance and appointments are available: Kay Ágoston, Director of Graduate Fellowships, (703)993-3131, kagoston@gmu.edu
3. IMPORTANT: If you receive an external fellowship or scholarship please make sure to inform your faculty advisor and Kay Ágoston.

Funding to support open-access publishing fees

George Mason University, through the University Libraries, will provide financial support to Mason scholars and researchers who wish to publish their work in open access (OA) journals. Registered graduate students are eligible to apply to Mason's Open Access Publishing Fund

(OAPF) for assistance with article processing fees required by some OA journals. Find more information here: <http://library.gmu.edu/about/oa-fund>

OSCAR - Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research

OSCAR provides funds for undergraduate researchers to work with graduate researchers on a competitive basis. Both students (graduate and undergraduate) receive a stipend. This is a great way to recruit a research assistant and serve as a mentor to a student. See the OSCAR website for more: <http://oscar.gmu.edu/>

Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC) Courses

<http://smconservation.gmu.edu/>

1. The Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC) is a joint program of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI) and George Mason University. SMSC offers conservation science and human dimensions courses to graduate students and conservation professionals. Graduate courses all have the CONS prefix.
 - a. Courses are 1-2 week intensive residential programs held throughout the year, offering 1-3 graduate credits
 - b. Located at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal, Virginia
 - i. It is less than an hour from GMU by car, but as classes are the whole day, it is advisable to stay in their dormitories (cost includes dining and housing package)
 - c. For a list of all upcoming courses go to: [\(http://smconservation.gmu.edu/upcoming-courses/\)](http://smconservation.gmu.edu/upcoming-courses/)
 - d. Application Process
 - i. Visit the website for application details. The course application form is found at: [\(http://smconservation.gmu.edu/programs/graduate-and-professional/graduate-course-application-form/\)](http://smconservation.gmu.edu/programs/graduate-and-professional/graduate-course-application-form/)
 - ii. You will also need to fill out the “CONS Course Registration Advisor Approval Form” found on the GMU ESP website under “Graduate Courses”: <http://www.gmu.edu/depts/espp/graduate/courses/index.html>
Once your advisor has signed off on this form, you must submit it to the ESP Graduate Coordinator who will obtain the other signatures needed and send it on to the SMSC program to complete your course application.

- e. Application Deadlines and Course Costs
 - i. Deadlines and course costs are posted on each course's webpage
 - ii. Deadlines for first consideration are generally about 10 weeks prior to the course date. Applications are reviewed and accepted/rejected by SMSC on a rolling basis, so please apply as early as possible. Registration is with Office of Continuing Professional Education (OCPE), if accepted, your space in the course is not guaranteed until your payment is arranged for with OCPE. The course webpage will specify whether space remains available after the specified registration deadline; if interested, you should apply/register as quickly as possible to help you secure a spot.
 - iii. Questions can be directed to the SMSC program administration email account, SCBItraining@si.edu
- f. Tuition Waivers/Remissions
 - i. Presently, GTA/GRA tuition remissions cannot be used in connection with registration for these CONS courses. Additionally, tuition waivers, previously offered on a limited basis, are NOT being offered in the 2016-2017 academic year, nor expected to be offered in future years.

Transportation and Parking

<http://parking.gmu.edu/>

Parking

1. All persons parking at the George Mason University are required to obtain and display the George Mason University parking permit. Purchased from the George Mason University Parking Services
 - a. Parking on the George Mason Campus (list of fees can be found here: <http://parking.gmu.edu/permitfinerefundrates.html>)
 - b. Map of all parking areas can be found on the left hand side under "Map of Fairfax Campus Parking Areas" (<http://parking.gmu.edu/>)
 - c. At the Parking Services website you can manage your parking account, purchase permits, and pay or appeal a citation. For any questions or problems contact the Parking Services Offices at (703) 993-2710.
 - d. Note: For those who only come to campus for one class once a week it may be more cost efficient to park and pay for the visitor spots found in Mason Pond, Sandy Creek, and Rappahannock Parking Garages.
 - i. <http://parking.gmu.edu/visitorsregulations.html>

Shuttles

1. Mason Shuttles operates several free service shuttles to various locations within campus as well as around Fairfax.
 - a. Buses, Shuttles, and the Metro times and maps are all available online (<http://transportation.gmu.edu/>)

Fairfax Transportation

1. Fairfax City also operates many commuter services that can be used by students to get around town
 - a. Cue Bus
 - i. Fairfax City Bus System (<http://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/public-works/transportation-division/cue-bus>)
 - ii. Free for all Mason students with student ID
 - iii. Check Nextbus website (www.nextbus.com) to find when next bus arrives as buses will get delayed by traffic especially during rush hour
 - iv. Some stops have live screens above bus stop booths that indicate when the next bus will arrive
 - b. Fairfax Connector
 - i. Fairfax County Bus System (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector/>)
 - c. Metro Bus
 - i. Northern VA, Washington D.C., and Southern Maryland Bus System (<http://www.wmata.com/>)
 - d. Arlington Transit
 - i. Arlington County Bus System (<http://www.arlingtontransit.com/>)
 - e. VA Railway Express
 - i. Northern Virginia and Washington D.C. Train System (<http://www.vre.org/>)

Housing Options

<http://och.gmu.edu/>

On Campus

1. Fairfax Campus:
 - a. Masonvale
 - i. These are upscale apartments and town homes reserved for GMU faculty, staff, and full-time graduate students.
 - ii. Rates range from \$1450 for a single bedroom apartment to \$2250 for a 3 bedroom apartment (check website for current rates)
 - iii. Masonvale also offers assistance finding roommates .
 - iv. There is a ranking and priority system involved in the application process. This priority system seems to favor faculty over graduate students (graduate students are 3rd to last on the list <http://www.masonvale.com/docs/priority-system.pdf>).
 - v. Information can be found at:
 1. <https://housing.gmu.edu/eLiving/public/graduate/index.asp>
 2. <http://www.masonvale.com/fairfax-va-apartments.asp>
2. Prince William Campus:
 - a. Beacon Hall
 - i. Monthly rates are per person and include all utilities, cable, and internet services:
 - ii. Studio: \$960/month - 68 available
 - iii. 1-bedroom: \$1230/month - 4 available
 - iv. 2-bedroom: \$730/per person/month - 40 available
 1. (these are the total numbers that they have in the hall and do not indicate how many spaces may be left)
 - v. Housing agreements are offered on both the typical academic year (Fall – Spring semester) basis as well as a calendar basis (approximately 11.5 months, with potential year to year option).
 - vi. There is a \$300 nonrefundable deposit to secure your space (this gets put toward the first month's rent).
 - vii. More information including floor plans and application information: <http://housing.gmu.edu/graduate/>

Off Campus

1. GMU Sites
 - a. GMU hosts a search site for finding roommates and off campus housing.
 - i. <http://och.gmu.edu/>
 - ii. You are required to register to use the site (this will help to keep some of the internet crazies off the site). You do not need to be a current student to register and search for housing, though guest accounts have some limitations. A GMU email address is required to register as a student.

Other Useful Sites NOT Approved or Promoted by GMU

1. <http://www.padmapper.com/> is a useful tool. It combines Google maps with an apartment search engine and has several nice filters (pets, keywords).
2. <http://www.apartments.com/>
 - a. Padmapper searches this
3. <http://www.rent.com/>
 - a. Padmapper searches this
4. <http://washingtondc.craigslist.org/hhh/>
 - a. Padmapper searches this

Dining

<http://dining.gmu.edu/>

On Campus Dining Locations

1. Through Mason Dining, Sodexo provides a variety of dining options for all George Mason campuses. For a list of all dining options please see the Sodexo website <https://gmu.sodexomyway.com/>
2. Listed below are the best places for graduate students to find food
 - a. Johnson Center Food Court - Main food court on campus with 12 restaurants and is centrally located
 - b. Northern Neck - Starbucks
 - c. SUB I (bottom floor) - Chick-fil-A, Jazzman's Café, Hot Spot, and The Mason Rathskeller (a popular spot for grads)

3. For questions and concerns contact the Resident District Manager John Teeple at john.teeple@sodexo.com

