Ph.D. Student Timelines

A student's path through our Ph.D. program will be dependent upon their starting condition! Below we outline suggested guidelines for two different types of students, depending upon their highest degree and relevant academic and institutional background.

(1) BS student coming from either UNCW or another institution entering into the M.S. program

Semester 1

Courses:	BIO 501 Core courses for selected M.S. program Other courses as needed or requested by thesis committee
Other Landmarks:	Select and meet with thesis committee Complete first draft of thesis research prospectus Carry out research

Semester 2

Courses:	Continue fulfilling core courses Other courses as needed or requested by thesis committee
Other Landmarks:	Present research plan at Graduate Student Prospectus Symposium Complete thesis prospectus and present to thesis committee Carry out research

Semester 3

Courses:	Courses as needed or requested by dissertation committee BIO 599s as needed
Other Landmarks:	*If continuing with M.S. before entering Ph.D. program* – take oral preliminary exam (near beginning of third semester) and continue research I*f transitioning to Ph.D. program (with support of major advisor)* – apply to the Ph.D. program

Semester 4

Courses:	*If continuing with M.S. before entering Ph.D. program* – BIO 599 or GRC 600 *If transitioning to Ph.D. program (with support of major advisor)* – begin Ph.D. course work (see below – likely can begin near year 2 of schedule)
Other Landmarks:	*If continuing with M.S. before entering Ph.D. program* - Departmental seminar and complete and defend thesis *If transitioning to Ph.D. program (with support of major advisor)* – follow timeline below as needed

(2) M.S. student coming from another institution with related background, but missing a biological oceanography course.

Year 1

Courses:	BIO 564: Biological Oceanography (pre-requisite for BIO 601) Begin Marine Biology Seminar series Other courses as needed or requested by dissertation committee
Other Landmarks:	Select and meet with dissertation committee Develop and discuss with committee dissertation research plan Carry out research

Year 2

Courses:	Continue Marine Biology Seminar series BIO 694: Teaching Practicum Other courses as needed or requested by dissertation committee BIO 698 and/or 699 (Likely most required course other than BIO 690 will be completed.)
Other Landmarks:	Departmental Seminar – presenting dissertation plan and preliminary results Dissertation research plan completed and signed off on by committee Carry out research

Year 3

Courses:	Courses as needed or requested by dissertation committee BIO 698 and/or 699
Other Landmarks:	Written and oral candidacy exams (near beginning of third year) Meet with committee Carry out research

Years 4 and 5 (if needed)

Courses:	BIO 690: Seminar BIO 698 and/or 699
Other Landmarks:	Final departmental seminar Complete and defend dissertation

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Checklist of forms and processes

Year 1

_____ Form committee (Ph.D. Committee Composition Form)
_____ Discuss and agree on publication plan (Ph.D. Authorship Agreement Form)
_____ Meet with committee (Ph.D. First Dissertation Committee Meeting Form)

Year 2

_____ Present first departmental seminar presentation
_____ Meet with, and present dissertation research plan to committee for approval and discuss written and oral exams (Ph.D. Interim Dissertation Committee Meeting Form)

Year 3

_____ Take Written Comprehensive Exam (Results of Ph.D. Written Comprehensive Exam Form)
_____ Take Oral Comprehensive Exam (Results of Ph.D. Oral Comprehensive Exam Form)
_____ Meet with committee (Ph.D. Interim Dissertation Committee Meeting Form)

Years 4 and 5 (if needed)

_____ Defend dissertation – public departmental seminar and private committee defense (Results of Dissertation Defense Form)