ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES

2016-2017
Graduate Student Handbook
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Aggie Code of Honor

For many years Aggies have followed a Code of Honor, which is stated in this very simple verse:

*An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.*

The Aggie Code of Honor is an effort to unify the aims of all Texas A&M men and women toward a high code of ethics and personal dignity. For most, living under this code will be no problem, as the Honor System Rules ([http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/Rules-and-Procedures/Rules/Honor-System-Rules](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/Rules-and-Procedures/Rules/Honor-System-Rules)) ask nothing of a person that is beyond reason. It only calls for honesty and integrity, characteristics that Aggies have always exemplified.

The Aggie Code of Honor functions as a symbol to all Aggies, promoting understanding and loyalty to truth and confidence in each other.
Atmospheric Sciences Mission

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences is dedicated to advancing our scientific understanding of the atmosphere and imparting that knowledge for the benefit of society.

Our most fundamental mission is to help students at all levels, from undergraduate to postdoctoral, acquire and develop scientific knowledge, critical thinking skills, the ability to continue to learn and the potential to contribute to society. We also serve students in other disciplines through survey courses, which give students a better understanding of nature and of scientific methods, and through specialized courses for students in fields that require applied knowledge of meteorology.

Our research efforts serve two purposes: to expand the frontiers of atmospheric science and to give students experience and training in conducting research. The knowledge gained from research may be fundamental or applicable to a particular societal need. Research results are communicated through journals or other appropriate media to other scientists and the public. As a department, we seek to maintain the highest standards of excellence in the research we perform.

We have a duty to contribute to society through our educational and research activities. This public service includes administrative and educational efforts both inside and outside the university, such as assisting in university governance, developing and disseminating teaching materials or improving pre-college education, and research-related efforts, such as serving on committees of scientific societies, providing advice to state and federal governments, acting as reviewers and editors, organizing meetings and assisting industry. Research and service activities should not be allowed to adversely affect our educational mission, but should be encouraged where they improve the quality of our teaching and of the scientists we train. We are committed to helping Texas A&M University and the State of Texas carry out their broader missions.
General Information

Degrees Offered

Graduate work in atmospheric sciences is offered at both the Master of Science (M.S.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) levels. The M.S. level program has a Thesis and a Non-thesis option. Programs are designed to provide the student with an understanding of the fundamentals of atmospheric sciences and related disciplines, and in-depth knowledge of a particular area. Research investigations comprise a significant part of each program.

Admission Requirements

A Bachelor’s degree is a prerequisite to apply to the Atmospheric Sciences graduate program, but a prior M.S. degree is not a prerequisite to apply as a Ph.D. student. Most applicants have a degree in one of the following disciplines: meteorology/atmospheric sciences, physics, chemistry, mathematics or engineering. Applicants from other disciplines may need additional preparatory work in college-level mathematics, physics, or chemistry.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

There is no minimum GPA to be considered as an applicant. However, most incoming students have GPAs well above 3.00.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

There is no minimum GRE score requirement to apply or to be admitted. As a reference point, most incoming students have a Quantitative GRE score in the upper 75th percentile.

Letters of recommendation

Three letters of recommendation are required. The recommendation letters are important: choose recommenders who can adequately and fairly assess the student's potential, both as a student and a researcher.

English Language Proficiency (University Requirement)

An international graduate student whose native language is not English must fulfill an English proficiency requirement through either English Proficiency Verification or English Language Certification. The most common forms of fulfilling this requirement are a TOEFL score of at least 80, a IELTS score of at least 6.0, a GRE Verbal Reasoning score of at least 146, a Bachelor’s degree following four years of study at an accredited U.S. institution (for a complete list, see [http://ogaps.tamu.edu/English-Language-Proficiency-Requirements](http://ogaps.tamu.edu/English-Language-Proficiency-Requirements)). Following guidance from the Department of Homeland Security, International Student Services will not issue an I-20 form to an international applicant who do not satisfy this requirement.

Most incoming international students have a score much higher than the University required minimum. As a reference point, a typical incoming student has a TOEFL score higher than 100.

Identifying a Faculty Advisor

Students are strongly encouraged to browse the profiles of our department faculty to find a potential faculty member to help support and guide them through their research. Students should initially contact faculty members via email. A faculty member enthusiastic about working with you may be able to offer you a Graduate Assistantship for Research (GAR): see the section on “Funding Opportunities” below. Faculty profiles can be found on the Atmospheric Sciences webpage: [http://atmo.tamu.edu/faculty](http://atmo.tamu.edu/faculty).
Pursuing a Degree

The following is a summary of the University, College, and Department level degree requirements for ATMO students. All students are expected to meet the departmental deadlines and OGAPS deadlines to insure successful completion of degree requirements and graduation. Students must be continuously registered until all degree requirements have been met.

Grade Point Ratio (GPR) Requirements (University Requirements)
All graduate students have two GPRs and both must be at least 3.0 to be in good standing, to conduct any type of exam, and to graduate. Course levels included in the GPRs are 300, 400, 600, and 900. Courses NOT included in the GPRs are transfer courses, 100-200 level courses, and courses that involve grades of W-drop (W), Satisfactory (S), Unsatisfactory (U), and Q-drop (Q).

• Degree Plan GPR – includes all courses listed on the degree plan that were completed at TAMU.
• Cumulative GPR – includes all courses completed at TAMU that are, or could be, listed on the degree plan.

ATMO Graduate Courses

Core Courses
The six core courses of the ATMO graduate program are ATMO 601, 602, 606, 611, 612 and 613. They cover three main fields of the atmospheric sciences:
  • Dynamical meteorology (ATMO 601 and 611).
  • Physical meteorology (ATMO 602 and 612).
  • Atmospheric chemistry (ATMO 606 and 613).

ATMO 681 (Weekly Graduate Seminar)
Attendance at the department seminars is mandatory, regardless of whether or not a student is registered in ATMO 681. Those who are registered in ATMO 681 will typically have additional assignments related to the seminars. The instructor of record in ATMO 681 will make these assignments.

Master’s Students

Course Requirements
All Master’s students are required to submit a degree plan with at least 32 hours of coursework, of which 23 hours must be formal (i.e., non-research based) coursework. The minimum course requirements are
  • 9 hours of ATMO core courses,
  • 6 hours of additional ATMO courses (may be core courses),
  • 3 hours of out-of-department courses,
  • 1 or 2 hours of ATMO 681 (seminar),
  • 4 or 3 additional hours of formal coursework, and
  • ATMO 691 (research hours)

If the student might later pursue a Ph.D. degree, the degree plan should explicitly specify the semesters for which ATMO 691 should be applied to the Master’s degree, so that other ATMO 691 credit hours may be applied to the Ph.D. degree plan.
Master's students will also be required to complete a residence requirement. Thesis Option Master’s students are also required to submit a research proposal, complete their final defense as well as submit a Thesis.

Master’s students must have at least three committee members. The chair must be from the Department of Atmospheric Sciences and one outside member (a member from another department) is required.

**Timeline**

1. **Before registration for each semester:** The student should meet with the departmental graduate advisor and his or her faculty advisor to plan course of study for upcoming semester.
2. **Before the start of the student's third regular semester (College of Geosciences deadline) or at least 90 days prior to the student's final defense, whichever comes first:** The student should establish an advisory committee in consultation with his or her faculty advisor and submit a degree plan to OGAPS at https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu/. The degree plan has to be approved electronically by the departmental graduate advisor, the advisory committee, the chair of the graduate committee and OGAPS.
3. **Before or during final semester:** During one semester, or 2 consecutive 5-week summer terms, the student must complete 9 hours of resident credit (residence requirement).
4. **Before the student's final semester:** The student should check the OGAPS calendars http://ogs.tamu.edu/calendars/ for deadlines.
5. **At least one or two months before planned final exam date:** The student should establish a date, time, and location for the final examination to ensure availability of the advisory committee members. These arrangements may be changed if the time of anticipated thesis completion changes.
6. **Well before submitting request to schedule final examination:** The student should check to be sure that all requirements and course work are complete.
7. **No later than 20 working days prior to submitting the request and announcement of final examination:** The student should submit a thesis research proposal by the deadline stated in the OGAPS calendar. Ideally, the student should submit the research proposal much earlier, as soon as possible after the scope of the student's thesis work is determined. The proposal has to be approved by the advisory committee, department head, and OGAPS.
8. **At least 10 working days before final exam date:** The student should submit request for permission to schedule final examination to OGAPS. The exam date has to be approved by the advisory committee, department head, and OGAPS.
9. **At least 7 days prior to the final examination (or earlier, if an advisory committee member requests):** The student should distribute the complete thesis draft to the members of the advisory committee. Prior to this, the thesis will typically have undergone several editing cycles with the student’s advisor and should be in what both student and advisor consider to be near-final form.
10. **Final exam.**
11. **After the final exam:** The student should allow several weeks after the final examination for making any necessary changes to the thesis and obtain its final approval of the advisory committee.
12. **After final approval of the thesis by the advisory committee:** The students should upload approved PDF file of the completed thesis to http://thesis.tamu.edu and submit signed approval page and copyright availability form to the Thesis Office. The uploaded thesis has to be approved by the chair of the advisory committee and the Thesis Office.
13. **After receiving correction requests (if any) from the Thesis Office:** After the student’s draft has been reviewed, the student will be contacted by the Thesis Office, and will be informed of any corrections that need to be made. Students will be responsible for submitting their corrections by the deadlines on the OGAPS calendar for the respective
semester in which they plan to graduate.

14. **By the deadline specified in the OGAPS calendar:** The student should apply for a degree and pay the graduation fee.

**Doctoral Students**

**Course Requirements**

All Doctoral students that have a Master’s degree are required to submit a degree plan with **at least 64 hours of coursework** and all students that do not have a Master’s degree are required to submit a degree plan with **at least 96 hours of coursework**. The minimum course requirements are

- 12 hours of core courses (both courses in the student’s primary field of interest and at least one course in each of the other two fields),
- 12 hours of additional ATMO courses (may be core courses),
- 6 hours of out-of-department courses,
- 2 hours of ATMO 681 (seminar) and
- ATMO 691 (research).

Students should identify the primary field of their interest in consultation with their advisor. Students may substitute other coursework for all or part of the core course requirement if those core courses have already been applied toward their Master’s degree.

Doctoral students will also be required to meet a residence requirement, successfully complete a qualifying exam and a preliminary exam, submit a research proposal, be admitted to doctoral candidacy, complete their final defense, as well as submit a Dissertation.

**Credit Hours Earned Before the Completion of Master’s Degree**

A doctoral student who first obtained an ATMO Master’s degree can include the following types of credit hours earned before the completion of his or her Master’s degree:

- Credit hours for formal course work, if those credit hours were not included in his or her Master’s degree plan.
- Research (ATMO 691) credit hours, if his or her Master’s degree plan listed specific semesters for ATMO 691 to be credited to the Master’s degree and the research credit hours to be applied to the Ph.D. were not taken in any of those semesters.

Ph.D. students must have at least three committee members. The chair must be from the Department of Atmospheric Sciences and one outside member (a member from another department) is required.

**Timeline**

1. **Before each semester registration:** The student should meet with the departmental graduate advisor and his or her faculty advisor to plan course of study for upcoming semester.
2. **Before the start of the student’s fourth regular semester (College of Geosciences deadline) or at least 90 days prior to the student’s final defense, whichever comes first:** The student should establish an advisory committee in consultation with his or her faculty advisor and submit a degree plan to OGAPS at [https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu/](https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu/). The degree plan has to be approved electronically by the departmental graduate advisor, the advisory committee, the chair of the graduate committee and OGAPS.
3. **Within three years after starting graduate studies:** Pass departmental Ph.D. Qualifying
Exam (see below for details on Qualifying Exam)

4. **Before Preliminary Exam:** Complete course work on degree plan
5. **Preliminary Exam**
6. **10 working days after Preliminary Exam date and at least 14 weeks prior to the Final Exam date:** OGAPS must receive checklist and the report of the Preliminary Exam
7. **Before submitting request to schedule final oral examination:** The student must complete the residence requirement: if entering with a baccalaureate degree, one year plus one semester must be spent in resident study; if entering with a Master’s degree one year must be spent in resident study. One year may include two adjacent long semesters or one long semester and one adjacent 10-week summer term of 9 hours each.
8. **Before the student’s final semester:** The student should check the OGAPS calendars [http://ogs.tamu.edu/calendars/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/calendars/) for deadlines.
9. **At least one or two months before planned final exam date:** The student should establish a date, time, and location for the final examination to ensure availability of the advisory committee members. These arrangements may be changed if the time of anticipated thesis completion changes.
10. **Well before submitting request to schedule final examination:** The student should check to be sure that all requirements and course work are complete.
11. **No later than 20 working days prior to submitting the request and announcement of final examination:** The student should submit a thesis research proposal by the deadline stated in the OGAPS calendar. Ideally, the student should submit the research proposal much earlier, as soon as possible after the scope of the student's thesis work is determined. The proposal has to be approved by the advisory committee, department head, and OGAPS.
12. **At least 10 working days before final exam date:** The student should submit request for permission to schedule final examination to OGAPS. The exam date has to be approved by the advisory committee, department head, and OGAPS.
13. **At least 7 days prior to the final examination (or earlier, if an advisory committee member requests):** The student should distribute the complete thesis draft to the members of the advisory committee. Prior to this, the thesis will typically have undergone several editing cycles with the student’s advisor and should be in what both student and advisor consider to be near-final form.
14. **Final exam.**
15. **After the final exam:** The student should allow several weeks after the final examination for making any necessary changes to the thesis and obtain its final approval of the advisory committee.
16. **After final approval of the thesis by the advisory committee:** The students should upload approved PDF file of the completed thesis to [http://thesis.tamu.edu](http://thesis.tamu.edu) and submit signed approval page and copyright availability form to the Thesis Office. The uploaded thesis has to be approved by the chair of the advisory committee and the Thesis Office.
17. **After receiving correction requests (if any) from the Thesis Office:** After the student’s draft has been reviewed, the student will be contacted by the Thesis Office, and will be informed of any corrections that need to be made. Students will be responsible for submitting their corrections by the deadlines on the OGAPS calendar for the respective semester in which they plan to graduate.
18. **By the deadline specified in the OGAPS calendar:** The student should apply for a degree and pay the graduation fee.

**Ph.D. Qualifying Exam (Departmental Requirement)**
Evaluating the quality of the Ph.D. students is considered one of the Department's most important academic obligations. The qualifying exam is a departmental requirement for PhD students, for
which the objectives are: (1) to restrict our Ph.D. program to students who are likely to be successful in their coursework and research, (2) to establish a minimum foundational knowledge and integrative analysis requirement for Ph.D. students that distributes responsibility broadly among the faculty, and (3) to require students to demonstrate an ability to carry out bibliographical research. The qualifying exam results, along with grades in courses, are used to decide who should be allowed to continue their studies in the Ph.D. program.

The format of the Qualifying Exam of the 2016/2017 Academic Year is new. Students who have passed the old-format written part of the exam prior to fall 2016 will take the “old-format” oral part of the exam. All other students will take the new-format exam.

**Exam Format**
The exam is offered once a year, at the end of the spring term. For students who enroll in the fall, the exam must be completed within 36 months after graduate study begins. Students who begin their study during the summer are considered to have enrolled in fall. For students who enroll in the spring semester, the exam must be completed within 32 months. This requirement also applies to Master’s students who later decide to pursue a Ph.D.

The exam consists of a written and an oral part. Both parts cover the same three fields as the core courses: dynamical meteorology, physical meteorology and atmospheric chemistry.

Only students who satisfy the following requirements are eligible to take the exam:

- The student satisfies the 36 (32) months time limit requirement.
- The student has not failed the exam more than once before.
- The student completed the minimum required core course work of 12 hours.
- The student has a GPR of 3.1 or higher over all core courses taken.
- The student has a cumulative GPR of 3.0 or higher.

Students who enrolled before fall 2016 are exempt of the last three requirements. The Chair of the Qualifying Exam Committee verifies the eligibility of the students to take the exam.

**Written Part**
The written exam has both a short-answer and long-answer section, composed of questions from each three fields. The Qualifying Exam Committee selects the problems of both sections from a pool of problems submitted by the ATMO faculty. Students will take the short- and long-answer sections in two 3-hour sessions on two different days, which will typically take place two days apart.

Each problem is graded independently by two faculty members, who are given no information about the students’ identity. They score the answers on a scale of 0-10, with 0 being without merit and 10 being excellent. The final score for a problem is the average of the two scores given by each grader. Overall scores are computed for both the short-answer and long-answer sections of the written part. Each of these two overall scores will have a weight of 1/3 in the calculation of the cumulative Qualifying Exam score.

**Oral Part**
The Qualifying Exam Committee selects a small number of papers in each three fields from a list of papers suggested by the Qualifying Exam Committee. Students choose a paper from this list and have a short period of time (about 1 week) to prepare an oral presentation based on the paper. The oral presentation should be no more than 30 minutes, after which examiners will ask questions. The entire exam should not exceed 90 minutes.

The purpose of the oral presentation is to give oral demonstration of the ability to understand key
scientific concepts and arguments in the chosen paper. Only figures/tables from the paper and equations can be presented as Powerpoint slides. No additional text should be included in the slides. These restrictions are intended to help the students to focus attention on trying to understand the paper during the week. They also imply that the students will not be judged on the quality of their presentation graphics. If students want to talk about material from textbooks or other papers, they can simply “talk about it”, or draw/write on the white board.

The oral exam will focus narrowly on the student’s understanding of the material presented in the paper, and any relevant material covered in the textbooks and core courses. The student is not be expected to “back trace” the citations and read all of the important previous papers on the topic in the short timespan of a week, although some of them may choose to do so in order to better understand the chosen paper itself. The student will be asked questions that are directly related to core topics discussed in the paper. It is assumed that the student has reviewed these topics using core course material when reading the paper.

The examining committee is not informed of the students’ score in the written exam.

Composition of the Oral Exam Committee:
- Each student’s committee will have the same number of members (three or more).
- Every student’s committee will be chaired by the same faculty member, the Chair of the Oral Exam Committee.
- The Department Head will appoint the additional members of the Committee before the exam.
- The student’s faculty adviser cannot be a member of the Committee.

Oral Exam Score:
The evaluation of the performance of a student is based on a rubric. The rubric items are the following:
- Was the student able to explain the scientific question addressed by the paper, as described in the introductory section of the paper?
- Was the student able to explain the methodology used to address the scientific question, as described in the paper?
- Was the student able to explain the main conclusions of the paper?
- Did the student display an understanding of the concepts discussed in the paper that were covered in the core courses taken by the student, by satisfactorily answering questions related to these concepts?

The students are evaluated on the intellectual content of their presentation and answers, not on their fluency in English or quality of their PowerPoint presentation.

Each committee member scores the student’s performance on each rubric item on a scale of 0-10, with 0 being very poor and 10 being very good. An un-weighted average of all the rubric items for all committee members will be computed to yield an overall oral exam score in the range of 0-10. This score will have a weight of 1/3 in the calculation of the cumulative Qualifying Exam score.

Decision on Passing the Qualifying Exam
The Qualifying Exam Committee calculates the cumulative Qualifying Exam score for each student, examines the scores in light of the level of difficulty of the various exam components, and makes a recommendation to the full faculty as to which students have passed the exam. The full faculty then discusses the exam and its outcome, and determines by simple majority vote which students have passed the exam. The identity of a student will be revealed before the vote only if the student’s score falls into a range between those obviously passing and those obviously failing. In such cases, faculty may also take into account the student’s performance in the different courses and other indicators of future success.
It is the responsibility of the student's faculty adviser to inform the student of the outcome of the exam, as soon as possible after the meeting of the full faculty. The faculty advisor should also discuss the options of a student who fails the exam. A student who fails the exam for a second time can no longer pursue a Ph.D. degree in the Atmospheric Sciences Department. The adviser of such a student will usually suggest a path to graduation with a Master's degree. Students also have the option to transfer to another Ph.D. program.

Preliminary Exam (University Requirement)
A preliminary examination is required of all doctoral students of the University. In the ATMO doctoral program, the preliminary exam is an oral exam. Any preliminary exam is given no earlier than a date when the student is within approximately six credit hours of completion of the formal course work (i.e., all course work on the degree plan except 681, 684, 690, 691, and 692 courses). It is recommended that the preliminary examination be completed no later than the end of the semester following the completion of the formal course work on the degree plan.

The scope of the preliminary exam may be any or all of the student's coursework on their degree plan. Typically in ATMO, the student submits a dissertation proposal to their committee prior to the preliminary exam, and the questions for the preliminary exam focus on the proposal and on the background knowledge necessary to successfully carry out the proposed work.

Prior to scheduling the preliminary examination with the other committee members, the committee chair will review with the student the eligibility criteria, using the Preliminary Examination Checklist to ensure that the student is eligible for the examination. The following list of eligibility requirements applies:

- Student is registered for the semester or 5-week term during which any portion of the preliminary examination may fall. If the entire examination falls between semesters, the student must be registered for the semester immediately preceding the exam.

- An approvable degree plan was submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies at least 90 days prior to the first written examination.

- Student's cumulative GPR is at least 3.00.

- Student's degree plan GPR is at least 3.00.

- All English language proficiency requirements have been satisfied (if applicable).

- All committee members have agreed to attend the examination or have found a substitute. Only one substitute is allowed, and it cannot be for the committee chair.

- At the end of the semester in which the exam is given, there are no more than 6 hours of course work remaining on the degree plan (except 681, 684, 690, 691, and 692). The head of the student's department has the authority to approve a waiver of this criterion.

The chair will report the results of the examination using the Report of Preliminary Examination form, with the signatures of all committee members, and the Preliminary Examination Checklist. These forms must be submitted to OGAPS within 10 working days of the scheduled oral examination date, and at least 14 weeks prior to the date of the final examination. If a student fails the preliminary examination, there is no obligation for a re-examination. At their discretion, the advisory committee and OGAPS may allow re-examination when adequate time.
has passed to allow the student to address inadequacies emerging from the first examination (normally six months). It is highly recommended that a written summary of the deficiencies noted on the failed preliminary exam, along with recommendations for further study, be provided to the student within one week of the first examination.

Examination schedules must be arranged so that all members of Advisory Committee can be present for the preliminary exam. Substitutions should be requested only as an absolute necessity. Unless emergency circumstances exist, arrangements for a substitution should be made by the individual member of the Advisory Committee who is to be absent—not by the student involved, the Chair of the Advisory Committee, nor the Head of the student’s major department. If a member must be absent from any scheduled examination, he or she should arrange with a Member of the Graduate Faculty from his or her department to sit at the examination as a substitute and should notify the Committee Chair. **No substitutions for the Chair will be approved.** If a Chair cannot attend a scheduled examination, or if two (or more) members of an Advisory Committee must be absent, the examination must be rescheduled.

A positive vote by all members of the graduate committee, with at most one dissention, is required to pass a student on his/her exam. A department can have a stricter requirement for the number of positive votes required provided there is consistency within all degree programs within a department. The Department of Atmospheric Sciences has no such stricter requirement.

*After passing the required preliminary examination for the doctoral degree, the student must complete all remaining requirements within four calendar years.* Otherwise, the student will be required to repeat the preliminary examination. With the approval of the advisory committee and department head or chair of the interdisciplinary program, the student may request an extension of the four years’ time limit with the submission of a Petition for Extension of Time Limits to OGAPS. Report of the Preliminary Exam Forms and Checklist can be found through the following link: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Preliminary-Exam-Checklist-Report1.pdf](http://ogs.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Preliminary-Exam-Checklist-Report1.pdf)

**Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

To be admitted to candidacy for a doctoral degree, a student must have: (1) completed all formal coursework on the degree plan with the exception of any remaining 681, 684, 690 and 691, (2) a 3.0 Graduate GPR and a Degree Plan GPR of at least 3.0 with no grade lower than C in any course on the degree plan, (3) passed the qualifying examination, (4) passed the preliminary examination, (5) submitted an approved dissertation proposal, and (6) met the residence requirements. The final examination will not be authorized for any doctoral student who has not been admitted to candidacy.

**Final Exam**

To be eligible to take a final exam, students must possess at least a 3.00 GPR for courses on the degree plan and for all courses completed at Texas A&M, which are eligible to be applied to the degree plan, and there must be no unresolved grades of D, F, or U for any course listed on the degree plan. They must also have completed or be currently registered for all of the courses listed on their degree plan, and have met all English language requirements. In addition, doctoral students must be formally admitted to candidacy before a final exam can be requested.

A Request and Announcement of the Final Examination must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies a minimum of 10 business days in advance of the scheduled date of the exam. OGAPS must be notified in writing of any cancellation or change to the scheduled examination date.

**Substitutions at the Final Defense**
Examination schedules must be arranged so that all members of Advisory Committee can be present for the Final Examination. Substitutions should be requested only as an absolute necessity. Unless emergency circumstances exist, arrangements for a substitution should be made by the individual member of the Advisory Committee who is to be absent—not by the student involved, the Chair of the Advisory Committee, nor the Head of the student’s major department. If a member must be absent from any scheduled examination, he or she should arrange with a Member of the Graduate Faculty from his or her department to sit at the examination as a substitute and should notify the Committee Chair. **No substitutions for the Chair will be approved.** If a Chair cannot attend a scheduled examination, or if two (or more) members of an Advisory Committee must be absent, the examination must be rescheduled.

**Forms and Signatures**
Final examination results must be submitted with original signatures of the committee members present at the examination (including any substitutes). A positive vote by all members of the graduate committee, with at most one dissent, is required to pass a student on his/her final exam. Examinations which are not completed and reported to OGAPS within 10 business days of the scheduled examination date will be recorded as failures. A Master’s student may be given only one opportunity to repeat the final examination and that must be within a time period that does not extend beyond the end of the next regular semester. A doctoral student is allowed only one opportunity to take the final exam. Final examinations must be passed by the deadlines announced each semester or summer term by OGAPS in order for the student to graduate in that semester.

**Timeline for Submittal and Graduation**
Thesis-option and Doctoral students have one year from successfully completing the final examination to clear the Thesis Office and graduate. Otherwise, the student will be required to repeat the final examination. With the approval of the advisory committee and department head or chair of the interdisciplinary program, the student may request an extension of the one-year time limit with the submission of a Petition for Extension of Time Limits to OGAPS.

**Thesis Office & Required Forms**
The Thesis Office reviews each electronic Thesis, Dissertation and Record of Study (ETD) for uniformity, consistency, and adherence to University guidelines for quality. In addition, the office also provides a wide range of preparation support and coordinates the timely release of the ETD for public access. The Thesis Office is conveniently located on the 6th floor of the Sterling Evans library in room 612.

**Information Seminars**
Each semester the Thesis Office hosts an Information Seminar, designed to help students plan effectively for their thesis/dissertation. This seminar is highly recommended for graduate students expecting to graduate in the current academic year, and their graduate advisors. During the seminar attendees have an opportunity to learn essential requirements and guidelines for preparing a thesis/dissertation, obtain information about OGAPS deadlines, copyright essentials, The University Writing Center Thesis/Dissertation writing services for graduate students, choosing and using citation management software, and research compliance. For those unable to attend in person, the seminar is streamed live via the Internet and archived for later viewing.

**Pre-Submittal Conference**
To see a list of upcoming face-to-face pre-submittal conferences, and to register, view the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies Event Registration and Management System through the link: [https://academicevents.tamu.edu/ogs/](https://academicevents.tamu.edu/ogs/)

**Online Pre-Submittal Conference**
This online training guide is designed to provide early and specific guidance on the preparation of a thesis/dissertation/record of study for Texas A&M University’s Thesis Office. It is divided into
separate sections to enable students to view some or all of the sections at their convenience and as many times as they deem necessary. This online pre-submittal conference is meant to serve as a supplement to, not a replacement for, the in person pre-submittal conference and the Thesis Manual. If possible, we encourage all students to schedule an in person pre-submittal conference around the date of their defense.

For more information on the online pre-submittal conference, please visit the following link: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/workshops-and-trainings/etd-online-pre-submittal-conference/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/workshops-and-trainings/etd-online-pre-submittal-conference/)

**Thesis Forms and Signatures**

The two forms that are to be submitted to the Thesis Office are the Written Thesis Approval Form (M.A. & M.S. Students), Written Dissertation Form (Ph.D. Students), and the Copyright and Availability Form (All Students). The Written Thesis/Written Dissertation Approval Forms are to be signed by the students’ entire advisory committee and their department head. The department heads signature must be original. If the students department is not able to sign the form, an authorized signer from the students’ home department may sign on their behalf. All other signatures from the other committee members must be the original or scanned signature of that person.

The Copyright and Availability Form is a required form for both Masters and Doctoral students. This form is to be signed by the student, and the student’s committee chair. The student’s signature may be a scanned copy, but the chair’s signature must be original.

**Submitting your Documents**

All Thesis office forms must be submitted either in person or through campus mail by the specified dates on the OGAPS calendar for the respective semester in which the student plans to graduate. A draft of the students Thesis or Dissertation in final form will also be due on the same date by 5 p.m. Students must submit their Thesis or Dissertation as a PDF copy online at [http://thesis.tamu.edu](http://thesis.tamu.edu). After the students draft has been reviewed, the student will be contacted by the Thesis Office, and will be informed of any corrections that need to be made. Students will be responsible for submitting their corrections by the deadlines on the OGAPS calendar for the respective semester in which they plan to graduate. Please be aware that students must have defended their Thesis or Dissertation before any Thesis forms of PDF copies of their document may be submitted. Students must be registered until they clear the thesis office.

**Departmental Exit-Survey**

The department of Atmospheric Sciences has a six-question exit survey that must be completed by all students and turned into the graduate advisor prior to receiving the department heads signature/approval on the Approval of Written Thesis /Dissertation Form.

**Preparing to Graduate**

Graduate students planning to graduate at the end of the current semester may file applications for degrees online through their HOWDY portal. This online application system will be accessible 24 hours a day, every day, until 11:59pm on the 60th class day. After that time, students must apply for graduation in the Office of the Registrar.

The application for degree requires payment of the $47.50 diploma fee.

Students who are permitted to apply after the initial deadline will be charged an additional $50 late application fee per degree. Late applicants may not receive their diplomas on graduation day due to the length of time needed for printing. Arrangements will be made for these diplomas to be picked up or mailed.

The Office of the Registrar at (979) 845-1089 also handles orders for copies of diplomas awarded in the past.
Graduation regalia and announcements can be ordered online at [http://graduation.tamu.edu](http://graduation.tamu.edu). For more information and/or assistance in ordering regalia and announcements please contact Barnes and Noble at Texas A&M University at 979-458-8751.

**International Students and Graduation/Departure**

There are certain requirements & obligations that students holding F-1 and J-1 visas must meet prior to and after graduation. These requirements and obligations vary from student to student and are handled on a case-by-cases basis. For more information, please visit [http://iss.tamu.edu](http://iss.tamu.edu) or call 979-845-1824.

### Being a Student

#### Graduate Student Classification

Each student has a classification, which indicates the type of degree program in which the student is enrolled, and reflects the student's progress within that program. This classification determines the type of credit hours for which the student is eligible to register for. The classifications are the following (see [http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/registration-academic-status/](http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/registration-academic-status/) for further details):

**G6 Post-baccalaureate Non-Degree**

Post-baccalaureate non-degree classification is intended for a student with a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education not actively pursuing a graduate degree. Post-baccalaureate non-degree status normally is not available to an international student.

**G7 Graduate, Master's**

G7 classification denotes admission to a master’s level program of study or admission to a doctoral program of a student who has not yet completed a master’s degree or 30 hours of eligible coursework taken at Texas A&M.

**G8 Graduate, Doctoral**

G8 classification denotes admission to a doctoral level program of study.

**G9 Graduate, Master’s/Doctoral Admitted**

G9 classification denotes admission to graduate study but signifies documents must be completed before a student is allowed to file a degree plan. When the required documents have been received, the student’s classification will be changed. Approval of the Associate Provost of Graduate and Professional Studies is required to change a student from G9 classification to the appropriate classification (i.e., G7 or G8).

### Registration

#### Full-Time Students

A graduate student (domestic or international) is considered full-time, if he or she is registered for a minimum of

- 9 semester credit hour during a fall or spring semester
- 6 semester credit hour during a summer semester
Maximum Schedule
A graduate student may register for a maximum of 15 hours in a fall or spring semester and 10 hours in the summer semester. The Dean’s office can approve a student for up to 18 hours in a fall or spring semester and 15 hours in the summer semester. In ATMO, the student’s faculty advisor has to approve registration for a more than the full-time load.

International Students
A student with F1 or J1 status is required to be enrolled full-time in fall and spring semesters. A summer semester is a vacation period unless it is the student’s first or last semester, because in that case the student is required to enroll full-time. In order for the student to be enrolled less than full-time, the student must receive written authorization from International Student Services (see Reduced Course Load below).

Continuous Registration
Students in graduate degree programs requiring a thesis, dissertation, internship, or record of study, who have completed all graded course work on the degree plan are required to be in continuous registration for Fall and Spring semesters until all requirements for the degree have been completed. Non-thesis students must maintain continuous enrollment until all degree plan courses are completed, but are not held to the continuous registration requirement after that unless the department or college has a requirement to do so. The minimal requirement to maintain continuous enrollment can be satisfied by registering for 1 credit hour. The continuous registration requirement may be satisfied by registering In Absentia or In Residence. International students should check with International Student Services for the minimum hours they must be enrolled in for visa purposes. Students on assistantships and many fellowships must maintain full-time enrollment.

Adding and Dropping Courses
Students may drop and add courses via web registration through the 5th class day of a fall or spring semester, or through the 4th class day of a summer term. After the open drop/add period, students must obtain approval from their academic dean to drop or add courses. Students who need to drop or add a course after the open drop/add period should contact their academic dean’s office for information on how to submit their request. In most cases students who need to drop a class will need to complete a Q-Drop Request form, which is then processed in the academic dean’s office or in the student’s major department. Other types of drop requests and all requests to add a course must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar for processing. Students should be aware that penalty fees are assessed for registering after the first day of class. Additional penalties will be assessed for registering or adding courses after the official census date for the term (12th class day of a fall or spring semester, 4th class day of a summer term).

For additional information about a change in schedule, see Section 1.16 of the Texas A&M University Student Rules.

A student who does not comply with the continuous registration requirement will be blocked from registration. He/she will be allowed to register only after receiving a favorable recommendation from a departmental review committee (not the student’s advisory committee), the endorsement of the department head or Chair of the Intercollegiate Program, and the approval of the Office of Graduate Studies.
Registering In Absentia
To qualify for In Absentia registration, a student must not have access to or use facilities or properties belonging to or under the jurisdiction of The Texas A&M University System at any time during the semester or summer term for which he or she is enrolled. A student who qualifies for In Absentia registration is required to register each subsequent fall and spring semester for a minimum of one and maximum of four credit hours of 691, 684, 685 or 692. Departments and colleges may have additional or higher requirements.

An international student may have additional registration requirements depending on his/her visa status. He/she should consult with the International Student Services Web site or an International Student Services advisor to obtain current information on these requirements.

Reduced Course Load (International Students Only)
- An F-1 visa holder who wishes to drop below full-time enrollment should complete this form: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/wp-content/themes/ogs-genesis/student-resources/F-1_Reduced_Course_Load.pdf](http://ogs.tamu.edu/wp-content/themes/ogs-genesis/student-resources/F-1_Reduced_Course_Load.pdf). The authorized exceptions to the full course of study requirement and the rules for reduced course load are included on the ISS website: [http://iss.tamu.edu](http://iss.tamu.edu)
- A J-1 visa holder who wishes to drop below full-time enrollment should complete this form: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/wp-content/themes/ogs-genesis/student-resources/J-1_Reduced_Course_Load.pdf](http://ogs.tamu.edu/wp-content/themes/ogs-genesis/student-resources/J-1_Reduced_Course_Load.pdf). The authorized exceptions to the full course of study requirement and the rules for reduced course load are included in the ISS website.

Visiting Classes (Auditing)
Please refer to Texas A&M University Student Rule 2.1 for information regarding visiting (auditing) classes.

Leave of Absence
Under unusual circumstances, a student may petition for a leave of absence. The entire advisory committee, if formed, and head of the department or Chair of the Intercollegiate Program, if appropriate, must approve the petition (Petition for Waivers and Exceptions) and submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies. If the Dean of Graduate Studies approves the petition, the registration requirement will be set aside during the period of leave. Leaves will be granted only under conditions that require the suspension of all activities associated with pursuing the degree. For certain types of approved leave, such as medical, the time period of leave will stop with the leave and begin when the student returns to the program. Other types of leave may not stop the time limit for the degree. A student should refer to the sections on Time Limits for masters and doctoral programs. A leave of absence is granted for one year. In case of extenuating circumstances, the leave of absence can be extended by the student’s committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies. A student who returns to the University after an approved leave of absence will not be required to submit an application for readmission to the Office of Graduate Admission if they return within one academic year. An international student should visit with an International Student Services advisor to find out how a Leave of Absence may impact his/her stay in or his/her re-entry into the U.S.

Scholastic Requirements
Unless otherwise stated, students in graduate degree programs and post-baccalaureate non-degree students (G6 classification) must maintain a 3.00 Cumulative GPR. Degree-seeking students also must maintain a Degree Plan GPR of at least 3.00. Departments and colleges may establish higher GPR requirements for their students in graduate degree programs and for post-
baccalaureate non-degree students (G6 classification). The Department of Atmospheric Sciences has no such requirements.

A graduate student will not receive graduate degree credit for undergraduate courses taken on a satisfactory / unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. A graduate student may not receive grades other than satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) in graduate courses bearing the numbers 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 693, and 695 (except for ALEC 695, BUAD 693, AGEC 695, GEOG 695, and IBUS 692). Any other graduate course taken on an S/U basis may not be used on a graduate degree plan (except CHEM 686 and CHEM 697). Graduate courses not on the degree plan may be taken on an S/U basis.

Repeat Courses and Grade Exclusions
Only grades of A, B, C and S are acceptable for graduate credit. Grades of D, F or Unsatisfactory (U) for courses on the degree plan must be absolved by repeating the courses at Texas A&M University and achieving grades of C or above or Satisfactory (S). A course in which the final grade is C or lower may be repeated once for a higher grade. If the second grade is higher, the original grade will remain on the student's permanent record, and the most recent grade will be used in computing the cumulative and degree plan GPRs. If the second grade is also a C, both grades are used in computing the cumulative GPR.

A student repeating a course in which a grade of B or better was originally earned will not receive grade points for the repeated course, unless the catalog states the course may be repeated for credit.

Academic Deficiency and Probation (University and Departmental Rules)
If either a student's Cumulative GPR or Degree Plan GPR falls below the minimum of 3.00, he or she will be considered to be scholastically deficient. If the minimum GPR is not attained in a reasonable length of time, the student may be dropped from graduate studies. The procedures for dismissal are explained in the Texas A&M University Student rule 12.7 (refer to the Website http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule12.

Departments or colleges may adopt specific guidelines pertaining to scholastic deficiency or dismissal in addition to these University policies. The specific guidelines adopted by ATMO are the following:

- If the Cumulative or Degree Plan GPR of a student falls below 3.00, the student will receive a letter from the Chair of the Graduate Committee of the Department providing warning of scholastic deficiency.
- If the Cumulative or Degree Plan GPR of a student stays below 3.00 at the end of the following term, the student will be permitted to continue in the program on scholastic probation. After consultation with the student's faculty advisor, the Graduate Committee of the Department will determine the terms of probation. The student will be informed in writing of the terms of probation in accordance with university regulations. If these terms are not satisfied at the end of the following term, the Graduate Committee will recommend dismissal of the student from the ATMO graduate program. The Department Head will make the final decision on the dismissal of the student from the ATMO graduate program.

Dismissal of a Graduate Student
For policies and procedures on dismissal of a graduate student please refer to student rule 12.7.1- 12.7.5 http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule12
Annual Evaluation (Departmental Requirement)
All graduate level students in the department of Atmospheric Sciences are required to complete and submit a Graduate Student Annual Review Form. The purpose of this form is to help the assessment of the progress of each student toward graduation by the Department. The form is to be completed and signed by the student and their faculty advisor stating and documenting the student’s goals and progress for the year. The Graduate Advisor of the Department sends out and collects the form near the end of the spring term. The typical deadline to complete the form is the end of the spring term. The ATMO Graduate Committee uses this form to assess the progress of each graduate student in the program toward graduation. The responses of the students are also used for the assessment of the ATMO graduate program.

Ombudsperson
Graduate students may serve in many roles during their academic careers such as students, teachers, co-workers, colleagues, employees, or technicians. Varying rules/policies apply for the many roles. As long as the expectations for behavior are understood and accepted by all parties, there is rarely a problem. However, challenges can arise when there are differing expectations or conflicting policies, or when one group is accused of violating the rules. The ombudsperson advocates for the processes of graduate education by being equally open and accessible to all parties—students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Typical Concerns Brought to the Ombudsperson
• Academics (grading disputes, testing procedures, instructor/student misunderstanding)
• Conflicts between graduate advisors and their students
• Fiscal matters
• Disagreements/misunderstandings with university policy
• Human or legal rights violations
• Discrimination
• Housing
• Cultural conflicts
• Reporting unethical behavior
• Student conduct

Ombudsperson Contact Info
Ombudsperson for Graduate Education 001 Commons Building 1113 TAMU College Station, TX 77843-1113 979-845-3631 ombuds@tamu.edu

Funding Opportunities

Financing Graduate Education at Texas A&M
Scholarships & Financial Aid estimates a basic budget for new graduate students (including tuition and fees, books, supplies, transportation, room and board, incidental and living expenses) at about $21,000. Total expenses for returning students during an academic year should be slightly less than those for new students. The cost for new nonresidential and international students is about $27,000. For the latest and detailed tuition and fee information, please refer to Student Business Services.
**Graduate Assistantships**

There are three types of graduate assistantships available through the academic departments, colleges, TAMUS agencies, and administrative offices:

- **Graduate Assistant Teaching (GAT)** – The student will typically work 20 hours per week, teaching labs and grading assignments for an assigned course (instructor).
- **Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT)** - The student will typically work 20 hours per week, grading assignments and completing various non-teaching duties within the department.
- **Graduate Assistant Research (GAR)** – The student will work and report to a particular Principal Investigator (PI) who will generally be the student's chair, but may be with an outside party. The student will usually work on a research project that could serve as a Thesis/Dissertation project for the student.

These positions require service of 20 hours per week. Graduate students holding assistantships in ATMO must be registered for a minimum of nine semester hours during a fall or spring semester, or for six credit hours during the summer. Assistantships terminate upon failure to maintain the minimum enrollment requirement. Students serving in these roles are paid a monthly stipend, eligible for insurance benefits, and their tuition and fees are paid by ATMO at the in-state rate. The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies Graduate Council enforces guidelines for employing graduate students at greater than a 50% effort. The current monthly stipend in ATMO is $1,975 for Master's students and Ph.D. students who have not, yet, passed the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam, and $2,125 for Ph.D. students who have already passed the Qualifying Exam. These rates will increase to $2,025 and 2,175, respectively, on September 1, 2017.

**Benefits for Graduate Student Employees**

All students holding graduate assistantships will be offered a range of benefits including health insurance, dental, vision, life insurance, long-term disability and others for you and your eligible dependents. Each of these has an associated cost, but graduate assistants are eligible for the state contribution to help pay for their benefits. This contribution becomes available starting with the first day of the month after 60 days of continuous employment. Because graduate assistants are in a part-time position, they receive half of the monthly state contribution. For more detailed information on the benefits for graduate student employees, see [http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/benefits/pdf/studentinsurance/benefits-for-graduate-student-employee.pdf](http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/benefits/pdf/studentinsurance/benefits-for-graduate-student-employee.pdf).

**Teaching Assistant (TA) Assignments**

TAs (GATs and GANTs) are assigned to courses by the Department. When available, students may request particular courses of interest. For more information regarding TA Assignments, please contact the Chair of the Graduate Committee of the Department.

**TA Training**

All TA’s are required to take a mandatory training course provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence at Texas A&M University prior to teaching. For more information please visit the following website: [http://cte.tamu.edu/](http://cte.tamu.edu/). International students must fulfill an English proficiency requirement prior to teaching. The University is planning to change the proficiency requirement by the beginning of the fall 2017 term. The new requirement will be based on only the oral part of TOEFL. All TA’s will receive evaluations from their students at the end of each semester.

**Fellowships**

Ordinarily, graduate students holding fellowships are not required to perform any services. Although individual colleges may have higher requirements, graduate students holding fellowships must register for a minimum of nine semester credit hours during a fall or spring semester, or for six credit hours during the summer. Many competitive fellowships of $4,000 or
greater per academic year also allow students to pay tuition at the in-state rate. Fellowships packages vary from $1,000 to over $30,000, and some do include funds for insurance, tuition, and fees. For detailed lists and more guidance about requirements and application, explore the following pages:
- Faculty-Nominated TAMU Fellowships
- Externally Funded Fellowships

Grants

Texas Aggie Graduate Grant
This is a need-based grant (need is determined by Student Financial Aid) for graduate students who are Texas residents. Each student may receive up to $1,500 per semester, with a maximum of $3,000 per year. The application is now located on the Scholarships and Financial Aid website. Turn the completed form in to the Scholarships and Financial Aid office (located in the Pavilion, 2nd floor).

Research and Presentation Grants
Purpose: The Graduate Student Research and Presentation (RAP) Grant Program is supported by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies and by funds provided by The Texas A&M Association of Former Students. The purpose of the program is to support graduate student research or travel to make presentations or conduct research by reimbursing students for some of the eligible expenses incurred. Travel expenses are allowed on research grants if absolutely required in order to complete the research.

Eligibility: The applicant must be in good academic standing (3.0 GPR) and registered as a full-time graduate student at TAMU – College Station campus at the time of application and at the time of reimbursement. Students are allowed one RAP grant per degree. If you have received a RAP grant before, you are not eligible to apply again, unless one was received as a master’s student and you are now applying as a doctoral student. Applications must be received by the posted deadlines to enable enough time for processing.

Detailed information regarding this grant and applications can be found through the following link: http://ogs.tamu.edu/funding-information/grants/grant-guidelines/

Awards
There are various other awards and fellowships through the university that students can be nominated for each year. Details and nomination criteria can be found through the following link: http://ogs.tamu.edu/current-students/fellowships-awards/awards/. If you think you would be a strong candidate for one of these awards or fellowships, talk with your advisor or the Chair of the Graduate Committee.

Sponsors
Some international students have all or part of their educational expenses paid from a source other than personal and/or family funds or from a Texas A&M assistantship. These students may have made agreements with a sponsor regarding their educational objectives that is the result of an agreement between agencies, governments, organizations (both international and domestic) and/or companies (both public and private). In most cases, these agreements require special coordination and certification by Texas A&M. Students participating in sponsored programs should contact the Sponsored Student Programs office early in the admissions process.
Transfer Course Work

Transfer course work may be accepted contingent upon the approval of the students’ advisory committee, department head, and the OGAPS office. Transfer work is handled on a case-by-case basis. Course(s) must be completed at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution with a grade of A or B and must be graduate level or upper level undergraduate courses.

In most cases, Master’s students may transfer in 12 hours with the approval of their graduate committee, department, and OGAPS. Students should refer to the Graduate Catalog for specific transfer limitations by degree. A final official transcript (with grades) must be received by the Office of Admissions for all transfer work listed on the degree plan. A degree plan listing transfer work ‘to be taken’ will be approved pending receipt of the final official transcript listing such work. Once the transcript has been received, it will be used to verify that the courses in question meet all eligibility criteria.

Masters students who are scheduling their final exam and are currently registered for transfer work must have confirmation of registration in the course from the attending university on file with OGAPS prior to approval of the final examination. Notification may be in the form of an unofficial transcript or a copy of the student’s registration. Doctoral students are not eligible to transfer in course work during their last semester or the semester of their final examination.

Filing a Petition

Filing a Petition with OGAPS

There are two types of petitions offered by the OGAPS office. The “MDD Petition” (MDD stands for Major, Degree, or Department) and the “LongForm Petition”. All petitions are to be submitted online at https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu/. Please be aware that a student may only have one petition in process through the DPSS system at one time. The petition must be approved by the OGAPS office before a new petition of either type may be created.

MDD Petition

The MDD Petition is used to request a change affecting at least one of these three parts to a student’s graduate program of study.

. Change of Major, Degree or Department- If a student already has an approved degree plan, the student will create a new degree plan of study after this request is approved.

. Change of Major- May keep an approved degree plan. This is an option reserved for special cases where the graduate student changes to a closely related major and may choose to keep to an existing plan of study.

. Add a Second Program of Study- Only certain pre-approved combinations of programs are allowed. This petition requests permission to pursue a second program. When a student pursues two programs, one is considered “primary” and the other is considered “secondary”. Speak with your graduate advisor or contact OGAPS for further information.

. Drop a Program- If a student previously requested a second program, but for reasons unforeseen, cannot pursue two programs, this requests approval to drop one of the programs. As a graduate student must have at least one program of study, a request to drop a program is not permissible when the graduate has only a single program.
LongForm Petition
Allows a student to submit requests for any one or a combination of Committee Changes, Course Changes, Extension of Time Limits or for a Waiver/Exception of rules.

Once the student “submits” a petition, it will be routed for approval. The first approver in ATMO is the graduate advisor. Then the petition is routed to the student’s committee. The committee members will have access to approve the petition only after the chair of the committee has approved it. Once all committee members have approved the petition, the chair of the graduate committee has to also approve it. Once all of these approvals have been registered, the document is routed to the OGAPS office for processing and final approval.

Filing a Petition with ATMO
All petitions regarding department requirements (e.g., deadline for Qualifying Exam, course requirements) must be addressed to the department head. The department head makes a decision on the approval or denial of the petition after consultation with the chair of the student’s committee and the chair of the graduate committee.

Letter Of Intent
A student completing a graduate degree who wants to continue for another graduate degree may request to do so by filing an approved letter of intent with OGAPS if there is no break in enrollment, or if the break is less than one calendar year. A student who has an enrollment break of more than one calendar year or longer following graduation must re-apply through Graduate Admissions. The following is included in the Letter of Intent:

- The degree and semester of the completed degree, the proposed continuing degree, department, major and the semester to begin the proposed degree.
- The student’s signature is required along with printing his/her name, student UIN, and mailing address.
- The department head, or the Chair of the Interdisciplinary Faculty, must sign indicating their acceptance of the student and date. The signer checks if the student must begin in the term listed only, or if they receive the one-year time frame to register.

Upon approval of OGAPS, a copy will be sent to the student, department, and ISS (if appropriate). Students should contact ISS directly for assistance in obtaining a new Form 1-20 or DS 2019.

Note: Students who are approved for a Letter of Intent, and do not attend the beginning semester indicated, must file a new Letter of Intent with the new semester indicated (if within one year of graduation).

The Letter of Intent can only be approved once all degree requirements have been met. If the student is registered for graded course work in their last semester, the letter may not be able to be approved prior to final grades being submitted.
Link to Form: http://ogs.tamu.edu/incoming-students/student-forms-and-information/

Use of Departmental Resources
Office Space
Office space is provided for graduate students that hold TA and GAR positions and Fellowships.
Office space for non-funded students is provided if space is available.

Students that are provided office space will be required to fill out a key check out form in order to receive a key for their office space. The form must be signed by the student as well as their faculty advisor prior to receiving a key. Key forms are available in the department’s main office. Students are allowed possession of their keys for as long as their office space is occupied. All keys must be turned in to the front office prior to graduation and/or termination/resignation of TA, GAR, or Fellowship privileges. Students that are granted office space will be provided with a desk and chair by the department.

**Departmental Equipment**
Departmental equipment is any equipment that is owned by either the department or the university. All students are entitled to usage of departmental equipment as long as prior authorization is obtained beforehand. The department applies a strict rule that all departmental equipment must be returned in good condition. Any damages to departmental equipment must be reported immediately to the proper individual. Failure to use or return equipment properly may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of equipment use privileges. Failure to inform the department about known damage to departmental equipment WILL result in disciplinary action and/or loss of equipment use privileges.

**Building Access**
All graduate students in the department of Atmospheric Sciences are entitled to building access at all times. From 7:30 A.M. - 5 P.M. Monday –Friday, students may enter the building through any door. At all other times students needing access to the building after hours must enter through the designated after hours entrances by swiping their university identification card. To obtain after hours building access, students should contact the ATMO Business Administrator.

**Parking**
All students are to park in the designated student parking lots, garages, and/or visitor lots. Parking in an unauthorized area may result in a parking ticket, and/or towing of the students car at their own expense. Parking at Texas A&M anywhere other than a visitor lot requires a parking pass. For information regarding parking, please contact the transportation department at 979-862-7275 or visit their website at transport.tamu.edu.

**Computer Usage**
All graduate students are granted the privilege to use any of the student computer labs within the building. A username and password will be required to operate and departmental computer. For assistance in setting up a username, password, or departmental mail please contact helpdesk@geos.tamu.edu.

**Official University Travel**
Certain trips such as conferences, research symposiums, and fieldwork may qualify as official university travel, and may qualify to be paid for by the department and/or university. Students must obtain prior authorization from the university for any and all official university travel. Requesting authorization and claiming expense reimbursement for such travel is done electronically in CONCUR through the sso.tamus.edu website. Students must receive proper training and authorization before using this website to claim travel as official university travel. Note that authorization for international travel may take several weeks. Students may not claim
personal travel as official university travel.

**Domestic Students and Official University Travel**
For domestic students, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain passports, health insurance and/or visas for the respective country they plan to visit when traveling abroad. For more information on obtaining passports and visas, please contact the Study Abroad Programs Office at 979-845-0544 or by email at studyabroad@tamu.edu. For more information on official university travel, please contact the ATMO Business Office.

**International Students and Official University Travel**
International students holding F-1 and J-1 visas are encouraged to attend conferences, research symposiums, and conduct fieldwork during their studies at Texas A&M University. Travel of these sorts may qualify as official university travel and may be eligible to be covered at the expense of the department and/or university. It is up to the student to ensure that they have a valid passport, visa, health insurance and travel signature on their form I-20 or DS-2019 prior to traveling, especially when traveling abroad. Failure to remain in compliance with ISS and DHS policies may result in the loss of an international student visa, and/or the privilege to study at Texas A&M University. Students may not claim personal travel as official university travel. For more information on international student travel both domestically and internationally, contact International Student Services office at 979-845-1824 or by email at iss.tamu.edu.

**Mentoring & Student Organizations**

**Mentoring**
The student’s faculty advisor who is also their committee chair serves as their primary academic advisor, principal thesis advisor, and the general mentor for their academic program and research. Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty advisor frequently to ensure successful progression and completion of their graduate program.

**Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Council (ASGC)**
The Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Council is the governing body for the graduate students in the department of Atmospheric Sciences. The council meets to discuss issues pertinent to graduate students within the department. The council spreads information regarding graduation, courses, symposiums, speakers and other events. The council also coordinates social and professional development events throughout the year for students and faculty. For more information on joining the ASGC, please contact ASGC President Michael Battalio (battalio@tamu.edu). The ASGC President Elect for academic year 2017/2018 is Sophie Mayne (zn000390@tamu.edu).

**Appendix**

**Administrative Structure of ATMO Department**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Head</th>
<th>Administrative Associate II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ping Yang</td>
<td>Irene Martinez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:pyang@tamu.edu">pyang@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:imartinez@tamu.edu">imartinez@tamu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>979-845-7679</td>
<td>979-845-7671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Director</td>
<td>Dr. Istvan Szunyogh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advisor</td>
<td>Brady Dennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administrator I</td>
<td>Theresa Morrison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities Coordinator</td>
<td>Sean Stroyick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Coordinator I</td>
<td>Debbie Odstrcil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Neil Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Associate II</td>
<td>Jason Root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Mills</td>
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</tr>
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**Useful Contacts**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>On-Campus Housing</td>
<td><a href="http://reslife.tamu.edu">http://reslife.tamu.edu</a> <a href="http://studentlife.tamu.edu">http://studentlife.tamu.edu</a> 979-845-4744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult, Graduate and Off Campus Student Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Services</td>
<td><a href="http://iss.tamu.edu">http://iss.tamu.edu</a> <a href="http://aggieathletics.com">http://aggieathletics.com</a> 979-845-1824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td><a href="http://library.tamu.edu">http://library.tamu.edu</a> 979-845-5741 979-845-7514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost &amp; Found</td>
<td><a href="http://hospitality.tamu.edu/lost&amp;found.html">http://hospitality.tamu.edu/lost&amp;found.html</a> 979-845-8908 (MSC) 979-845-3313 (News)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and Research Services</td>
<td><a href="http://dars.tamu.edu">http://dars.tamu.edu</a> 979-845-0532 979-845-1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Information</td>
<td><a href="http://mscc.tamu.edu">http://mscc.tamu.edu</a> 979-845-8908 979-845-3211</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSC Print “N” Copy</td>
<td><a href="http://pnc.tamu.edu">http://pnc.tamu.edu</a> 979-845-7294 979-845-3211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Traditions &amp; History</td>
<td>Multicultural Services, Department of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Website</td>
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<td>Career Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computing and Information Services</td>
<td><a href="http://cis.tamu.edu">http://cis.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance Education</td>
<td><a href="http://distance.tamu.edu">http://distance.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>English Language Institute</td>
<td><a href="http://eli.tamu.edu">http://eli.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>GLBT Resource Center</td>
<td><a href="http://glbt.tamu.edu">http://glbt.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Mentors</td>
<td><a href="http://gradmentors.tamu.edu">http://gradmentors.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Council</td>
<td><a href="http://gsc.tamu.edu">http://gsc.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Office:</td>
<td><a href="http://shs.tamu.edu">http://shs.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University Bookstore (MSC)</td>
<td><a href="http://tamu.bncollege.com">http://tamu.bncollege.com</a></td>
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**Faculty & Staff Directory**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bowman, Kenneth P.</td>
<td>1014A</td>
<td>979.862-4060</td>
<td><a href="mailto:k-bowman@tamu.edu">k-bowman@tamu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name, First</td>
<td>Last Initials</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brooks, Sarah</td>
<td></td>
<td>1105A</td>
<td>979.845.5632</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chang, Ping</td>
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<td>624</td>
<td>979.845.8196</td>
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<td>Collins, Donald R.</td>
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<td>1005B</td>
<td>979.862.4401</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conlee, Don</td>
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<td>1208B</td>
<td>979.845.5099</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dessler, Andy</td>
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<td>1210B</td>
<td>979.862.1427</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epifanio, Craig C.</td>
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<td>1017A</td>
<td>979.845.9224</td>
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<td>King, Michael</td>
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<tr>
<td>Korty, Robert</td>
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<td>1009B</td>
<td>979.847.9090</td>
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<td>Lemmon, Mark</td>
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<td>Logan, Timothy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nielsen-Gammon, John W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>North, Gerald R.</td>
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<td>Nowotarski, Chris</td>
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<td>Orville, Richard E.</td>
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<td>Panetta, R. Lee</td>
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<td>Rapp, Anita</td>
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<td>Saravanan, Ramalingam</td>
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<td>1012A</td>
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<td>Schade, Gunnar</td>
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<td>1104A</td>
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<td>Schumacher, Courtney</td>
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<td>Szunyogh, Istvan</td>
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<td>Xu, Yangyang</td>
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<td>1210H</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yang, Ping</td>
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<td>1204GA</td>
<td>979.845.7679</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhang, Renyi</td>
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<td>1108A</td>
<td>979.845.7656</td>
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**Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name, First</th>
<th>Last Initials</th>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morrison, Theresa A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1204GAA</td>
<td>979.862.2812</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmorrison@geos.tamu.edu">tmorrison@geos.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Odstrcil, Debbie</td>
<td></td>
<td>1204F</td>
<td>979.458.0559</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dodstrcil@tamu.edu">dodstrcil@tamu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Mills</td>
<td></td>
<td>1204G</td>
<td>979.845.3067</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dmills@tamu.edu">dmills@tamu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene Martinez</td>
<td></td>
<td>1204</td>
<td>979.845.7671</td>
<td><a href="mailto:imartinez@tamu.edu">imartinez@tamu.edu</a></td>
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**Research Staff**

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<tr>
<td>Dessler, Alex</td>
<td></td>
<td>1210A</td>
<td>979.845.5090</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alex.dessler@tamu.edu">alex.dessler@tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Funk, Aaron</td>
<td></td>
<td>1008A</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:afunk@tamu.edu">afunk@tamu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gyarmati, Gyorgyi</td>
<td>1010B</td>
<td>979.845.1482</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gygy@tamu.edu">gygy@tamu.edu</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lau, William</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:wkmlau@umd.edu">wkmlau@umd.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence, Jim</td>
<td>1014B</td>
<td>979.458.2880</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jlawrence736@tamu.edu">jlawrence736@tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Li, Ron</td>
<td>907B</td>
<td>979.845.3228</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ronli@tamu.edu">ronli@tamu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng, Jianfei</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td>979.845.9475</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pengjianfeipku@163.com">pengjianfeipku@163.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schroeder, Steve</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>979.845.1090</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s-schroeder@tamu.edu">s-schroeder@tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stegmann, Patrick</td>
<td>907B</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:pstegmann@tamu.edu">pstegmann@tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun, Bingqiang</td>
<td>903A</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:bqsun@tamu.edu">bqsun@tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tang, Guanglin</td>
<td>907C</td>
<td>979.862.4341</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tangguanglin@tamu.edu">tangguanglin@tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Weitz, Richard</td>
<td>1110A</td>
<td>979.845.7655</td>
<td><a href="mailto:weitz_richard@yahoo.com">weitz_richard@yahoo.com</a></td>
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**College of Geosciences Department Directory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atmospheric Science</td>
<td>979-862-2812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail Stop: 3150</td>
<td>979-845-7211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: 979-862-4466</td>
<td>979-845-6331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>979-845-7141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IODP</td>
<td>979-845-1026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: 979-845-4487</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geology &amp; Geophysics</td>
<td>979-862-2323</td>
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<tr>
<td>GERG</td>
<td>979-862-2361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail Stop: 3115</td>
<td>979-845-2451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: 979-845-6162</td>
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