

**Instructions for Completing an Application for Admission
William and Mary School of Marine Science
Virginia Institute of Marine Science**

- **The online application, transcripts and test scores are due on or before January 5th.** *Please take holidays into account and check with your university early about how to obtain an unofficial transcript.*
- **You must pay the application fee on or before January 5th.** *You may use the online payment system or send a check or money order to the address below.*
- **Letters of recommendation are due on or before January 16th.** *It is very important that you ask your referees for letters early and explain to them that they will receive a direct request for a letter from the School of Marine Science.*

1. Application

Use the link "Apply Online" on the left sidebar of the Admissions webpage to access the online application, or use this url:

<http://www.vims.edu/education/graduate/admissions/index.php>

Once you create a username/password, you will be able to complete your application in one or more sessions before it is submitted. You will also be able to use the application portal to check the status of your application package once your application has been submitted. Each time you log in to the online application, you will have up to 30 minutes to make changes. Should you need longer, we suggest closing and re-opening your browser and logging in again.

Please note that some time may elapse between the time you send or have any materials sent by mail and the time the materials are uploaded to our system. This is particularly true for materials sent in mid- to late December due to the U.S. holidays. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science closes between December 24th and the New Year's holiday. For this reason we recommend that you not delay if you will be submitting any materials, such as the application fee, by mail.

2. Letters of Recommendation

Letters are requested automatically when you use the online application. The requests are sent when you enter the names of the referees.

Use the official university e-mail (.edu) for any faculty who will provide letters of recommendation.

You will need three (3) letters of recommendation from persons qualified to judge your scholarly and professional capabilities/potential. Requests for letters will be sent automatically as soon as you enter the contact information for your referees during the online application process. Your referees will receive an email notification directly with instructions on how to complete the letter of recommendation using our on-line system. Please let them know that they will be contacted.

We recommend that you request letters by no later than late November.

3. Transcript(s)

Create pdf files of your unofficial transcripts. You should create one file that contains all undergraduate transcripts and, if you have previous graduate level coursework or a graduate degree, also create one file for all graduate transcripts. You will upload these files as part of the application process. Follow the directions in the application for naming the files. You must submit a transcript for every college or university attended regardless of the number of credits completed. If your application is selected for further review by the Admissions Committee, you will be required to submit an official transcript for each college or university you attended. You will be notified electronically by March if you need to send official transcripts.

If you are unable to provide an unofficial transcript with the online application, we recommend that you request transcripts by no later than early December. You must have a transcript sent for every college or university attended regardless of the number of credits completed.

In order to expedite evaluation of records of foreign-educated students, English translations of transcripts of college records must be provided naming courses taken, credits attempted, credits earned and grades. Where transcripts do not give these details, the transcripts must be accompanied by an official statement explaining how the scholastic record may be compared to that of the College of William & Mary. Details must be given as to whether the courses are given on a semester basis (15 credits per semester, 30 per year, 120 for graduation), quarter basis (15 credits per semester, 45 per year, 180 for graduation) or other basis. In addition, the grading scale must be explained showing the grade equivalence in terms of A (highest), B, C, D (passing) and F (failing).

In general, the minimum GPA requirement for acceptance to SMS is a 3.0 (on scale of 4.0).

4. GRE Scores

The GRE® General Test is required of all applicants.
VIMS/SMS Institution Code: 5871 - listed as "College of William and Mary Marine Science"
GRE scores more than 5 years old will not be accepted.

We recommend that you take the GRE no later than November.

Request that older GRE scores be sent by the end of November. ETS does not mail the scores immediately upon your request; allow at least 10-14 days to ensure the scores are received by the deadline.

The minimum combined GRE required for acceptance to SMS is 1100 (verbal + quantitative; for tests taken prior to August 1, 2011) or 300 (verbal + quantitative; for tests taken on or after August 1, 2011).

5. TOEFL or IELTS Scores

All international applicants whose first language is not English, or who did not attend a college or university where the language of instruction was English, are required to demonstrate adequate English competency. Applicants may demonstrate competency by submitting scores from the [Test of English as a Foreign Language](#) (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System test (IELTS).

For TOEFL - Use the code for Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Institution - Code: 5871 Department Code: 99

For IELTS - The School of Marine Science is listed among educational institutions as the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. VIMS only accepts scores submitted electronically by the IELTS test center. An institutional code is **not** required. Contact the test center directly where you took the IELTS test, and request that your test scores be sent electronically using the IELTS system.

There are two versions of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the paper-based Test (PBT) and computer-based test (iBT).

A minimum score of 500/4.5 is recommended for the PBT and 94 for the iBT. The recommended minimum total IELTS (International English Language Testing System academic test) score is 7.

6. Essay/Objective Statement

Provide an objective statement [**750 words or less**] describing your career objectives and how the SMS program at VIMS will help you achieve your goals. Discuss any experiences that have prepared or motivated you to pursue an advanced degree in marine science, highlighting the research interests you intend to explore during your graduate studies. The essay is submitted as a pdf file with the online application. Follow the instructions in the application system for naming the file.

7. Résumé or CV

Provide a short summary of education, job experience, awards, presentations at scientific meetings, publications, and other relevant information. The résumé is submitted as a pdf file with the online application. Follow the instructions in the application system for naming the file.

8. Virginia Residents

If you wish to claim Virginia domiciliary status, you will need to complete an *Application to Determine Physical Residency and In-State Tuition Eligibility*. The form is accessed at the following url, under the section "Tuition-Related" :

<http://www.wm.edu/offices/registrar/forms/index.php>

Send the form to the VIMS/SMS Office of Academic Studies at the address below. **Do not** send the form to the University Registrar on main campus as indicated on the application.

9. Processing Fee

A non-refundable processing fee of \$50.00 (on-line payment or a check or a money order payable to the College of William & Mary) is required. Payment must be received by January 5. If you are sending a check or money order, use the address below.

The School of Marine Science is pleased to waive the application fee for anyone who has served honorably in the Armed Forces of the United States. You must contact Admissions (admissions@vims.edu) **before January 5th** if you wish to request a fee waiver for service in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Additional Information

- International Students—If you are offered admission, additional information will be required before an I-20 can be issued.
- If you have limited access to computers or if you have trouble downloading/printing any material, please contact us directly

Contact Information and Mailing Address for Application Materials

Office of Academic Studies - Admissions

Post Office Box 1346

1375 Great Road (shipping)

Gloucester Point, VA 23062 USA

e-mail: admissions@vims.edu

Telephone: (804) 684-7105

Fax: (804) 684-7881