

Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program
Graduate Student Handbook
and Graduate Degree Requirements

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Welcome!

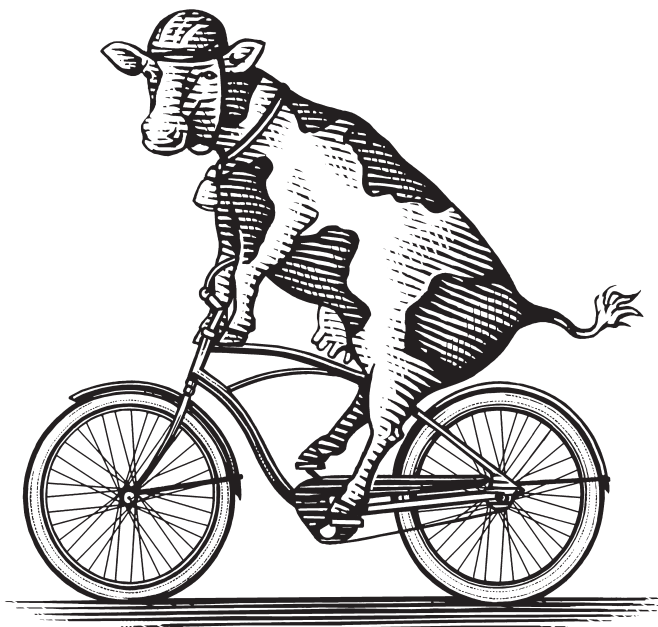
Welcome to the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program (EPSGP) at UC Davis. Graduate school is an important stage in your career as a scientist. Perhaps for the first time you will be participating in the process of scientific inquiry. Our goal is to challenge students and prepare them for careers in academia, industry, or business. Our hope is that your stay here will be both exciting and productive, and this handbook is designed to assist you with a successful graduate career. In it, you will find information about the requirements you must meet to complete a graduate degree in Earth and Planetary Sciences at UC Davis. In addition, you will find information on financial aid, departmental facilities, life in Davis, and some of the rules and procedures that are part of UC Davis. We wish you the best of luck!

Orientation and Mentoring Information

for Entering Graduate Students | UC Davis Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program

General onboarding and department facility information can be found in the Earth and Planetary Sciences [Onboarding and Department Information](#).

UC Davis students have been “Aggies,” since the university’s beginnings as a farm extension for UC Berkeley. In 1993, UC Davis students voted to adopt the cow as the official mascot, but administration and alumni rejected the proposal. In 2003, the students adopted a mustang named Gunrock as the school’s mascot; but the cow remains our “unofficial” mascot.



Graduate Advisors and Committees

Graduate Program Committee. This committee consists of 5 people, 3 of which are also graduate advisors. They handle almost all graduate affairs on behalf of the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program (EPSGP). These 5 people also serve as the admissions committee.

Graduate Advisors. There are three graduate advisors in the Earth and Planetary Sciences department, each with about 1/3 of the current graduate students as their primary advisees. The graduate advisors handle progress meetings and sign forms for their advisees.

- [Magali Billen](#) (also EPSGP Chair)
- [Sujoy Mukhopadhyay](#)
- [Babsi Ratschbacher](#)

Chair of the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program and Chair of Admission | [Magali Billen](#)

In charge of continuing student matters; assigns TAs; and handles new student orientation, student evaluations. Handles forms/petitions for special circumstances (e.g., PELP, Filing Fee), and is back-up for the other graduate advisors if they are not available.

Fellowships and Educational Policy Chair | [Sarah Stewart](#)

Coordinates with UG Committee on course assignments; oversees various department and university fellowship related matters; and consults with Graduate Chair on use and awarding of internal fellowship funds; recommends/ advises policy changes for graduate curriculum and fellowships.

Recruitment and Student Success | Mike Oskin

Oversees recruitment weekend; takes lead on improving recruitment of graduate students (coordinates with ARAC on DEI related issues); takes lead on improving the graduate student experience post-recruitment to graduation.

Faculty Advisor(s), (also known as **Faculty Mentor**, **Thesis/Dissertation Advisor**, **Major Professor**). The Faculty Advisor is the faculty member who provides the primary supervision and guidance of the student in the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program. They serve as the chair of the Thesis/Dissertation Committee. The Faculty Advisor is expected to meet regularly with the student throughout the year. The list of potential thesis advisors in the EPS Graduate Program is available online.

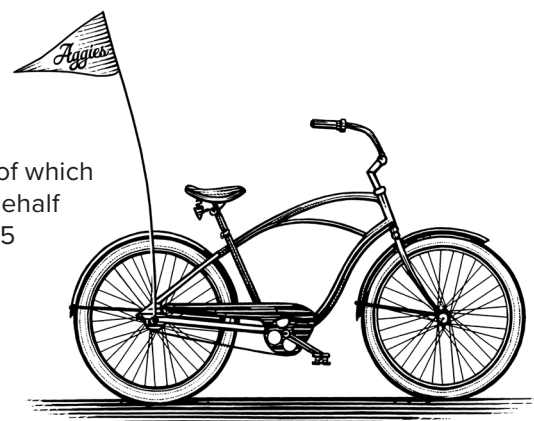
Graduate Program Coordinator | Mandy Rousseau (mlrousseau@ucdavis.edu, room 2119)

She manages administrative and policy matters, forms and petitions, and Graduate Student employment. Submit all forms and petitions to the Graduate Program Coordinator for forwarding to Graduate Studies.

Committees. All [graduate program committees](#) are detailed in Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements, section 6.

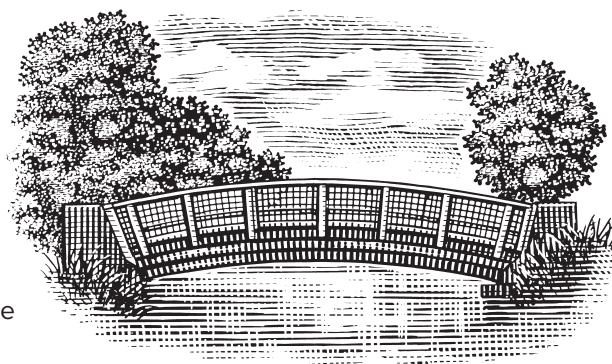
- **The Admission Committee** reviews graduate program applications and makes recommendations for admission to the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- **The Course Guidance and Advising Committee** consists of two Graduate Advisors, and administers the Introductory Meeting, Continuing Student Meeting, and Mid-Year Meeting with students.
- **The Prospectus Committee** meets with first-year students to review their prospectus.
- **The Qualifying Exam Committee** administers the Qualifying Exam to second-year Ph.D. students.
- **The Thesis/Dissertation Committee** aka **Annual Advisory Committee** consists of the student's Faculty Advisor and two additional members and is responsible for approving the final version of the student's thesis as well as administering the Annual Advisory Meeting.

For the regulations on who is eligible to serve on a Thesis or Dissertation committee, see the [Policy on Service on Advanced Degree Committees](#) and [Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program Bylaws](#). Qualifying Exam committee membership is governed by the [Graduate Council Policy on Doctoral Qualifying Examinations \(GC2005-02\)](#).



Graduate Degree Requirements

The requirements for a graduate degree in the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program are detailed in the [UC Davis Graduate Studies Graduate Degree Requirements](#) and the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#). Students may have a choice of which set of Degree Requirements to follow based on the [legacy degree requirements policy](#). Visit the Graduate Studies website for most [policies](#) and [forms](#).



Registration Requirements

Graduate Studies requires that students register for 12 units of upper division or graduate courses per quarter. The Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program requires that students enroll in GEL 290, the weekly department seminar, each quarter throughout their degree (for Master's students) and until passing the qualifying exam (for Ph.D. students; continued enrollment in 290 is recommended after passing the qualifying exam). All new students must enroll in GEL 390 during their first Fall quarter in the program.

English Language Requirement. Students who have not obtained a previous degree at an approved English-medium institution or demonstrated English-language proficiency through an appropriate exam (e.g. TOEFL) are required to complete appropriate English-language courses, as described in the policy [Graduate Student Course Requirements – English as a Second Language \(GC2018-02\)](#). Courses taken in satisfaction of this requirement do not count towards the units required for graduation.

Filing Fee. Students who have completed all program requirements except the thesis/dissertation and public department seminar may choose to go on Filing Fee for their final quarter only. Find out more and apply using the [Filing Fee Application and Regulations](#) form.

Changing the degree objective from M.S. degree to Ph.D. degree. Consult the Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements for information on how to change between degree objectives.

Course Requirements

Classes should be chosen in consultation with the advisory committee and can be in Geology or other appropriate fields. Classes may be upper-division (100) or graduate level (200) and must be at least 2 units. M.S. students must complete 5 courses for at least 12 units. Ph.D. students must complete 8 courses for at least 22 units.

The course requirements as described in the EPS Graduate Program Degree Requirements are now governed by the [2023 Interim Modifications to Degree Course Requirements](#). These new requirements include less breadth and more flexibility. All students must take:

Breadth: 3 GEL upper-division or graduate courses, each in a different subdiscipline; one of these breadth courses can be a lower or upper-division programming or quantitative skill course providing a completely new skill to the student.

Depth: remaining courses (2 for MS, 5 for PhD) can be graduate or upper-division courses in any department on campus.

Subdisciplines:

1. **Geology/Petrology:** 205, 206, 214, 216, 218, 226, 230, 253, 296, 298: Coastal Ecogeomorphology (Pinter), 298 (Oskin), 101 (note: 101L does not count as a breadth course), 103, 105, 109 (note: 109L does not count as a breadth course), 136, 140, 150B
2. **Geochemistry/Petrology:** 250, 251, 227, 281N, 298: Aqueous Geochemistry (Atekwana), 298: Radiogenic Isotope Geochemistry (Cooper), 298: Early Earth History (Mukhopadhyay), 298 (Griffin), 298 (Mukhopadhyay), 108, 116N, 133, 150A

3. **Geophysics/Planetary:** 219, 240, 298: Geodynamic Modeling (Rudolph), 298: Planet Formation (Stewart), 298: Planetary Geology and Geophysics (Stewart), 298: Planetary Impact Processes (Stewart), 131, 160, 161, 162, 163
4. **Geobiology/Paleobiology:** 232, 260, 262, 298: Geobiology (Grettenberger, paired with 144), 298 (Gold), 298: Microbial Photosynthesis (Grettenberger), 107 (note: 107L does not count as a breadth course), 141, 144

View the [graduate courses offered](#) each year.

The remainder of the 30 total units (for M.S.) or 72 total units (for Ph.D.) must be made up of additional graduate and upper division courses, including at least 12 units of research (GEL 299) credit.

Required Meetings and Departmental Forms

Fall Quarter

- Introductory Meeting: First-year students will meet with two Graduate Advisors prior to the start of the quarter to discuss their program of study, courses, and other administrative topics.

Winter Quarter

- Mid-year Meeting: All students will meet with the Graduate Program Chair to discuss administrative issues and academic goals towards the student's progress.

Spring Quarter

- Prospectus Meeting: First-year students will meet with their Prospectus Committee to discuss their Prospectus, proposed research, and next steps. See the M.S. Requirements and Ph.D. Requirements sections for more information. They will submit their Prospectus and signed [Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form](#) to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
- Qualifying Exam: Second-year Ph.D. students will take their Qualifying Exam. See the Ph.D. Requirements section for more information.
- Annual Advisory Committee Meeting: All students (except those completing their Prospectus or Qualifying Exam) will meet with their Advisory Committee to discuss their research. They will submit the [Annual Advisory Committee Meeting form](#) to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
- Student Financial Support Meeting: All students will meet with their faculty advisor to discuss financial support for the following academic year. They will submit a [TA Request Form](#) to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
- Student Progress Assessment (SPA): All students will meet with their faculty advisor and complete their [Student Progress Assessment](#) together between April 1st and June 30th each year.

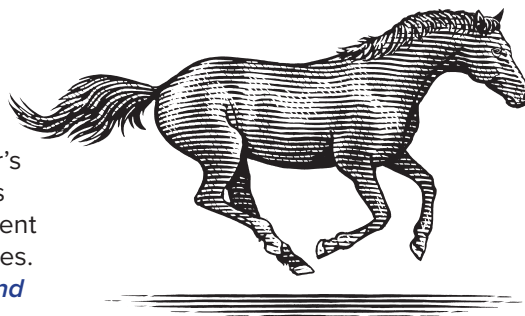
This [Graduate Student Self-Assessment Guidance](#) can help you evaluate your progress and goals each year for use in your annual Spring progress meetings.

The UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden spans the campus's 5300-plus acres and includes the historic Arboretum – a 100-plus acre campus and regional amenity comprised of demonstration gardens and scientific collections as well as the Putah Creek Riparian Reserve – a rare stream and grassland ecosystem managed for teaching, research, wildlife and habitat protection.



M.S. Requirements

Use the [M.S. Advising Form](#) to track your degree requirements



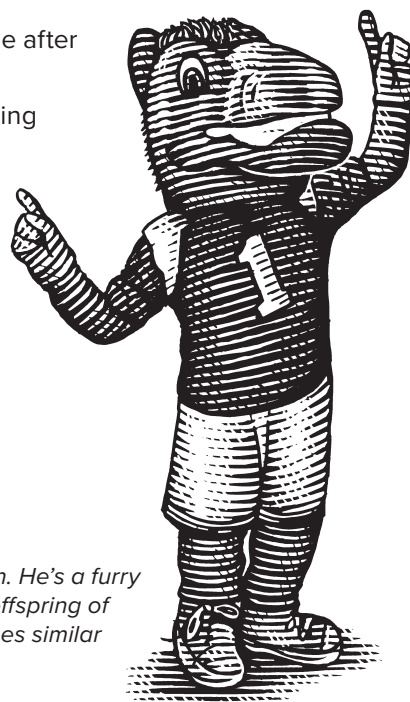
Prospectus. By the 6th week of the third quarter in residence, Master's students must submit a prospectus for their thesis research. This 10 page double-spaced page document includes an abstract, statement of research problem, background, methods, discussion, and references. For more information, see the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) and [Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form](#).

- **Prospectus Meeting.** After completing the prospectus, and before the end of the first year in the program, students will meet with their Prospectus Committee to discuss the prospectus, the proposed research, its suitability for a M.S. thesis, and the ability of the student to complete the proposed research. This meeting can have the following outcomes: the student will proceed with their thesis research, take additional courses, modify the proposed research, and/or be recommended for disqualification from the graduate program. After this meeting, students must submit their Prospectus and signed Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Advancement to Candidacy. Master's students must file a [Candidacy for the Master's Degree – Thesis Plan I](#) form after completing one-half of their course requirements and at least one quarter before completing all degree requirements, no later than the 5th quarter in residence.

Thesis. The thesis may be written in one of two formats: (1) thesis format, with chapters, and appendices to archive data; or (2) manuscript format, intended for submission for publication in a professional journal in the students' field of research. See the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) for more details.

1. **Submit a complete draft** to the Thesis Committee, who certifies that the thesis is ready for presentation. Note that university policy gives one month for faculty to complete and return comments on a thesis draft, and there may be several rounds of edits.
2. **Schedule your public seminar.** It should be during the academic year if possible, and it is recommended to use a time when most of the department can attend, such as the Friday Lunch Seminar. The graduate program coordinator can help you find a time and place in the department, and it is the student's responsibility to add the seminar to the [department event calendar](#). The Faculty Advisor usually announces the seminar to the department by email.
3. **Public Seminar.** Students must present a public departmental seminar on the results of their work before a final draft can be accepted.
4. **Collect signatures** from your thesis committee on your Thesis Title Page after you have given your Public Seminar.
5. **File the thesis with Graduate Studies.** For deadlines, formatting, and filing instructions, see the [Graduate Studies filing deadlines and process](#).
6. **Submit your [Department of EPS Exit Checklist](#)** to the Graduate Program Coordinator.



Gunrock is more than a mascot. He's a link to UC Davis history, to the University Farm. He's a furry blue reminder of the real Gunrock, who was stabled on campus from 1921-1931. The offspring of English Triple Crown winner Rock Sand and race mare Gunfire, Gunrock had bloodlines similar to the legendary racehorse Man O' War.

Ph.D. Requirements

Use the [Ph.D. Advising Form](#) to track your degree requirements.

Teaching Assistantship. Each Ph.D. student must serve as a Teaching Assistant (TA) once before advancing to candidacy. This requirement may be waived with permission from the Graduate Chair for students on fellowship who are not eligible to TA.

Prospectus. By the 6th week of the third quarter in residence, Ph.D. students must submit a prospectus for their dissertation research. This 10 page, double-spaced document includes an abstract, statement of research problem, background, methods, discussion, and references. For more information, see the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) and [Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form](#).

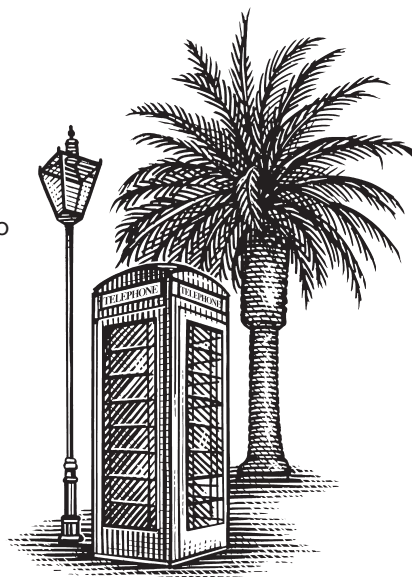
- **Prospectus Meeting.** After completing the prospectus, and before the end of the first year in the program, students will meet with their Prospectus Committee to discuss the prospectus, the proposed research, its suitability for a dissertation, and the ability of the student to complete the proposed research. This meeting can have the following outcomes: the student will expand their prospectus into dissertation proposal, modify and resubmit the prospectus, complete a Master's degree before continuing in the Ph.D. program, or be recommended for disqualification from the graduate program. After this meeting, students must submit their Prospectus and signed [Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form](#) to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Proposal. By the start of the 6th quarter in residence, Ph.D. students must submit a proposal for their dissertation research. Students with an M.S. in the UC Davis EPS Graduate Program must submit their proposal by the 4th quarter in residence. The proposal is a formal NSF-style proposal, 15 single-spaced pages long, including a summary, statement of research problem, methods, research plan and timetable, discussion, and references. The proposal is due to the student's advisory committee members 4-8 weeks before the Qualifying Exam. See the [Qualifying Exam Guidelines](#) for more information.

Qualifying Exam. By the end of the 6th quarter in residence, Ph.D. students must take their Qualifying Exam. Students with an M.S. in the UC Davis EPS Graduate Program must take their Qualifying Exam by the 4th quarter in residence. The QE is an oral exam in front of the student's Qualifying Exam Committee, about 2-3 hours total, consisting of a short presentation (less than 15 minutes) of the proposed research by the student followed by a question-and-answer period. The Oral Qualifying Examination is intended to demonstrate the student's critical thinking ability, powers of imagination and synthesis, and broad knowledge of the field of study. Review the [Qualifying Exam Guidelines](#) for more information.

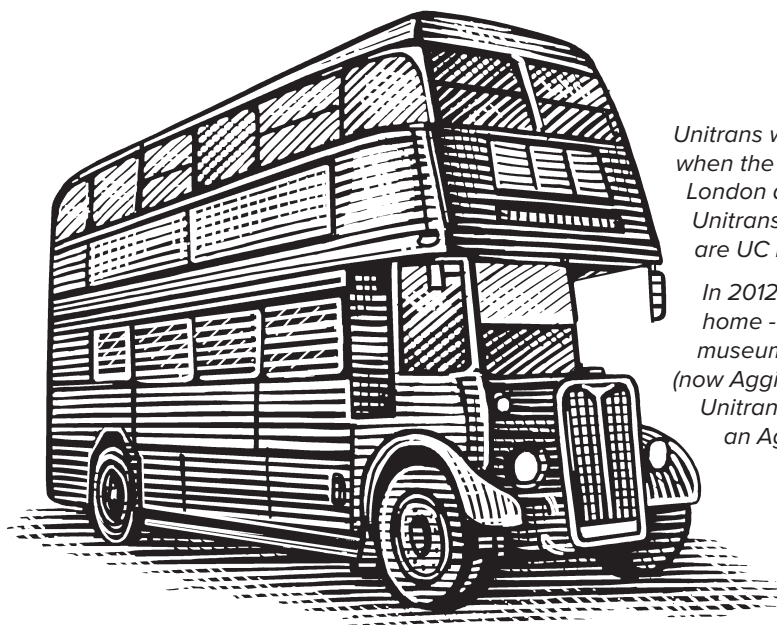
- **Six weeks before the qualifying exam,** submit the [Qualifying Exam Application](#). This will include your Qualifying Exam Committee membership. Additional forms are required for [remote members](#) (one member, not the chair, may be remote) or [external members](#) (non-UC faculty and non-faculty are considered external and require special approval).
 - The Graduate Advisor will only sign the Qualifying Examination Application once they have confirmed with the student's QE Chair that the Proposal is complete.
- **Take the Qualifying Exam.** The Qualifying Examination can have one of three outcomes: Pass; No pass with the option to retake all or part of the examination within a specified time period, or to satisfy specific requirements; Fail. The Chair of the Exam will submit the Report on Qualifying Examination for Admission to Candidacy.
 - The exam may be attempted only twice; on the second attempt only an outcome of Pass or Fail is allowed. Should a student receive a Fail on the first or second attempt, that student will be recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies for disqualification from the program.

Advancement to Candidacy. After completing all coursework, the TA requirement, the prospectus document and meeting, the proposal, and passing the Qualifying Exam, Ph.D. students must file a [Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Plan C](#) form.



Dissertation. The completion of the Ph.D. includes two main components: 1) a written dissertation and 2) a defense/final examination consisting of a public departmental seminar followed by a closed examination restricted to members of the Dissertation Committee. See the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) for more details.

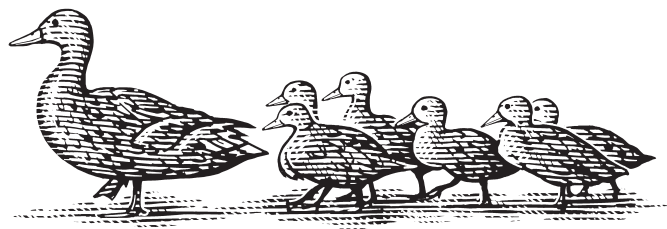
1. **Submit a complete draft** to the Dissertation Committee, who certifies that the dissertation is ready for presentation. Note that university policy gives one month for faculty to complete and return comments on a thesis draft, and there may be several rounds of edits. A minimum of two weeks before the dissertation defense/final examination and public departmental seminar, a complete and defensible dissertation must be submitted to the Dissertation Committee for review.
2. **Schedule your public seminar.** It should be during the academic year if possible, and it is recommended to use a time when most of the department can attend, such as the Friday Lunch Talks. The graduate program coordinator can help you find a time and place in the department, and it is the student's responsibility to add the seminar to the [department event calendar](#). The Faculty Advisor usually announces the seminar to the department by email.
3. **Public Seminar.** Students must present a public departmental seminar on the results of their work before a final draft can be accepted.
4. **Defense.** The dissertation defense follows the public departmental seminar and is a 1-2 hour long oral examination, restricted to members of the Dissertation Committee, on any aspects of the research. See the Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements for an explanation of the possible outcomes of the dissertation defense. The Dissertation Committee Chair will complete a [Report of Final Examination for Ph.D., Plan C](#) form.
5. **Collect signatures** from your dissertation committee on your Dissertation Title Page after you have given your Public Seminar and Defense.
6. **File the thesis with Graduate Studies.** For deadlines, formatting, and filing instructions, see the [Graduate Studies filing deadlines and process](#).
7. **Submit your Department of EPS Exit Checklist** to the Graduate Program Coordinator.



Unitrans was founded in 1968 as the University Transport System, when the Associated Students of UC Davis purchased two vintage London double decker buses to operate on two routes. All Unitrans drivers and supervisors, as well as most support staff, are UC Davis students working part-time.

In 2012, one of the original buses, designated RTL 1014, went home -- to the London's Ensignbus Transport Museum. The museum bought the 1950 bus through the campus Bargain Barn (now Aggie Surplus). RTL 1014 still has "ASUCD-City of Davis-Unitrans" lettering on the sides and a California license plate in an Aggie frame!

Financial Support and Employment



Cost of Attendance

Information on the cost Graduate Studies at UC Davis including cost-of living in UC Davis can be found here: <https://financialaid.ucdavis.edu/graduate/gradstudies/cost>

Employment

Graduate students admitted to the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program are offered a graduate support package. This support may take the form of employment as a Teaching Assistant (TA) or Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) and/or fellowships plus fee and tuition remission. Our ability to make and honor these commitments is crucial to our recruitment and retention of outstanding students.

Master's students are guaranteed two years of support while Ph.D. students are guaranteed five years of support, pending satisfactory academic progress. Students changing their degree objective or needing additional support beyond the guaranteed support package should reference the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) for program policies.

M.S. students changing to the Ph.D. after finishing the M.S. at UC Davis are guaranteed an additional four years of support for a total of six years of support. Students changing from the Ph.D. to the M.S. are guaranteed two total years of support. Students are still required to complete the degree within [normative time](#).

Employment Process. New students will need to be onboarded by the Academic Unit Shared Service Center (AUSS-C). All students with an appointment as a GSR, TA, Reader, or AI will get an offer letter each quarter, which they will need to sign and return to the EPS business office.

Graduate students are paid monthly at the end of the month. GSR, TA, Reader, and AI salaries are paid through the UC Path Payroll System (UC PATH). These paychecks arrive through direct deposit or as a paper check to your home address. Paystubs can be found at [UCPath](#). Taxes are withheld and salary reported on the W-2 form. Internal Fellowships are paid through the Banner system. These paychecks arrive through direct deposit or as a paper check available for pickup at Student Accounting in Dutton Hall. Paystubs can be found on the Student Accounting website. No taxes are withheld, but the student is responsible for reporting and/or paying taxes via the 1098-T form. See more tax information on the [Student Accounting Tax Information](#) website.

Be aware that students working as a 25% TA with a supplemental Graduate Program Fellowship will get two paychecks, of slightly different amounts because of the amount withheld for taxes. One is for the TA Salary, and one is the Internal Fellowship.

Salary scales. Each student job title is assigned a salary level according to the [salary scales](#). The descriptions and eligibility of each job title can be found on the [Graduate Studies Student Employment](#) page.

Direct Deposit. Sign up for payroll deposit at [UCPath](#). Sign up for direct deposit for travel, expense, and student accounting (fellowship) reimbursements at the [UC Davis Direct Deposit](#) website.

Family and Medical Leave. Please visit the Graduate Studies website for information about [Family and Medical Leave](#).

Union Representation. TAs, Readers, and AIs are all considered [Academic Student Employees \(ASEs\)](#) and fall under the UGSE/UAW union. GSRs are represented by the UAW 2865 union. Both union contracts can be found on the [UCOP Bargaining Unions & Contracts](#) webpage.

Types of employment

Policies and eligibility for graduate students to hold academic appointments are outlined in the [UC Davis Academic Personnel Manual \(APM\), Appendix II-B](#). Students must register for 12 units each quarter to be eligible to hold an academic appointment.

Graduate Student Researcher (GSR)

Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs) are hired to conduct research under the guidance of a Principal Investigator (PI), usually their thesis or dissertation advisor. Funding comes from research grants and the GSR is expected to work on research related to the grant. Students should discuss the requirements and terms of their GSR appointment with the PI. GSR availability depends on PI funding and departmental need for TAs.

Graduate Student Researchers are paid according to the [GSR Compensation Plan](#) for the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program. All GSRs are paid at 50% time over the academic year, and up to 100% time over the summer. Master's students and pre-candidacy Ph.D. students are hired at Step 2 rate and all post-candidacy Ph.D. students are hired at Step 4 on the GSR salary scales.

Teaching Assistant (TA)

Teaching Assistants are responsible for teaching in a specific course component such as a lab or discussion section for a class. They may have other duties such as grading, holding office hours, and joining class field trips. TA Job Descriptions in Geology can be found at EPSInfo [<https://epsinfo.geology.ucdavis.edu/links/ta-jobs.php>].

All TAs in the Department of EPS are required to complete the Center for Educational Excellence (CEE)'s TA Orientation [<https://cee.ucdavis.edu/tao>] program offered each Fall before their first appointment as a TA begins. TAs must also have completed or be enrolled in GEL 390: Methods of Teaching in Geology. Lastly, TAs must be qualified for the subject they will be teaching, as demonstrated by 1) a bachelor's degree in Geology or related fields, 2) knowledge of the field through prior work or academic experience and/or 3) prior enrollment in the course or its equivalent.

TAs are assigned each quarter by the Graduate Chair. The Graduate Program takes into account students' requests (collected in summer each year) as well as requests from the instructors of each course and departmental teaching needs when assigning graduate students to TA positions. Any positions that are not filled internally will be posted on Handshake [<https://icc.ucdavis.edu/find/resources/handshake>] before each term.

TAs are paid at a monthly rate according to the salary scales, either at a 25% or 50% time. 25% TAs work approximately 10 hours per week, or no more than 110 hours per quarter. 50% TAs work for approximately 20 hours per week, or no more than 220 hours per quarter. If a position is for 25% time, and there are no other sources of stipend (e.g., external fellowship or GSR), the equivalent to a 25% TA will be paid as a Graduate Program Fellowship, therefore meeting the funding guarantee provided to Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program students.

Reader

The Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences hires both undergraduate and graduate student readers to assist with various course duties like grading and proctoring. All available reader positions in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences will be posted on [Handshake](#) for students to apply to. The Instructor of Record for the class will choose a reader. Graduate Readers submit monthly timesheets on [TRS](#) and are paid hourly according to the salary scales.

Associate Instructor (AI)

The UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden is home to at least 31 species of mammals, 7 species of fish, 3 species of amphibians, 19 species of reptiles, 45 species of butterflies, 18 species of ants, and hundreds of species of other insects and invertebrates (confirmed and expected). More than 135 species of birds have been observed nesting or roosting in the Arboretum.



Occasionally, the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences has positions available for graduate students to be the primary instructor of record for a class. These positions are usually assigned by the Undergraduate Vice-Chair based on need and experience. *Special permission* is needed for an AI to teach an upper division course. Associate Instructor compensation is included in the salary scales, with the percentage appointment based on the type of class.

Tuition and Fees

Information about *tuition and fees* can be found online. You can view your bill online at *MyBill*.

Fee Remission. Fee remission is the process by which the university and the graduate program pays a student's tuition and fees. It is a benefit of employment. GSRs get full fee remission, and ASEs (TAs, Readers, and AIs) get partial fee remission, as determined by the *union*.

There are some fees not covered by fee remission or the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program. Some of these may come out of your paycheck automatically and some may require action on your behalf to ensure they are paid.

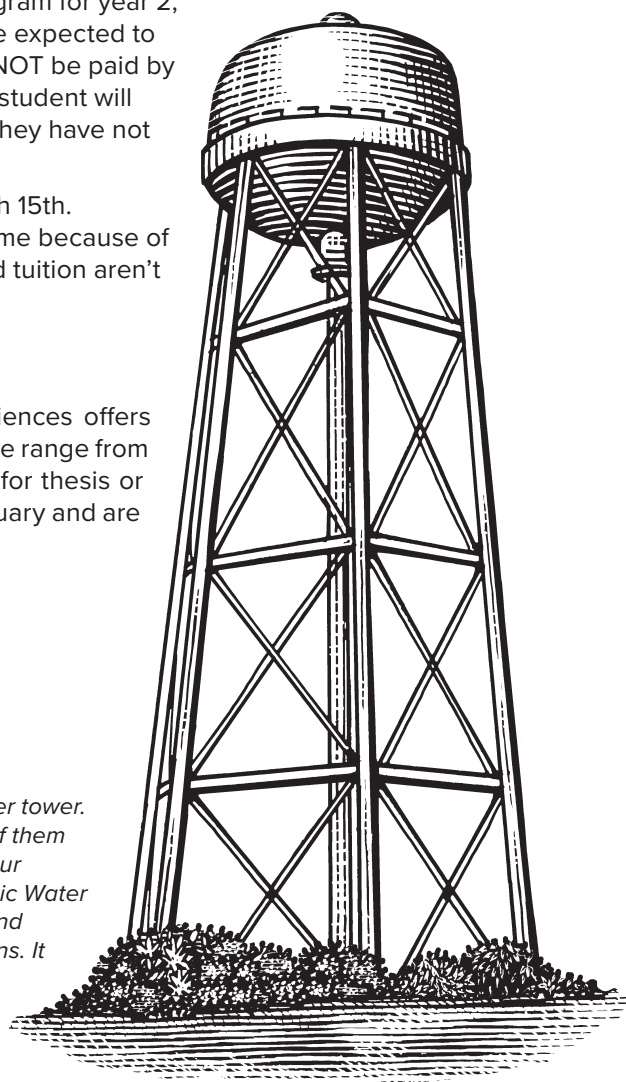
- International students are responsible for a one-time fee of \$159.
- All new students must pay a one-time *Document Fee* in Winter Quarter of \$150.
- Students will have to pay the Candidacy Fee upon advancing to candidacy (this pays for a variety of professional development opportunities on campus such as GradPathways).
- Some health center charges or copays are not included in fee remission.
- All first-year students' Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) is paid by their fee remission. International students' NRST is covered by the program for year 2, and is waived for years 3-5. After the first year, US Citizens are expected to become a resident of California; after the first year NRST will NOT be paid by the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program, and the student will be responsible for paying this amount (\$5,034 per quarter) if they have not become California residents.

Fees and tuition are due September 15th, December 15th, and March 15th. However, students may still see a balance in their fees due at that time because of the timing of payroll entry and fee remission. This is fine, as fees and tuition aren't considered late until the eighth week of the quarter.

Departmental Fellowships & Scholarships

Durrell Awards. The Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences offers research support each year in the form of Durrell Awards. These range from \$500-\$2,000 and can be used to help offset research costs for thesis or dissertation research. Applications are emailed out each February and are due in mid-March.

A popular symbol of UC Davis is the water tower. Davis has three water towers, with two of them located on campus. The water tower in our "backyard" is officially known as Domestic Water Tower No. 1. It was constructed in 1967 and has a storage capacity of 200,000 gallons. It bears the UC Davis logo and welcomes visitors at the south campus entry.



Todd Awards. Todd Awardees are chosen each year by the Graduate Advisors to support graduate students in the summer.

Rand Schaal Graduate Scholarship. Rand Schaal Graduate Scholarships offer “complete support of studies and research of promising Ph.D. graduate students in any field of physical geology (especially petrology or planetology)”. Awardees are chosen each year by the Graduate Advisors to support graduate students in the summer.

Internal Fellowships

UC Davis and Graduate Studies offers a variety of [internal fellowships](#), ranging from \$1,000 to \$50,000 per year. Prospective graduate students are encouraged to apply for fellowships by December 15th each year, and current students by January 15th each year.

Graduate Studies Travel Awards. During the Fall and Spring, [Travel Award](#) applications are open for travel to conferences.

External Fellowships

Graduate Studies is an excellent resource for [finding](#) and applying to [external fellowships](#) from private foundations, government agencies, and corporations.

Graduate Studies provides [matching funds](#) to supplement the tuition and fees offered by an external sponsor. Some matching commitments require Graduate Program support. If you are applying to external fellowships that may require matching funds, please contact the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Summer Funding

Some TA positions and Graduate Program Fellowships are available over the summer. The Graduate Program Coordinator will send an annual call to students for requests for summer support. Students should talk to their Faculty Advisor regarding GSR support over the summer.

Summer Internships. Summer internships can enrich postgraduate education by enhancing professional development, building new skills and professional networks. The Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program is supportive of graduate students doing a summer internship as part of their professional development. Although not an exhaustive list, here are examples of some [internship opportunities](#).

In order to maintain satisfactory progress towards degree objectives, faculty and students are encouraged to communicate openly about internship opportunities and balance research requirements with summer internship opportunities. Students who are funded part time in the summer through the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program may use their discretion to explore other scholarly or personal activities, including internships, during their unpaid time. These activities should be coordinated with the student's thesis adviser as part of the student's overall plan towards their degree.

International students should check with [Services for International Students and Scholars \(SISS\)](#) for approval to work at a paid or unpaid position over the summer.

Retirement Benefits over the Summer. Over the summer, students are not enrolled in units so an automatic and mandatory payroll process is triggered regarding their retirement benefits. 7.5% of a student's paycheck each month is taken out (pre-tax) and put into a personal retirement account called DCP Safe Harbor. When they are finished working for UC Davis, they can take this money out of that account (with a small penalty) or transfer it to another account like an IRA. This will affect the August 1st, September 1st, and October 1st paychecks. For more information, please see the [Voluntary UC Retirement Savings Program](#).

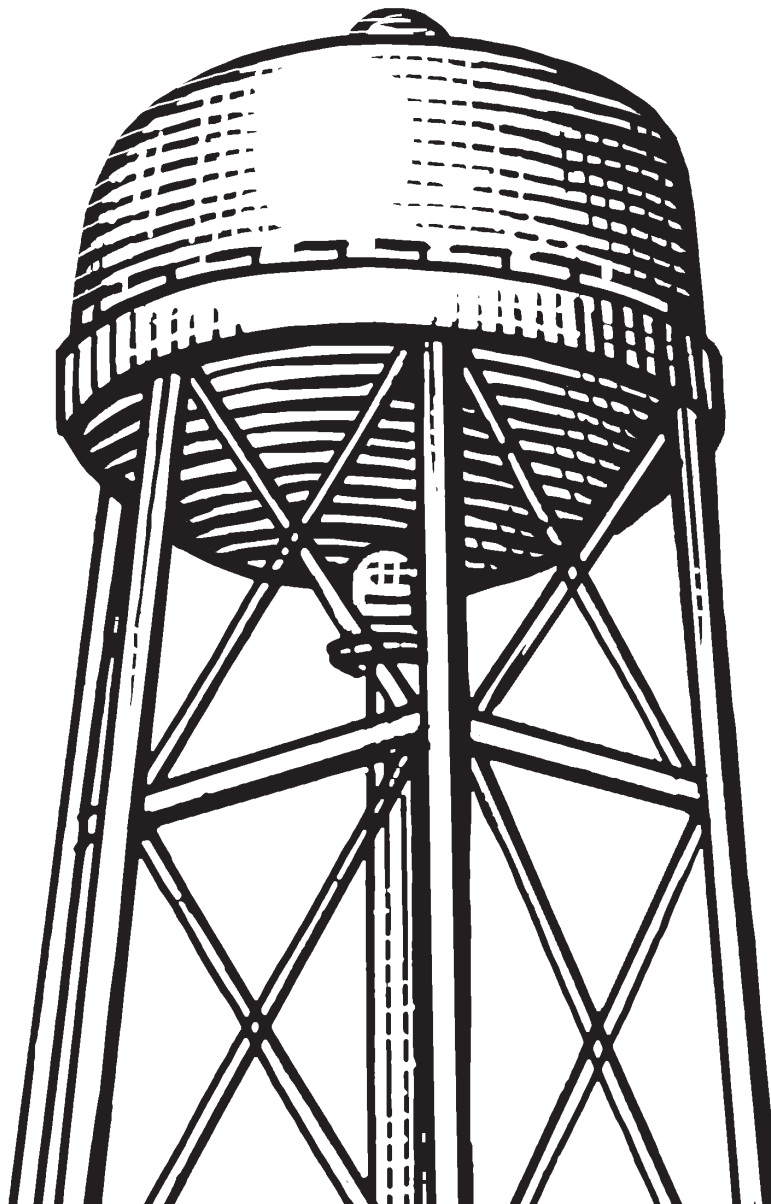
Financial Aid

Some students choose to pursue [Financial Aid](#) in the form of loans or other support. Graduate Studies offers an [Emergency Grant](#) and Financial Aid office offers several types of emergency and [short-term loans](#), including the Fall Quarter Graduate Transition Loan for incoming students.”

FAFSA. All graduate students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents are required to file a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) each year. Although the FAFSA can be filed at any time, it is strongly suggested that you file by the priority processing date of March 2. This form is used to determine financial need only. Financial need is a component of the eligibility criteria for many fellowships, including some Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program Fellowships, and for all forms of federal financial aid.

Campus Fee grant. Eligible students who file a FAFSA may receive a [Campus Fee Grant](#) in their student accounts each quarter.

Work-Study. Each year, the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program hires a limited number of students on Federal Work-Study funds. This program receives funds to supplement a GSR salary. Students assigned to work-study funds must complete a FAFSA, sign an offer letter, and fill out a [paper timesheet](#) for the quarter during which they are on work-study.



The Role of Graduate Students in the department of Earth and Planetary Sciences

Graduate students are not merely in the last stages of their formal education. More importantly, they are in the first stages of their scientific careers. Therefore, they must be viewed, and must view themselves, as professional colleagues to the faculty and the staff in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences. With this comes all the rights and responsibilities of a professional in the Department. This short section reviews those rights and responsibilities and outlines how graduate students can address any grievances they may have.

The Rights and Responsibilities of the Graduate Student.

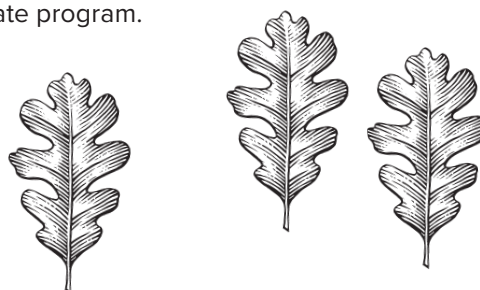
The graduate student has their responsibilities and rights spelled out in the [*Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*](#) issued by the Graduate Student Association and endorsed in principle by the UC Davis Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies. Below, we restate some of the more essential rights and responsibilities. This list is not complete, and students should read the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for a complete list and more details.

Rights.

1. A graduate student has a right to be respected as a person of merit and junior colleague upon gaining admission to a graduate program.
2. Graduate students have a right to an accurate description of the availability and the likelihood of financial and resource support within their programs.
3. Graduate students have a right to specific and concrete requirements for achieving an advanced degree. In the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program, these requirements are explicitly spelled out in the Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Student Handbook.
4. Graduate students have a right to have their progress towards achieving an advanced degree be evaluated in an objective manner and based on criteria that are understood by the graduate advisor and the student.
5. A graduate student has a right to regular feedback and guidance concerning his or her academic performance. (Ref. #3)
6. Graduate students have a right to not be discriminated against, such as actions based on a student's gender, race, age, sexual orientation, disability, religious or political beliefs.
7. Graduate students have a right to reasonable confidentiality in their communications with professors.
8. Graduate students have a right to refuse to perform tasks if those tasks are not closely related to their academic or professional development program.
9. Graduate students have a right to co-authorship in publications involving significant contributions of ideas or research work from the student.
10. Graduate students have a right to expect that their departments or graduate programs incorporate student representatives into the decision-making process at that level.

Responsibilities.

1. Graduate students have a responsibility to conduct themselves, in all educational activities, in a manner befitting an academic colleague. Graduate students' behavior should be a credit to themselves, the higher academic unit and the university.
2. Graduate students have a responsibility to devote an appropriate amount of time and energy toward achieving the advanced degree within "normative time", except when special circumstances apply.
3. Graduate students have a responsibility to provide accurate and honest reporting of research results and to uphold ethical norms in research methodology and scholarship.
4. Graduate students have a responsibility to participate in the campus community to the extent that each is able, and should leave the campus enriched in whatever ways possible.
5. Graduate students have a responsibility to take the initiative in asking questions that promote their understanding of the academic requirements and the financial particulars of their specific graduate program.
6. Graduate students have a responsibility to understand their role in the development of the relationship between faculty mentor and graduate student.
7. Graduate students have a responsibility to uphold the public service aspects of the mission of a public university, at a level appropriate to their ability and graduate program.



Resources

Academic Resources

- [Graduate Student academics](#) | degree requirements, policies, forms, and dates & deadlines
- [Library](#)

Community Resources

- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Students of Color \(GSoC\) Mentorship Program](#)
- [The First-Generation Grads Initiative](#) provides peer mentorship and professional development workshops for first-generation students.
- [Student Affairs](#) | Find your community within the many cultural, identity, and support centers on campus.
- [Center for Leadership Learning \(CLL\)](#) | Aims to educate and cultivate the next generation of leaders who have a strong sense of self-awareness, have the ability to work effectively with others, and who are civically and socially engaged.
- [Student Disability Center](#) | Campus unit designated to receive requests for accommodation, approve services, and coordinate support for students with disabilities to create equitable access to the University's educational programs.
- [Aggie Life](#) | A list of student clubs and organizations.

Mental Health, Physical Health and Advocacy Resources

- [Aggie Mental Health](#)
- [Thriving in Graduate School](#) program
- [Graduate Student Mental Health and Counseling](#) | *Student Health and Counseling Services is a confidential resource*
 - Reach a counselor at all hours by calling (530) 752-0871
- [Graduate Student Mentoring Resources](#)
- Aggie Compass | Their mission is to help mitigate the effects of food and housing insecurity on students, while working to change policy, systems and environment that will affect long term change.
- [Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs \(OSSJA\)](#) | Supports the University's educational mission by upholding standards of academic

honesty and responsible behavior, promoting student development, and assisting students in need.

- [Center for Advocacy, Resources, and Education \(CARE\)](#) | *confidential resource*
Dedicated to reducing the incidence and impact of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

Mental Health, Physical Health and Advocacy Resources *continued*

- [Harassment & Discrimination Assistance and Prevention Program \(HDAPP\)](#) | Supports the University's commitment to a harassment and discrimination-free work and learning environment for all members of the UC Davis, UC Davis Health, and University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) campuses.
- [Report Hate and Bias](#)
- [Sexual Violence Prevention and Response](#)
- [UC Davis Police](#)
- [Campus Recreation](#) | Enhances well-being and the educational experience in the UC Davis community through personal development and involvement in our dynamic programs, services and facilities.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources

- [Graduate Diversity at UC Davis](#)
- [Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)
- [Resources for Racial Trauma](#)
- [Tips for managing Socio-Political Stress](#)

Financial Resources

- [Graduate Student financial support](#) | Learn about internal and external fellowships, employment, and financial aid.
- [Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences financial support](#)

Career Resources

- [*Graduate Student professional development*](#) | GradPathways provides programming based on eight core competencies relating to professional and career development.
- [*Internship and Career Center \(ICC\) Advising for Graduate Students*](#) | Explore your interests, skills, and values that lead to your career through advising, workshops, career fairs, and more.

Additional Resources

- [*UC Davis Graduate Studies*](#)
- [*Graduate Student Campus Resource Guide*](#) | Housing, dining, transportation, health, exercise, entertainment, campus services, and student organizations



What to do if you are Having Problems with Individuals, Department Policies, or the University

Mediation Services and Grievance Procedures. On occasion, a student may find themselves in a dispute or difficulty with another individual (faculty, staff, or student), or with a Department policy. The student has a right to address these disputes and to make an effort to have them resolved. Below we have recommended procedures for addressing graduate student complaints and grievances. Students must be aware that, when their complaints result in a formal personnel action against a staff or faculty member, rules of confidentiality may apply that prohibit the student access to some information about their dispute. This can be very frustrating. Please see: http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/current-students/gs201_graduatestudentguide.pdf, <http://gsa.ucdavis.edu>, and <http://mediation.ucdavis.edu/>

We recommend the following sequence of procedures if you find you have a grievance against an individual.

1. Discuss the problem with the individual. You have the right to such a discussion without fear of retribution. Quite often disputes or grievances arise from simple misunderstandings. At other times, problems come about because of inadvertent insensitivity by one of the principals. In either case, the problems can be simply and even pleasantly cleared up between the two involved individuals.
2. Sometimes a dispute cannot be resolved between the principals. Or the student does not feel comfortable confronting the individual alone. If so, the student may discuss the problem with one of the Graduate Advisors. The student has the right to a confidential and objective review of the problem with the Advisor. Such a discussion can include informal and more formal characteristics.
 - In an informal discussion, the student can request total confidentiality, and the Graduate Advisor must respect that request (within limits set forth in the Policies and Procedures Manual of the University). The Graduate Advisor can offer opinions about the seriousness of the problem, its solution, and what the student should do next. At this stage the Advisor is not obligated to take any particular action, but must protect the confidentiality of the situation and must make an objective evaluation of the problem.
 - In a more formal discussion, the Advisor is requested to take some action, such as confronting the antagonist on behalf of the student, bringing the issue to a faculty meeting, or forwarding the issue to the administration. The Advisor may discuss the issue with other Graduate Advisors or the Department Chair, provided that none of them are principals in the dispute. The student has the right to request a written response from the Graduate Advisor explaining what action the advisor has taken, and why they have taken it. Under most circumstances the student can request this response within one week.
3. If the student is dissatisfied with the response of the Graduate Advisor, or if the authority of the Graduate Advisor is not sufficient, the student has a wide variety of options. If appropriate, the student may request a meeting with the Department Chair. The student has a right to a written response from the Chair about what action he or she has taken, and why he or she has taken it. Under normal circumstances the student can request this response within one week.
4. After, or instead of, the Department Chair, the student has the right to pursue a grievance in a number of ways. They may go to the Graduate Student Association at 752-6108. Alternatively, or in addition, the student may wish to confer with a number of individuals or offices for help with specific problems.

Specific examples of avenues for graduate students include:

- Grievances about the Graduate Program, Graduate Advisors, and general academic issues should be referred to Associate Dean, Office of Graduate Studies, 250 Mrak Hall, 752-0650.
- Concerns about sexual harassment should be forwarded to the **Harassment & Discrimination Assistance and Prevention Program (HDAPP)**. Complaints should be made promptly because time limits exist for some types of complaints and responses. If a student formally reports an incident of sexual harassment, the Program must make an official inquiry. However, students may make confidential inquiries by making an anonymous call to the Sexual Harassment Information Line (752-2255).

In general, a student's stay in graduate school should be a scientifically challenging, enjoyable experience, albeit one that occasionally causes frustration and stress, in which disputes between the student and others may arise. While these disputes often are easily resolved, they should not be left to fester over long periods of time. The student has a right to seek a solution so that normal progress can be made toward a degree and a fruitful, productive graduate career can result.

Masters (Plan I) – Advising Form

Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program | University of California, Davis

Please use this form to keep track of your progress and completion of various degree requirements. You will be asked to e-mail a PDF version to the Graduate Advisors before required meetings, and it can be a good tool to share with your major advisor. See the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) for detailed description of requirements.

Student Name: _____ Advisor: _____

Quarter Started: _____ Expected Quarter Finished (+2 yrs): _____

Year 1

Fall Quarter

- Introductory Meeting (before the start of the quarter) Date completed: _____
- CEE TA training (before the start of the quarter) Date completed: _____
- Take GEL 390: Methods of Teaching Geology Date completed: _____

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- Prospectus Document Date completed: _____
- Prospectus Meeting Date completed: _____
 - Submit Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form Date completed: _____
- Student Financial Support Meeting Date completed: _____
- Student Progress Assessment Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Begin coursework
- Background thesis research
- Formulate research question; preliminary data collection, analysis...

Year 2

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting Date completed: _____
- [Advance to Candidacy](#) Date completed: _____
 - Form thesis committee Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- Annual Advisory Committee Meeting
- Student Progress Assessment

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Finish coursework
- Begin writing thesis
- Finish collecting and analyzing data

Finishing your degree

- Finish writing (expect multiple rounds of revision)
- Submit draft of thesis to committee (2+ weeks prior to public seminar)
- Schedule final Public Seminar (2 weeks prior)
- Give final Public Seminar (2+ days before filing thesis)
- Obtain Thesis Cover Page signatures (after public seminar)
- [Submit thesis](#) and required filing paperwork to Graduate Studies (2+ days before the [filing deadline](#) for the quarter)
- Department Exit Checklist (before leaving)

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Courses

Course Number	Course Name	Units	Requirement	Quarter
GEL 390	Geology TA/Writing Course	2	Required	
GEL 290	Wednesday Seminar	1	Required	ALL
			Breadth #__	
			Breadth #__	
			Breadth #__	
			Depth	
			Depth	

Funding Record

	Quarter	GSR	TA	GPF	Fellowship	Other
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

PhD (Plan C) – Advising Form

Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program | University of California, Davis

Please use this form to keep track of your progress and completion of various degree requirements. You will be asked to e-mail a PDF version to the Graduate Advisor before required meetings, and it can be a good tool to share with your major advisor. See the [Earth and Planetary Sciences Ph.D. and M.S. Degree Requirements](#) for detailed description of requirements.

Student Name: _____ Advisor: _____

Quarter Started: _____ Expected Quarter Finished (+2 yrs): _____

Year 1

Fall Quarter

- Introductory Meeting (before the start of the quarter) Date completed: _____
- CEE TA training (before the start of the quarter) Date completed: _____
- Take GEL 390: Methods of Teaching Geology Date completed: _____

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- Prospectus Document Date completed: _____
- Prospectus Meeting Date completed: _____
 - Submit Prospectus Guidelines and Meeting Form Date completed: _____
- Student Financial Support Meeting Date completed: _____
- Student Progress Assessment Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Begin coursework
- Background thesis research
- Formulate research question; preliminary data collection, analysis...

Year 2

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting Date completed: _____
- Before Qualifying Exam / Advancing to Candidacy:
 - Teaching Assistant for at least one quarter Date completed: _____
 - Form QE committee Date completed: _____
- Proposal (due 4-8 weeks before QE) Date completed: _____

- Proposal Approval Form signed

Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- QE Application (6 weeks before exam)
- Qualifying Exam
- [Advance to Candidacy](#)
 - Form dissertation committee
- Finish coursework
- Student Financial Support Meeting
- Student Progress Assessment

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Continue collecting and analyzing data

Year 3

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting

Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- Annual Advisory Committee Meeting
- Student Financial Support Meeting
- Student Progress Assessment

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Continue collecting and analyzing data
- Begin writing dissertation

Year 4

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting

Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- Annual Advisory Committee Meeting
- Student Financial Support Meeting
- Student Progress Assessment

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Finish collecting and analyzing data
- Continue writing dissertation

Year 5

Winter Quarter

- Mid-Year Meeting

Date completed: _____

Spring Quarter

- Annual Advisory Committee Meeting
- Student Progress Assessment

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Annual Goals

- Finish collecting and analyzing data
- Finish writing thesis

Finishing your degree

- Finish writing (expect multiple rounds of revision)
- Submit draft of dissertation to committee (2+ weeks prior to public seminar)
- Schedule final Public Seminar and defense (2 weeks prior)
- Give final Public Seminar (2+ days before filing dissertation)
- Give defense (immediately following Public Seminar)
- Obtain Dissertation Cover Page signatures (after defense)
- Obtain [Report of Final Examination for PhD Plan C](#) from committee (after defense)
- [Submit dissertation](#) and required filing paperwork to Graduate Studies (2+ days before the [filing deadline](#) for the quarter)
- Department Exit Checklist (before leaving)

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Date completed: _____

Courses

Course Number	Course Name	Units	Requirement	Quarter
GEL 390	Geology TA/Writing Course	2	Required	
GEL 290	Wednesday Seminar	1	Required	ALL
			Breadth #__	
			Breadth #__	
			Breadth #__	
			Depth	
			Depth	
			Depth	
			Depth	
			Depth	

Funding Record

	Quarter	GSR	TA	GPF	Fellowship	Other
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						