Directions for the MA Student

This publication is designed to help students through the various stages of their master's degree. For full requirements, please consult the Oceanographic Center Catalog at http://www.nova.edu/ocean/academics/course-catalog/index.html

Table of Contents
1. MA Marine and Coastal Studies ................................................................. 2
2. Time Limits ................................................................................................. 2
3. Coursework ................................................................................................. 2
   3.1. Core Courses ....................................................................................... 2
   3.2. Elective Courses ................................................................................. 3
   3.3 Portfolio ................................................................................................. 3
       3.3.1 Development of the Essays for the Portfolio ................................. 3
4. Style Guide .................................................................................................. 4
5. Final Exam, The Assessment of Learning Outcomes (the Rubric Exam) .... 4
6. Application for Degree/Conferral .............................................................. 4

Appendix 1. Screen shot of application for degree ............................................. 6
NSU Oceanographic Center Guidelines to the MA Student

1. MA Marine and Coastal Studies

This program is designed to provide students with an orientation towards the marine-related social sciences with a broadened, in-depth, scholarly perspective on marine and coastal issues, from the depths of the deep sea to the heights of atmospheric climate change. This on-line, distance education MA is designed for a broad range of students and working professionals with an interest in the marine and coastal zone that may not have an academic background in science. Students come from a range of sectors; e.g. administration, teaching, government and policy, urban planning, environmental journalism and film media, tourism, and business.

Expected program outcomes are:

- Students will achieve and maintain a high cumulative grade point average (GPA $\geq 3.0$) from course grades earned throughout the program.
- The combination of courses comprising the degree ensures that students acquire and demonstrate:
  - effective communication skills;
  - the ability to explain, assess and predict historic, current and anticipated societal, technological, and ecological impacts related to the marine and coastal environment;
  - the ability to identify and analyze national and international marine and coastal issues and approaches to their solutions.

2. Time Limits

The maximum time limit for completion of the MA program is five years for full-time students, nine years for part-time students. There is no minimum time limitation for completion of the MA. Like many other Master’s programs, including those at NSUOC, the program can be completed in less than 2 years but it is anticipated full-time students will complete in 24 to 30 months.

3. Coursework

Program completion consists of 12 three-credit graduate courses equaling 36 credit hours (15 hours of core/required courses and 21 hours of electives) with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher. In addition, students write a proctored or on-site final comprehensive examination, and present a final portfolio of rigorous scaffolded work compiled from core courses throughout the program.

3.1. Core Courses

The MA student is required to take 5 core classes:

- MAMC-4000 Anthropological Marine and Coastal Influences I: Historical
- MAMC-4050 Anthropological Marine and Coastal Influences II: Futures
- MAMC-4100 Effective Environmental Communication
- MAMC-4200 Introduction to Marine and Coastal Processes: Essential Principles and Fundamental Concepts
- MAMC-4300 Marine and Coastal Flora and Fauna

Each core course will require a final term paper which will be graded as 20% of the course final grade. After grading, these term papers will be rewritten until the course instructor finds them acceptable to be incorporated into the student’s portfolio.
3.2. Elective Courses

The MA student is required to take 7 electives. These can be either MAMC or CZMT courses. Courses include but are not limited to:

- Archaeological Oceanography: Reefs and Wrecks
- Coastal Policy
- Coastal Zone Interpretation
- Environmental Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems
- Environmental Science
- Fundamental Concepts of Climate Change: Scientific Perspectives
- Fundamental Concepts of Climate Change: Societal Perspectives
- International Integrated Coastal Zone Management
- Marine Protected Areas: Science, Siting and Monitoring
- Ocean and Coastal Law
- Water World Revisited: Exploring Coastal Futurology

3.3 Portfolio

To complete the MA student must successfully complete the 5 core courses and 7 electives, presenting a final portfolio prior to graduation consisting of rigorous integrated papers scaffolded over their completed term of study. Each core course will require a final term paper which will be graded as 20% of the course final grade. After grading, these term papers will be rewritten until the course instructor finds them acceptable to be incorporated into the student’s portfolio. The course instructor will sign-off on the term-paper as acceptable.

The final portfolio consists of the 5 approved core term papers and a summative essay integrating and showing the synthesis of knowledge and skills gained through completion of the core papers will be presented to the Director of Academic Programs upon completion of all coursework. The Director of Academic Programs will insure the summative essay is rewritten until acceptable.

3.3.1 Development of the Essays for the Portfolio

As part of the requirements for each core course, the MA student is required to complete an essay.

3.3.1.1. The goals of the essay are to:

- demonstrate your writing ability (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, formatting);
- demonstrate your ability to coherently summarize one (or several) problem(s);
- demonstrate your ability to do independent library research;
- demonstrate that you understand the broad shape of your subject;
- introduce you to the scientific writing process;
- introduce you to new ideas and provide a portfolio essay for the MA student;
- provide a sound basis for grading;

Choose a topic with your instructor’s approval. Take the writing of the essay very seriously; it is a major part of your course grade.

3.3.1.2. Your essay is a literature review

It is a survey of what has been written in your chosen topic area. It should succinctly review and systematically summarize recent progress in that area. It should allow the reader to understand the topic by discussing the findings presented in (chiefly) recent research papers, and it acts as a guide and reference to further reading in the area. It should include alternate views, if appropriate, so the reader realizes that other ways of looking at your topic exist. It is not an undergraduate book report and is not merely a summary of some references you found. Instead, a review paper synthesizes the results from primary literature papers and other sources to produce a coherent argument about a topic or focused description of a field. It shows some original thought.
3.3.1.3. Your essay must be written in the scientific style of writing

Scientific writing has certain characteristics that distinguish it from journalistic, personal or fictional prose. It must be clear and unambiguous, concise and precise (not repetitive, not irrelevant); it must have no errors of punctuation, grammar or syntax, be free of contractions (e.g., don’t, can’t, isn’t) and popular language (e.g., ‘hassle’ instead of ‘difficulties’) and properly referenced throughout.

Keep your writing as brief as possible. Length is not the key criterion; rather, it is the content. When you edit your work, remove unnecessary words. See how many sentences you can shorten without changing the meaning. If you write more briefly and your work becomes shorter, include more information. Never ‘pad out’ your writing.

3.3.1.4. Specifics of essay structure

- A 15-20 page take-home term paper written in a professional scientific manner.
- 20%, or more, of the final course grade will be based on the essay.
- It must be written with 1½ line spacing in Times New Roman 12-point font.
- It must be following guidelines in the Chicago Manual of Style.

4. Style Guide

The Oceanographic Center uses the Chicago Manual of Style.

Chicago style uses endnotes or author-date style for in-text referencing and a bibliography at the end to indicate those sources that were referenced in the text. All papers should be double-spaced and should have margins of at least one inch on all sides of every page. All pages should be numbered except preliminary pages, including pages of works cited pages. The preferred page numbering choice for the OC is generally bottom center (modified version).

More information can be found in the Oceanographic Center’s library guide.

5. Final Exam, The Assessment of Learning Outcomes (the Rubric Exam)

Prior to graduation all Masters’ students must take a pass/fail test on the learning outcomes of their program (i.e. MB, CZM, MES, BS, MA). Students failing the test will be required to retake it prior to graduation; the test may be repeated multiple times. After finishing all coursework and prior to the oral defense of thesis or capstone the student will take a closed-book written test. Students may schedule the exam online at http://nsuoc.wufoo.com/forms/rubric-schedule-request. Once information is submitted the student will receive a confirmation email with a link to the calendar of available times for the rubric exam.

The questions will concern general knowledge (specifically, the material learned in all 5 CORE courses and 5 of the 7 electives) and will be directed at the learning outcomes of the individual courses.

6. Application for Degree/Conferral

Once the student has turned in the portfolio and it has been accepted by the program office, the student is ready to complete their 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@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 1 for sample).

The last step in the application degree process is to remit payment ($100). Once the information on the Degree Application Request form is completed and submitted online, you will be provided 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 sent to the student via email. Students must return any Oceanographic Center door keys. The student must also make sure all books have been returned to the library. Any incomplete items will result in a delay in conferment of the degree.

Once all of the above has been satisfied, the diploma will be conferred at the end of the month, and will be mailed to the student within 2 months.
Appendix 1. Screen shot of application for degree

Degree/Diploma Application for: Your Name here

Required fields marked with an asterisk (*).

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, ë, 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