

PHYSICAL AND APPLIED SCIENCES, GEOLOGY EMPHASIS

Geology Area of Emphasis

1. Students must pass a qualifying examination during the first eight weeks of their first semester of graduate work. The exam will be administered orally by the Geology faculty and will be coordinated by the student's thesis advisor. Students will be allowed two attempts to pass the qualifying exam. If a student fails to pass the qualifying exam on the first or second attempt, the student must withdraw from the program at the end of their first semester and may not reapply to the program until the following academic year.
2. Following successful completion of the qualifying exam, and prior to the end of the first semester of graduate work, students must submit to the Graduate Studies office a Plan of Study approved by the Geology faculty. The plan must include a minimum of 32 hours, at least 16 of which must be earned in 600 higher level classes. In addition, the curriculum must include at least 12 hours of 500-600 level geology courses. The thesis credit will constitute a maximum of 6 hours.
3. Following approval of the Plan of Study, the student forms a thesis committee with the mutual consent of his/ her advisor. The committee will consist of at least three faculty members with graduate status, at least two of whom are faculty members from the Marshall Geology Department.
4. Following successful passing of the qualifying exam, the student must submit a thesis proposal to his/her committee. The proposal must be approved by the committee no later than the end of the student's second semester of enrollment in the plan.
5. Students will be evaluated by a letter grade in all graduate coursework with the exception of the 6 hours of thesis work, which will be evaluated by a CR/NC grade. No candidate will earn his/her degree unless he/she obtains a "CR" grade for the thesis.
6. Upon completion of his/her thesis work, the student will submit a draft of his/her thesis approved by his/her advisor to the thesis committee. Guidelines for scientific writing can be found on the departmental website.
7. The candidate must orally present and successfully defend his/ her thesis before his/her thesis committee. The oral presentation will be open to the public. The subsequent question-and-answer session by the committee will focus solely on the student's research, and will be closed to the public. Should the candidate not pass his/ her thesis defense, he/she will be allowed two more attempts at defending the thesis. Conference or meeting presentations will not substitute for the oral defense.
8. The student must submit a final copy of his/her thesis with all revisions requested by the committee members to the committee for final approval.
9. Normal time for completion of the M.S. degree is 2.5 years. A student must complete all requirements for graduation within five calendar years from the date of successful completion of his/her qualifying exam. Otherwise, his/her thesis hours will no longer count toward graduation.
10. A student who fails to satisfy criterion 9 above may petition his/her thesis committee explaining the circumstances behind this delay.