

UW Dept. of Atmospheric Sciences – Graduate Student Resources

General Timeline of Study (for students entering Aut 2011 or later)

Students who entered the program prior to Aut 2011 should reference the older version of this timeline.

This timeline is intended as a general guideline to be used only as a reference and planning tool – it is not a substitute for the more detailed policies and procedures outlined in the Grad Program Guide. All grad students are responsible for being familiar with the content of the GPG which is available in pdf format on the Grad Program website.

First Year of Study

Autumn – Spring

During the first three quarters, students will be engaged in taking core classes, and beginning to explore a research problem. Towards the end of the first year, students should begin thinking about a summer research plan and a presentation to be given at the end of summer.

Summer

During summer quarter, students conduct independent research. Progress and plans for Masters Thesis research are presented at the end of the summer quarter at the First Year Research Presentations. These presentations are generally given during the week preceding the first week of classes of autumn quarter (late September). This is an all day event during which each first year graduate student gives a twenty-minute presentation on their research to date, followed by questions and answers. The audience for these reports consists of first year graduate students, the incoming class of new graduate students, and Atmospheric Sciences faculty.

Second Year of Study

During the second year, students continue to take core and elective courses but focus primarily on independent research. Additionally, students will serve as a TA for one quarter.

Autumn

By the end of November, students set up a Masters Thesis committee. This committee consists of a minimum of three graduate faculty in Atmospheric Sciences, one of whom must be the student's faculty adviser. To set up the MS committee, students must send an email to the Student Services Coordinator listing the committee chair and additional members.

Also by the end of November, students should meet with their new supervisory committee to review a research proposal.

Winter

Students applying for entry into the PhD program with a prior M.S. thesis should plan on applying in winter quarter of their second year of study (see application steps listed in "Third Year of Study" below).

Spring

During spring quarter, students should meet with their supervisory committee for feedback on a research proposal, coauthored with their faculty adviser. This proposal is a brief document (usually 2-3 pages but may be longer) that addresses the Masters Thesis research. The plan must include an overview, methodology, and anticipated timeline. Examples of past Masters Thesis proposals are available in the Students Services Office in ATG 416.

By the last day of spring quarter, students should submit this proposal – complete with written feedback from committee chair - to the Student Services Coordinator.

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Third Year of Study

For students who entered the program in Autumn 2011 or later and who intend to apply for entry into the PhD program, the last quarter that they may apply for entry is winter quarter of their third year. Students applying to the COGS with a prior M.S. thesis should plan on completing the following steps in winter quarter of their second year of study. Graduate students who entered the program prior to Autumn 2011 must apply to the COGS via the old guidelines. Procedures detailing application to the COGS can be found in the Grad Program Guide; procedures, deadlines and a checklist are also available on the Grad Program website.

During the third year, students should complete any core and/or elective courses needed to fulfill the course requirement. The bulk of the third year will be devoted to research, preparing the Masters thesis, and preparing to apply to the COGS (for entry into the PhD program) in winter quarter. Students who will stop at a Masters degree and who do not intend to apply to the COGS should plan to give their public seminar in the quarter in which they intend to graduate.

Winter

For students applying to the COGS, written materials are due no later than the second Monday of winter quarter.

Public COGS seminar must be given during winter quarter.

Spring

COGS decisions will be announced by the end of April.

After Entry Into the PhD Program

Upon entry into the PhD program, students focus almost exclusively on research and preparing for the general exam and doctoral thesis. Elective courses may also be taken to satisfy degree requirements and/or to support research. Students may also be required to TA a second quarter.

Students should set up their doctoral committee within one month of entry into the PhD program. The doctoral committee must consist of a minimum of five members, to include a Faculty Adviser/committee chair, three Graduate faculty in Atmospheric Sciences, and a Graduate School Representative (GSR). More information on the doctoral committee may be found on the Graduate School's website: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/stsv/doccommroles.htm>. In order to set up the committee, students must email the Student Services Coordinator with the names of their committee members and their roles.

The nominal timeline for taking the general exam is no more than one year after gaining entry into the PhD program.

The nominal timeline for taking the final exam is one year after successfully passing the general exam, although this time varies.