This document is intended to clarify how the department implements the degree requirements defined in the Dartmouth College Bulletin of Organization, Regulations, and Courses (ORC). The ORC is the authoritative document that defines the degree requirements. If the ORC and this document are in conflict, the ORC supersedes this document.

In addition, the policies implemented by the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies apply to all of the graduate students in the Earth Sciences graduate program and students are referred to appropriate documents published by the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies on their website.

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### Summary of key dates

#### Important dates for MS candidates

| Year 1 | April 1\(^{st}\)  
| Submit names of committee members to department Graduate Coordinator | June 15\(^{th}\)  
| Submit thesis proposal signed by committee |
| Year 2 | Late April/Early May  
| Get thesis committee approved by the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies | Prior to Scheduling Defense  
| Get degree requirement form signed by Graduate Coordinator |

#### Important dates for PhD candidates

| Year 1 | April 1\(^{st}\)  
| Submit names of summer research committee members | June 15\(^{th}\)  
| Submit summer research proposal signed by committee, receive literature papers for qualifying exam |
| Year 2 | Prior to Dec. 15\(^{th}\)  
| Present and defend a thesis proposal before thesis committee | Prior to Feb. 1\(^{st}\)  
| Present and defend results of summer research project, oral qualifying exam |
| Year 3 | Prior to June 1\(^{st}\)  
| Yearly committee meeting-20 min. presentation. Submit summary paragraph signed by advisor to Graduate Coordinator | Prior to Scheduling Defense  
| Get degree requirement form signed by Graduate Coordinator |
| Year 4/5 | Prior to June 1\(^{st}\)  
| |

### Guarini School Deadlines

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1) General information regarding advanced degrees in the Earth Sciences

a) Degrees offered— The Department of Earth Sciences awards both M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Earth Sciences.

The M.S. and Ph.D. degrees alike require a solid background in the Earth sciences. Accordingly, many aspects of curriculum and committee selection, as well as academic requirements and regulations given below, apply to both degrees. The main differences between the degrees are the scope and depth of the thesis investigation, depth of knowledge in the disciplines that most closely relate to the thesis, and level of independence in carrying out the research.

b) Expectations of publication— Both the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at Dartmouth require a written thesis. The M.S. degree is a professional degree, and the M.S. thesis is expected to report on research that is ultimately worthy of peer-reviewed publication. A Ph.D. thesis is expected to report on research worthy of three or more peer-reviewed publications, the majority of which should be published or in review/revision by the time of completion of the Ph.D.

c) Grading in graduate courses— The following grades are used in graduate-level courses: HP (high pass), P (pass), LP (low pass), and CT/NC (Credit/No Credit). Credit/No Credit is assigned for EARS 141-143 (thesis research), EARS 145 (field instruction), and EARS 149 (undergraduate teaching). Consult the ORC for explanations of these grades. When graduate students take undergraduate courses, passing grades of C+ and lower will be considered a low pass. If a student receives two low passes, their status in the program will be reconsidered, and dismissal from the graduate program is an option. In general, if a graduate student fails to meet the program key deadlines or fails consistently to make reasonable progress toward completion of assigned research and coursework, they may be also be subject to dismissal from the graduate program.
2) Curriculum and advisory-committee selection

a) Initial advising— At the beginning of each fall term, first-year graduate students meet individually with their academic advisor to discuss their individual course of study for the year and beyond. A student may request a change of academic advisors at any time; this request should be made in writing to the Graduate Coordinator or Chair, and is usually granted if all parties involved agree to the proposed changes. The graduate school requires that a student have a thesis committee at all times. Until a graduate student’s regular thesis (or summer research) committee is named during the Spring term of the first year of residency, the Department Graduate Coordinator and the Department Chair will serve as default members of the committee and will be available to the graduate student for academic advising. In the case that the advisor also serves as either the Graduate Academic Coordinate or Department Chair, the Graduate Ombudsperson will serve as a member of the committee.

In preparation for the initial meeting with one’s advisor to identify a tentative course schedule, each student is encouraged to fill out the Departmental curriculum form attached at the end of this document, listing EARS and past science courses one has completed and the courses one proposes to take during the next two academic years. The student should consider what courses previously taken may be used to fulfill program prerequisites and requirements. Whether a course taken elsewhere can be used to fulfill program prerequisites and requirements is determined by the Graduate Coordinator unless the Graduate Coordinator is also the student’s advisor, in which case the determination is made by the Department Chair. No course taken elsewhere may count toward program prerequisites or requirements unless approved by the Graduate Coordinator or Department Chair. In determining if a course taken elsewhere can fulfill program prerequisites or requirements, you may be required to provide a copy of the course syllabus and the Graduate Coordinator (or Department Chair) may consult with relevant department faculty.

b) Registration/enrollment requirements— Graduate students must enroll for at least 3 academic credits each term. These credits may include EARS 141-143 (thesis research) and EARS 149 (supervised teaching). Note that EARS 142 is equivalent to two course credits and EARS 143 equivalent to three course credits. When enrolling in thesis research, students should choose only one of EARS 141-143. Thus, a student taking a graduate seminar (e.g., EARS 201) and spending the rest of their time doing thesis research would enroll in EARS 201 and EARS 142. Similarly, a student doing full time thesis research need only enroll in EARS 143.
Specific coursework requirements are outlined in section 3. Otherwise, there is significant flexibility and available time for individual students, in consultation with their advisor and thesis committee, to customize their own graduate training. In addition to departmental offerings, the EARS faculty recommends that students consider relevant courses in the Departments of Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics, as well as in the Thayer School of Engineering. Course offerings from these Departments are described in the ORC and on respective Departmental websites.

Overall, foresight and prior thought are necessary when considering which Dartmouth courses to take: many upper-level courses eligible for graduate credit offered within the EARS Department and elsewhere on campus are normally offered only in alternate years. Thus, we suggest that each student develop a tentative graduate curriculum that spans two full years, at a minimum.

c) Courses outside Dartmouth— The EARS faculty recognize that there are many professionally rewarding and research-relevant short courses and full-term courses offered elsewhere that can complement our own course offerings. The EARS faculty are willing, on a case-by-case basis, to provide financial support for costs associated with enrollment and travel in such off-campus courses, so that a student can make the most of their time in our program. A student’s request for such support will include a written justification for a reasonable amount, and at least one letter of support from the student’s primary advisor and/or members of the student’s research committee. Normally the department will only provide funding for one course outside Dartmouth per student per degree.

A student undertaking a full-term course (or other pursuit) outside Dartmouth must apply to the Guarini School (through the Graduate Coordinator) for a leave of absence. Such leaves are generally approved only after a student has completed three consecutive terms on campus. During a leave term, a student is generally not paid and is responsible for their own health insurance fee (insurance must be maintained while on leave).

If the student’s schedule elsewhere permits the registration for EARS 142 at Dartmouth (i.e. there is sufficient time beyond the external work to conduct 2 credits worth of independent research), no leave of absence is required.

d) Employment outside Dartmouth— The Department recognizes that graduate students will occasionally find rewarding opportunities for professional growth outside of the Department and, in any event, have additional financial needs. The policy for compensated work outside of one’s home academic Department is governed by the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and articulated in the Graduate Student Handbook as follows:
Graduate students who are fully supported (a full tuition scholarship and a full stipend) cannot normally receive additional payment from Dartmouth College for services rendered and cannot normally accept employment outside the College while enrolled. Exceptions may be granted in cases of unique academic or professional benefit or documented financial hardship. Any exception will normally not exceed 8 hours per week and must have the written approval of the graduate student’s advisor, Department Chair or Graduate Program Committee, and the Dean of the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.
3) Requirements and guidelines - all degrees

a) Prerequisites - all degrees: To be considered for admission to the Earth Sciences graduate program a prospective student must have completed an undergraduate science major with broad background in Earth Science, for which the coursework should have included the following:

i) The equivalent of Dartmouth courses Math 3 and 8.
ii) The equivalent (or higher level) of any two of the following Dartmouth course sequences:
   (1) Chemistry 5 and 6;
   (2) Physics 3 and 4 (or 13 and 14);
   (3) Biology 11 and 16

If a student is admitted into the graduate program without having completed such courses, the student must fulfill these prerequisites in addition to the specific degree requirements described below.

b) Required core curriculum - all degrees: All first-year graduate students are required to enroll in EARS 201, 202 and 203 in sequence, offered in fall, winter and spring terms each year, respectively. These courses provide an opportunity to build a spirit of collaboration among the members of an incoming cohort, as well as an introduction to regional geology/glaciology and the development of critical professional skills, including pedagogy and science communication. In special cases (required field seasons during one of these terms, for example), one or more of these courses may be delayed to the second year.

c) Per Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies requirements, each graduate student is required to TA at least one course. An essential element of graduate education at Dartmouth is the experience gained in teaching other students; this expectation acknowledges that aim. To fulfill this requirement, the student must be enrolled in either EARS 145 or EARS 149 during the term the student serves as a TA.

d) Specific requirements - M.S.

i) EARS 117 or 118

ii) Two additional courses carrying graduate credit. Of these, one may be from the EARS 270–279 series (topical literature). Courses not eligible for course credit toward a graduate degree include special project research (EARS 131), thesis research (EARS 141-143), supervised field instruction (EARS 145), and undergraduate teaching (EARS 149). With approval from their thesis committee, an M.S. student may transfer no
more than 1 course credit from another institution to count toward fulfilling these requirements.

iii) **Complete the equivalent of three terms (nine course credits) of thesis research for registered credit (EARS 141-143).** See section 2)b) for additional details regarding EARS 141-143.

iv) **Submit names of thesis committee.** Additional information on committee membership is given in section 4.

v) **Submit a thesis proposal.** The submitted thesis proposal must be signed by all members of one’s committee, signifying their approval. This document should be prepared in close collaboration with one’s research advisor.

vi) It is expected that, at a minimum, a student will **meet with the Dartmouth members of their committee at least** once during the winter term of their 2nd year to give a 20-minute presentation on the progress of their research. After this presentation, the committee will discuss the student’s progress and determine what is required to ensure that they maintain satisfactory progress. **It is the graduate student’s responsibility to prepare a short summary of this meeting, and submit a copy, signed by the student and their advisor, to the Graduate Coordinator.**

vii) **Complete a thesis of professional quality and pass a final oral defense of the thesis.** A near-final draft of the thesis is due to committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense. No defense may be scheduled until: a) membership of the thesis committee is approved by the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies; b) a degree certification form is approved by the Department Graduate Coordinator. See section 5)d).

e) **Specific requirements- Ph.D.**

i) **Satisfactorily complete the following required courses or their equivalents,** if not already having done so prior to entering the Ph.D. Program.

1) **EARS 107**—Mathematical Modeling in the Earth Sciences
2) **EARS 118**—Advanced Methods for Environmental Data Analysis
3) **MATH 23**—Differential equations. It is strongly suggested that Math 23 be completed in the first two years of one’s Dartmouth coursework if not already completed by start of the graduate program. It is the responsibility of the student and their research committee to complete this requirement in a timely way, as well as to use the opportunities it
affords to pursue further advanced quantitative coursework as appropriate.

(4) One upper-level Science or Engineering course outside the Department eligible for graduate credit and approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

ii) **Satisfactorily complete a minimum of three additional courses carrying graduate credit beyond the above required courses, for a total of nine graduate credits.** Of these three, a maximum of two courses from the EARS 270-279 series (topical literature) courses may be counted, including the same course twice. Courses not eligible for course credit towards a graduate degree include special project research (EARS 131), thesis research (EARS 141-143), supervised field instruction (EARS 145), and supervised undergraduate teaching (EARS 149). At the discretion of the thesis committee, some courses below the 100 level from outside the department (particularly ENGS) may be counted towards this requirement in addition to the single course required by section 3)e)i)4).

iii) **Submit names of thesis committee.** Additional information on committee membership is given in section 4.

iv) **Submit a summer research project proposal.** The submitted project proposal must be signed by all members of one’s committee, signifying their approval. This document should be prepared in close collaboration with one’s research advisor.

v) **Successfully pass a qualifying exam set by the EARS faculty.** See section 5)b) for details on the qualifying exam.

vi) **Successfully present and defend the results from one’s summer research project.** All members of one’s summer research committee must be present at this exam. Additional information about scheduling and the nature of this defense is given in section 5)b).

vii) **Present and defend a thesis proposal before one’s thesis proposal committee. A draft of the thesis proposal is due to committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense.** While recommended that the outside committee member be present at one’s proposal defense, it is not required. Additional information about scheduling and the nature of this defense is in section 5)c).

viii) **Submit a copy of the thesis proposal,** signed by the committee, to the Graduate Coordinator.
ix) After the third year of one’s Ph.D. research, it is expected that, at a minimum, a student will meet with the Dartmouth members of their committee once during the winter term each year to give a 20-minute presentation on the progress of their research. After this presentation, the committee will discuss the student’s progress and determine what is required to ensure that they maintain satisfactory progress. It is the graduate student’s responsibility to prepare a short summary of this meeting and to provide a copy of this summary to the Graduate Coordinator. This summary must be signed by the graduate student and the advisor.

x) **Complete a thesis meeting the highest standards of professional scholarship.** The thesis may be a series of published (or at least publishable) papers linked by appropriate text. A near-final **draft of the thesis is due to the committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense.** No defense may be scheduled until: i) membership of the thesis committee is approved by the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies; ii) a degree completion form is approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

xi) **Pass a final oral defense of the thesis before the Thesis Committee.** All other members of the faculty are encouraged to attend this defense. The thesis defense will be preceded by a public oral presentation of the candidate’s research, giving all faculty and students a chance to ask questions or offer comments. See section 5d).

f) **Thesis Submission - all degrees**

i) **Submit one signed copy of the thesis to the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies for editorial review.** Details on the required formatting of theses are available online. Pending editorial approval of one’s thesis by the Guarini School, the candidate will **upload the final version of their thesis to ProQuest** by following the “Submitting an electronic Thesis” link through the Guarini School website.

ii) **Optional bound copies**—Directions for obtaining personal bound copies of the thesis are given when the thesis is uploaded. A credit card must be used. Any remaining student research funds can be used for extra copies.
4) Thesis and exam committee membership

a) **General guidelines** for the composition of one’s thesis committee are given in the Graduate Student Handbook from the Guarini School. The student and primary research advisor will choose the other members of this committee during their first year no later than the April 1st deadline, and submit these names to the Graduate Coordinator. The composition of this committee may change as a student’s academic interests evolve. Final approval of any thesis defense committee rests with the Dean of the Guarini School. To this end, prior to scheduling the defense of one’s thesis for either M.S. or Ph.D. degrees, the degree candidate must submit the names of the members of the thesis defense committee for approval by the Dean. The necessary form for this submission is available from the Graduate Coordinator.

b) **M.S. Committees** generally consist of three faculty members from the EARS Department (including the advisor). One of the three may be, but is not required to be, from outside the Department. With approval from the Guarini Dean, the third member of the thesis committee may be an emeritus faculty member, research faculty member, or other similar Ph.D.-level expert with a demonstrated record of active and on-going peer-reviewed research and who is qualified to critique the student’s work.

c) **Ph.D. Committees** consist of a total of at least four members: A minimum of three full-time Dartmouth faculty members, at least two of which must be from the EARS Department (including the advisor), plus an external member with a faculty-equivalent appointment outside of Dartmouth. With approval from the Guarini Dean, the third internal member of the thesis committee may be an emeritus faculty member, research faculty member, or other similar Ph.D.-level expert with a demonstrated record of active and on-going peer-reviewed research and who is qualified to critique the student’s work. Also with approval from the Guarini Dean, the external committee member may be a staff scientist at a research facility (e.g., USGS, CRREL, NASA). In these cases, the external committee member should have a demonstrated record of active and on-going peer-reviewed research and should be uniquely qualified to critique the student’s work. The external member may participate in meetings and defenses in person or via videoconference.
5) Oral exams and dissertation defenses in the M.S. and Ph.D. programs

a) Scheduling—The Summer Research Defense (Ph.D.), the Dissertation Proposal Defense (Ph.D.), and final Dissertation defenses (both M.S. and Ph.D.) should be scheduled at times when a maximum of members of the Department can attend. Students and advisors should work together to coordinate all examinations and defenses during a term to assure best-possible attendance and departmental faculty participation.

Before you can schedule your final dissertation defense, you must make sure you have met all of your degree requirements. In order to do this, you may need to meet with the Graduate Coordinator to review your academic record.

Once it is determined that you have met all the degree requirements, the Graduate Coordinator will sign the Degree Certification form. You will show this signed form to the Departmental Administrator and then you will be able to schedule a date and time to defend.

After you defend and are ready to turn in your thesis, you must have the Degree Certification form signed by the Department Chair and give a signed copy to the Departmental Administrator for your file. The original version of this form is to be submitted to the Guarini School of Graduate and Advanced Studies Office along with the number of required copies of your thesis.

Please note: Once the Graduate Coordinator signs the Degree Certification form and you show it to Departmental Administrator to schedule your defense, you must hold onto this form until after your defense for chair signature. You may ask the Dept. Administrator to place this signed form in your department file for safekeeping.

b) Summer research defense and oral qualifying exam for Ph.D. Candidates—The candidate will arrange to present and defend their summer research results before the summer research committee. At the same time, the candidate must pass an oral qualifying exam based on an understanding of the literature related to the candidate’s subdiscipline.

Any candidate who does not successfully pass the summer-research defense by March 31st of their second year, unless there are extenuating circumstances, will be dismissed from the Ph.D. program, and admitted to the M.S. program.

The summer research defense will be preceded by a public oral presentation of the background, aims, methods, results, and conclusions from the candidate’s summer research. After the presentation, all faculty and students
will be given a chance to ask questions or offer comments. At the conclusion of the open session, the candidate and committee will enter a closed session. Only the candidate, members of the summer research committee, and any member of the Earth Sciences faculty may be present during this defense. During the defense, the candidate’s approach to research will be scrutinized for its significance, timeliness, logical coherence, and optimization of research approaches. Please note that the purpose of this exercise is for the Ph.D. candidate to successfully demonstrate to the faculty that they can propose, design, execute and report on a ‘stand-alone’ research project.

In addition to the closed oral defense of the summer research project (approximately 1 hour), time in the closed session will be given to a more general qualifying exam (up to 2 additional hours for a total ~3 hour closed defense). At the time of approval of the summer research proposal, the candidate will be given two papers, potentially unrelated to the specifics of the project, by each Summer Research committee member (with a maximum of 6 papers for students with committees larger than 3). These papers could be anything from recent papers in the field or more classic papers selected by the committee member. The qualifying portion of the exam will be devoted to discussion of these papers – the expectation is that the candidate will read them in detail, discuss them with committee members prior to the defense, and read very broadly around those topics so as to be able to answer detailed questions related to the contribution.

At the conclusion of the summer-research defense, the summer research committee will evaluate the student’s performance and preparation to pursue Ph.D. degree in the following terms:

i) Unconditionally invite the candidate to write and defend a Ph.D. thesis proposal;
ii) Conditionally invite the candidate to write and defend a Ph.D. thesis proposal after completion of remedial action(s);
iii) Invite the candidate to re-defend their research and/or take the oral exam at a later date; this option will only be made available during the first defense;
iv) Accept the student into the M.S. program.

In the case of a conditional pass (option 5)b)ii), above), which is assigned if, in the committee’s view, the candidate fails to adequately defend the results from their summer research or lacks preparation in certain areas of their Earth science background, the committee will advise remedial action. Such action may include the candidate’s completion of additional courses, directed reading with a faculty member, assigned teaching assistantships, or additional research. It is the candidate’s responsibility to assure that any deficiencies are made up expeditiously. The candidate may not defend a thesis proposal until all recommended remedial actions are complete.
In the event of option 5)b)iv), above, or in the event that a Ph.D. candidate fails to schedule and satisfactorily pass their summer-research defense by the appointed deadline, the candidate will be admitted into the M.S. program. In this event, and given successful completion of one’s M.S., the student must re-apply to the Ph.D. program if they wish to continue to pursue a Ph.D. degree.

c) **Dissertation proposal defense**— A draft of one’s proposal for Ph.D. research must be submitted to the members of one’s Thesis Committee at least two weeks prior to the proposal defense. The public presentation of the proposal will be followed by a closed-door committee meeting (open to any interested faculty). The purpose of this meeting is to further evaluate and refine the dissertation proposal, in order to make the proposal and subsequent dissertation the strongest possible document.

If the committee finds that the candidate lacks preparation in certain areas of their Earth science background, the committee will advise remedial action. Such action may include taking of additional courses, directed reading with a faculty member, assigned teaching assistantships, or additional research. It is the candidate’s responsibility to assure that any deficiencies are made up expeditiously.

If the committee finds the dissertation proposal and defense unacceptable, the candidate may be given an opportunity to revise the proposal and defend it again during the next academic term. Two successive failures will automatically result in dismissal of the candidate from the Ph.D. program. At the discretion of the thesis committee, the student may be admitted into the M.S. program.

If a Ph.D. candidate has not defended their thesis proposal by December 15th of their third year, pending any extenuating circumstances, progress in the program will be considered unsatisfactory and the candidate’s funding may be revoked, and/or they may be dismissed from the Ph.D. program. At the discretion of the thesis committee, the student may be admitted into the M.S. program.

d) **Final M.S. or Ph.D. dissertation defense**— Candidates for M.S. and Ph.D. degrees must present a public presentation of their thesis research, followed by a private meeting with the thesis committee. A near-final draft of the dissertation must be submitted to committee members a minimum of **two weeks** prior to the defense. Students must arrange scheduling of the defense with the committee prior to making any final arrangements with outside examiners. At the end of the closed-door session, the thesis committee will indicate one of the following:
i) Approved
ii) Approved with minor revision
iii) Requiring major revisions
iv) Fail

If major revisions are required, the committee will provide a summary of the main comments and requirements, and a schedule for revisions and completion of the degree. If the candidate fails the final defense, they may be given an opportunity to revise the thesis and defend it again during the next academic term. Two successive failures will automatically result in dismissal of the candidate from the program.
6) Students holding previous graduate credits and degrees

a) Students with graduate credits from elsewhere— A student entering the Dartmouth EARS graduate program with graduate credits from another institution may, at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator, transfer up to 6 course credits towards the PhD. If any of these courses are identical in content to the EARS requirements, they may be counted as such, exclusive of the EARS 201-203 and EARS 270-279 series. Irrespective of the number of credits transferred in this way, at least one course numbered 100-199 taken at Dartmouth is required.

b) Students with an M.S. from Dartmouth— An EARS student currently enrolled in the M.S. program who wishes to continue toward the Ph.D. degree should proceed as follows:
   i) Notify the faculty of their plan promptly and in writing, outlining research interests. Early notification will facilitate the development of a coherent M.S.- Ph.D. program.
   ii) Apply formally to be admitted to the EARS Ph.D. program by completing the standard graduate application form. The application should provide a statement of intent for the Ph.D. The applicant should make sure to provide an updated transcript and, if necessary, updated letters of recommendation and GRE scores.
   iii) The student must complete all the regular Ph.D. degree requirements within the regular timeframe that begins upon matriculation to the Ph.D. program. However, students may opt to complete some of the degree requirements at an earlier date. Also, with the approval of their Ph.D. committee, a student continuing on to a Ph.D. degree may use EARS 141-143 to count toward the nine graduate credits required of the Ph.D. degree.
   iv) In parallel with the policy pertaining to students entering with a M.S. from elsewhere, if the student completes the M.S. degree, the student can count up to 6 courses taken for the M.S. towards the Ph.D. requirements.
# TWO-YEAR COURSE PLAN WORKSHEET

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