



NSU Oceanographic Center Directions for the Ph.D. Student

Ph.D. Program.....	2
General and Credit-Hour Requirements	2
Academic Requirements, Activities and Approvals	2
Academic Timetable and Milestones.....	3
Committee.....	4
Qualifying Proposal Presentation	4
Progress Reports	5
Comprehensive Examination.....	5
Defense of Dissertation.....	6
Revision of the Dissertation and Final Submission	6
Appendices: Sample Cover and Approval Sheets	8
Appendix 1. Progress Report	9
Appendix 2. Dissertation Proposal Signature Sheet	10
Appendix 3. Approval for Dissertation Defense Signature Sheet	11
Appendix 4. Sample Dissertation Cover Sheet.....	12
Appendix 5. Sample Signature Page.....	13
Appendix 6. Screen shot of application for degree.....	14
Appendix 7. Application for Degree/Conferral	15

PH.D. PROGRAM

General and Credit-Hour Requirements

The Ph.D. in Oceanography/Marine Biology allows specialization in a variety of disciplines including marine biology, marine geology, biological oceanography and physical oceanography. The degree requires a minimum of 90 credits beyond the baccalaureate, of which at least 48 credits must consist of dissertation research. At least 42 credits consist of upper-level course work. Required courses include the relevant M.S. core courses and completion of upper-level course work consisting of OC graduate courses and/or tutorial studies with the major professor.

Milestones towards the degree include: 1) submission of a successful application package, 2) a qualifying exam, 3) defense of planned research at a qualifying proposal presentation, 4) passing of a Ph.D. comprehensive examination, 5) a successful public and private defense presentation of the completed dissertation before the supervising committee.

Students are expected to complete the Ph.D. program in nine years or less, a minimum of three years is required.

Academic Requirements, Activities and Approvals

Applicants must have an M.S. degree in an appropriate discipline and satisfy the entry requirements listed in the Table in section 3.1.3.2 of the Oceanographic Center catalog. The M.S. degree will normally be thesis-based. If an applicant has a capstone-based degree (involving a review paper rather than empirical research) their graduate transcript should show at least 6 credit hours of research experience (such as directed independent study credits relevant to research).

Applicants who meet the requirements of the program should contact a prospective faculty project supervisor ahead of formally applying to the OC to secure agreement. The application package must contain a brief outline of the proposed research and a supporting statement from the prospective supervising professor attesting to her/his commitment and capability (expertise and funding) to mentor the applicant.

Ph.D. students may transfer up to 30 graduate course credits from prior graduate programs in the same disciplines. Transferred courses must be either acceptable equivalents of courses offered at NSU or be clearly applicable to the field of interest. The Director of Academic Programs, the Major Professor, and the students' dissertation committee (if formed at entrance) will decide transfer acceptability.

Formal course work minimum requirements should be taken within 21 months after admission to the program.

Academic Timetable and Milestones

Admission

- Apply to Ph.D. program. Secure a written agreement from a prospective Major Professor and submit with an overview of proposed research. This is a paragraph or so on the general topic of research – not a full proposal. Students are not admitted without prior agreement on a research topic and a Major Professor. Furthermore, the Major Professor will need to state in writing that she/he has or will be able to acquire sufficient funds to cover the Ph.D. student's research expenses for the duration of the student's course of study at the Oceanographic Center. The OC will not be responsible for covering research expenses in the event of funding loss by the Major Professor.
- Submit application package containing letters of recommendation, statement of career goals, GRE scores, undergraduate and graduate transcripts, general research topic, and statement of support from prospective Major Professor (see Table in section 3.1.3.2 of the catalog). This is the package that will go to faculty. Acceptance into the program is effectively provisional for all– basically the accepted student is a “pre-candidate” until later defense of proposal and successful passing of Comprehensive Exams.

Within 12 months

- Assemble a supervising committee of at least 4 people (at least 3 OC faculty and 1 external member). One of the committee is the Major Professor. The external member(s) must have demonstrated expertise (by an appropriately strong publication record) in the dissertation research field.
- Prepare final program of studies with Major Professor and secure agreement with committee and Director of Academic Programs
- Within 6 months the student should also complete a qualifying exam before his/her committee to determine basic knowledge and deficits to be corrected by coursework. This test is used to tailor the student's curriculum. It is not graded, and does not determine candidacy.
- Compile a detailed research proposal (with Major Professor and committee) for presentation in an open defense. Defend the proposal by demonstrating knowledge about and a justification of the scientific value of the research topic at the Qualifying Proposal Presentation (3 to 12 months into the program). If the defense is failed, and the committee decides a retake is warranted, the student may retake the defense within 6 to 12 months.

Within 24 months

- Typically complete course work within 21 months after entry
- Take comprehensive exams. These are normally taken within six months of completion of formal course work, but not prior to one and one-half years after admission.
- Admitted to candidacy and begin dissertation credits (48 credit hours required).
- Begin formal research on the approved research topic. Note: research may begin immediately on acceptance but not for credit

Within 9 years

- Complete research and write dissertation
- Defend dissertation
- Complete corrections suggested by committee
- Submit final dissertation

Committee

The student's Ph.D. Committee consists of at least four members. Three of the committee members must be Center faculty and one must be from outside the Oceanographic Center. The external committee member must be a recognized expert in the student's field of research. The committee monitors all phases of the candidate's progress and must be formed prior to the candidate's oral defense of the proposed research. The Major Professor chairs the committee.

In special circumstances it may be possible for the external committee member to be the Major Professor. In this case there must be at least four committee members from inside the Oceanographic Center and the external Professor must be eligible for Adjunct Professor status at the Oceanographic Center.

Qualifying Proposal Presentation

Before research relevant to the Ph.D. can begin, a student must produce a detailed research proposal written under guidance of the Major Professor and members of the supervising committee. The dissertation proposal should consist of at least the following elements:

- title of the proposed dissertation
- statement of the problem and hypothesis to be tested
- statement of the significance of the work
- detailed description of the methodology. Literature should be cited where applicable with enough detail that the methodology can be understood without going to the literature. Proper experimental design is very important and will be subject to review and comment by the dissertation committee. Expected results of the research should be provided, and any required funding, facilities, and other equipment/resources should be listed.
- references/bibliography.

A pre-candidate student will defend the proposal in an oral presentation to faculty. A written version must be submitted at least one week beforehand and reside in the program office for inspection by the faculty if desired. At the oral presentation defense, a candidate will be expected to demonstrate sufficient knowledge about the proposed research project and to justify the chosen research topic. Presentation will be open to all OC students and NSU faculty and a closed session will follow with the student restricted

to the committee and interested OC faculty. Neither the open or closed proposal defense is open to family or acquaintances of the pre-candidate student that are not professionally associated with the OC. If areas of deficiency are highlighted in the defense, a candidate will be notified and will have the opportunity to modify the proposal. The committee may require a second presentation.

The student should give the qualifying proposal presentation within 3 – 12 months after admission into the program.

Progress Reports

Ph.D. students are required to submit a written progress report at the end of every term. This report will be approved by the Major Professor, sent to all committee members, and a copy filed in the Graduate Program Office. This filed copy must have signed approval from the major professor. It is the student's responsibility to insure that the reports are accomplished and filed in a timely manner. The report will include the following information:

- Students name and date
- A brief narrative synopsis of the work completed since the last report. For examples, details of experiments conducted and literature reviewed.
- Estimated progress towards completion of dissertation research
- Target date for dissertation completion
- A list of problems experienced (if any)
- Major professor's comments
- Major professors signature

Comprehensive Examination

The written examination, taken within 3 months of completion of formal course work (typically within 24 months after admission to the program), is administered by the Major Professor and consists of questions submitted by each committee member. The examination takes a minimum of three days. The committee will discuss results of the examination and a decision will be reached. The student is informed of the results of the written examination within one week of completion. In almost all cases, the student will be required to take an oral examination within two weeks of this notification. The condition of an oral examination will be decided by the committee. The oral phase consists of questions focusing on topics that were identified as areas of concern in the written examination. The committee may waive the oral examination if performance on the written examination was exemplary. The oral examination is chaired by the Major Professor and must be at least two hours in length. After the examination, the student will be excused and the committee will determine the outcome.

The decision of the committee must be unanimous. A student failing either part may retake the examination once, typically two to six months after the first attempt.

Successful completion of the comprehensive examination signifies admission to candidacy and the student is allowed to begin registration for dissertation research credits.

Non-successful completion of the comprehensive examination signifies the student is no longer admitted to the Ph.D. program.

Defense of Dissertation

On completion of the dissertation to the Major Professor's satisfaction, a draft document is formally submitted to the full committee members for their review. Upon agreement of the Major Professor and committee, the dissertation may be defended. The defensible dissertation draft must be well written, in the proper format, and judged by the committee as essentially 95% complete. The student should consult frequently with the committee during all phases of dissertation work for continuity and in order to avoid significant problems during the formal defense. Upon approval, the defensible draft will be made available to faculty interested in reviewing the work prior to the defense. All Ph.D. dissertation defenses must be scheduled at least three weeks in advance through the Graduate Program Office. Notice will be provided to the faculty. At least two weeks prior to a student's scheduled defense, a formal clean copy of the work in proper format must be submitted to, and reside in, the Program Office. For very long documents, this time period may be extended to provide faculty adequate time for reading and comments. This defensible copy must be essentially complete, including, for example, all relevant materials, appendices, figures, and data tables (where appropriate, figures and tables are to be incorporated into the text). The copy (or reproductions thereof) will be available for review to any interested faculty member. Incomplete works (those less than 95% complete) will not be acceptable for defense. If the defensible copy is not submitted in time, or changed in any fashion during the review period, the defense will be rescheduled accordingly.

The defense consists of an approximately 50-minute oral presentation to the faculty, student body, and other interested persons. After the student addresses questions from the general audience, there will be a closed session of the committee with the student. The committee will question the candidate on the dissertation and related subjects. This session is closed and limited to the candidate, members of the committee, and interested faculty members. The committee then discusses results in closed session without the student and votes. The dissertation may be accepted, accepted with revision, or rejected. The student is notified of the results following the committee deliberations.

The Oceanographic Center faculty has final approval of the dissertation.

Revision of the Dissertation and Final Submission

The student shall be required to remain in full registration throughout the Ph.D. program, during defense, and during any required revisions of the dissertation. At least

three signed copies of the successfully defended and completed dissertation (including revisions specified during the defense) must be submitted in printed form, on at least 20% cotton rag content paper, to the Oceanographic Center librarian. The cost of binding is the student's responsibility. An electronic copy must be submitted as well.

The Major Professor and committee are responsible for insuring that changes specified by the committee are incorporated in the final version. Once the final version has been accepted, registration requirements for the student are over. One bound copy will be placed in the library, one is for the student's major professor, and one is for the program office. The student may submit any number of additional personal copies to the librarian for binding or may have them bound elsewhere.

Appendices: Sample Cover and Approval Sheets

Appendix 1. Progress Report

Ph.D. Progress Report

Student Name: _____

A brief narrative synopsis of the work completed since the last report. Including: Estimated progress towards completion of dissertation research; a list of problems experienced (if any); and target date for dissertation completion. Use additional sheets if required.

Major professor's comments (not required):

Major professors signature: _____
(required)

Date: _____

The completed Form must be turned into the Program Office at the end of each term.

Appendix 2. Dissertation Proposal Signature Sheet

Registration for Dissertation Credits

Student Name: _____

Title: _____

Committee Members:

Major: _____

Member: _____

Member: _____

To be filled out by program office:

Proposal Accepted/Rejected: _____

Students must submit this signed form and a copy of the approved proposal to the program office for final approval. Students may not register for dissertation credits until the proposal is approved by the major professor and the program office.

Appendix 3. Approval for Dissertation Defense Signature Sheet

Approval for Dissertation Defense

Student Name: _____

Title: _____

Committee Members:

Major: _____

Member: _____

Member: _____

Member: _____

To be filled out by program office:

Defense Accepted/Rejected: _____

Students must submit this signed form and a copy of the approved dissertation to the program office no later than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled defense date. Students may not submit their dissertation to the program office until the defense date is scheduled.

Appendix 4. Sample Dissertation Cover Sheet

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY OCEANOGRAPHIC CENTER

TITLE

By

Name of Student

Submitted to the Faculty of
Nova Southeastern University Oceanographic Center
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a specialty in:

Oceanography, Marine Biology

Nova Southeastern University

Date

Appendix 5. Sample Signature Page

Doctor of Philosophy

Title
*** NAME ***

Nova Southeastern University
Oceanographic Center

Month Year

Approved:

Dissertation Committee

Chair : _____
*** *****, Ph.D.

Committee Member : _____
*** *****, Ph.D.

Committee Member : _____
**** *****, Ph.D.

Committee Member : _____
*** *****, Ph.D.

Appendix 6. Screen shot of application for degree

Degree/Diploma Application for: Your Name here

Required fields marked with an asterisk(*).

Month/Year * in which you will complete your degree requirements:

Degree | Major:*

Minor:

Concentration:

2nd Major:

2nd Minor:

2nd Concentration:

Daytime Phone #:*

(Include Area/International Code)

In the space below, type your name EXACTLY as you want it to appear on your diploma.*

(First, Middle, Last Name, Suffix)

NOTE: If your name contains a special character (for example, é,ü, etc) this system will not accommodate the inclusion of them. As such, please send an email to us (diplomas@nova.edu) indicating the special characters that should appear in your name in addition to completing this application.

Please indicate the address where your diploma is to be mailed (NO P.O. Box)

Address Line 1:*

Address Line 2:

City:*

State:*(U.S.Addresses)

Province (Non U.S.addresses):

Country:

Zip/Postal Code:*

Phone #:

Please verify that all information is accurate and correct prior to clicking the "Submit Request" button.

[Submit Request](#)

[Reset Form](#)

Appendix 7. Application for Degree/Conferral

Once you have turned in the thesis for binding, you are ready to complete the degree. Please take a moment to review your name, address, and telephone number in WebSTAR to ensure that we have the correct information on file should we need to contact you in the future. Make any corrections to your address and telephone number while in WebSTAR.

While in WebSTAR, it is important that you also view your online transcript (i.e., degree, major, grades, etcetera). Should you find any discrepancies, please notify us immediately by sending an email to: missy@nsu.nova.edu

As part of this process, you should review your account to ensure there are not holds and/or outstanding balances. This will expedite the degree conferral process, and as such, facilitate smoother processing on your behalf.

Once everything is correct in WebStar, you need to submit your application for degree. Please go to <https://www.nova.edu/sbin/degreeapp/> and fill out the online form (see Appendix 6 for sample).

The last step in the degree application process is to remit payment (\$75). Once the information on the Degree Application Request form is completed and submitted online, there will be a link to go to for payment. No degree will be conferred until payment is received and all financial obligations have been met.

Once the online form is complete, a survey will be emailed to you. You must return their Oceanographic Center Gate Card(s) and any Oceanographic Center keys. You student must also make sure that your Bursar's account is cleared and all books have been returned to the library. Any incomplete items will result in a delay of conferment.

Once all of the above has been satisfied, the diploma will be conferred at the end of the month, and will be mailed to you within 2 months.