WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, M.S.

The water resources management (WRM) program is an interdisciplinary graduate program leading to a master of science (M.S.) degree in water resources management. The program addresses the complex, interdisciplinary aspects of managing water resources by helping students integrate the biological and physical sciences (which identify and assess problems) with engineering (which defines technological alternatives) as well as law and the social sciences (which assess needs and potential for institutional response). Through the WRM program, a student gains breadth in relevant planning and management areas while developing depth in an area specialty.

The water resources management degree is designed to prepare students for employment as water resources management professionals. Rather than conduct individual research projects, WRM students participate in a summer group practicum workshop with a water resources management focus. Students who wish to add individual research credentials to their records frequently arrange to complete a second, simultaneous master’s program in one of the university’s traditional departments. Those interested primarily in individual research may wish to consider the Nelson Institute’s environment and resources program as an alternative. The WRM program does not offer a doctoral degree.

Any person who attended an accredited institution and earned an undergraduate degree there in the biological sciences, earth sciences, economics, education, engineering, history, journalism, landscape architecture, law, mathematics, physical science, political science, urban and regional planning, or other suitable field may apply for admission to the WRM program.

Two tracks are available. All applicants should apply for the regular 45-credit track, which provides depth in an area specialty in addition to breadth in resource management and planning. The alternate track (30 to 44 credits) is for those who have at least three years of pertinent professional experience or for those advanced students who already have a related master’s degree prior to entering the program. Either such candidate may appeal for the alternate track based on their background. The alternate track, also known as the reduced-credit track, can be pursued with the consultation of one’s faculty advisory committee once that candidate is enrolled in the program. The candidate’s advisory committee and the program chairperson make the final determination as to whether or not the alternate track is appropriate. No thesis is required for either track, but every WRM student must complete the 2-credit spring planning seminar and the associated 4-credit summer group practicum workshop.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext) in addition to the requirements of the program.

MASTER’S DEGREES
M.S., with available reduced-credit track

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT
M.S.: 45 credits
M.S.: reduced-credit track: 30–44 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT
16 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT
Half of degree coursework (M.S.: 23 credits out of 45 total credits; M.S.: reduced-credit track—contingent number of credits depending upon how many the student has to satisfy from 30–44) must be in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle).

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

With faculty advisory committee and program chair approval, students are allowed to count graduate coursework from other institutions. The number of such credits is determined on a case-by-case basis. Coursework completed five or more years prior to admission to the program is not allowed to satisfy graduate degree or graduate coursework requirements.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the program.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

With faculty advisory committee and program chair approval, students are allowed to count up to 15 credits of coursework taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Such credits from courses numbered 300 and higher can count toward graduate residency and graduate degree requirements. Credits from graduate-level courses (courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (http://my.wisc.edu/CourseGuideRedirect/BrowseByTitle)) can count toward the graduate coursework requirement. Coursework completed five or more years prior to admission to the program is not allowed to satisfy graduate residency, graduate degree, or graduate coursework requirements.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED
15 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT
3.00 GPA required
OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS
Grades of BC or C are not typically accepted toward program requirements unless the grade is allowed by the student’s faculty advisory committee and the program chair. Grades of BC and C may not be used in the area specialty category. A maximum of 3 credits graded S may be counted toward program requirements if approved by the student’s faculty advisory committee and the program chair. Courses that are audited or graded pass/fail or credit/no credit will not count toward program requirements.

PROBATION POLICY
The status of a student falls into one of the following three categories:

1. Good standing (progressing according to standards; any funding guarantee remains in place).
2. Probation (not progressing according to standards but permitted to enroll; loss of funding guarantee; specific plan with dates and deadlines in place in regard to removal of probationary status).
3. Unsatisfactory progress (not progressing according to standards; not permitted to enroll, dismissal, leave of absence or change of advisor or program).

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE
All students must assemble a three-member faculty advisory committee that represents a minimum of two departments, preferably no later than their second semester in the program. To meet the interdisciplinary requirement the committee must include members tenured in one of the natural sciences divisions (Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences) and one of the social sciences divisions (Social Studies, Arts & Humanities).

ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS
All students must hold an evaluation and guidance conference with their faculty advisory committee, preferably no later than their third semester in the program.

TIME CONSTRAINTS
Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS
No language requirements.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
- Students will expand their knowledge of the physical, chemical, biological, and social sciences and learn how to apply this knowledge to the management of water resources.
- Students will understand water resource decision-making at governance levels from local to national.
- Students will be able to use a wide range of analytical tools to sustainably manage water resources.
- Students will be able to participate in as well as lead interdisciplinary teams.
- Students will be able to orally and in writing communicate to stakeholders the findings and recommendations of interdisciplinary projects.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
- Students will have an understanding of professional and ethical responsibility.

ADMISSIONS

DEADLINES
Application materials for water resources management must be received by December 15 for admission to the following summer session or fall semester and by October 15 for admission to the following spring semester.