

Academic Program

General Program Description

The academic program of the School of Marine Science is intended primarily for the student who wishes to specialize in marine science at the graduate level. Degrees offered are the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Marine Science. The school offers research opportunities and instruction at the graduate level in five general areas: Fisheries Science, Biological Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Resource Management and Policy.

Though the courses offered by the School are primarily for graduate students, advanced undergraduates (juniors and seniors) may participate. For instance, biology, chemistry, and physics majors can enroll in suitable 500-549 level marine science courses for credit toward the bachelor's degree provided certain conditions (see College of William and Mary Undergraduate Program Catalog) are met. Undergraduates also may enroll for research credit to work on problems in marine science. The student is responsible for making the necessary arrangements with an individual School of Marine Science faculty member, and the consent of the chairperson of the student's major department is also required.

General Preparatory Requirements

Students who are interested in pursuing marine science as a profession should consult with their academic advisor or the Dean of Graduate Studies, School of Marine Science, early in their college careers to identify an academic program that will prepare them for graduate study in marine science.

Students interested in biological sciences, environmental sciences, or fisheries science should have a strong background in basic sciences, including a suite of contemporary biology courses, physics and chemistry (through organic), and mathematics through calculus and differential equations. The prospective chemical, geological or physical oceanography student should have an undergraduate degree with appropriate course work in chemistry, geology or related geophysical science, physics, meteorology, mathematics or engineering, and a solid quantitative background. Course work in statistics and competence with computers are particularly important for prospective resource management and policy students, but also are considered beneficial to students in all other fields of concentration as well.