

# ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION: ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATION AND INFORMATICS, M.S.

## POLICIES

### GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### NAMED OPTION-SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### PRIOR COURSEWORK

##### Graduate Work from Other Institutions

No credits from another institution are allowed to count toward the program.

##### UW–Madison Undergraduate

With program approval, up to six credits of selected coursework taken as a UW–Madison undergraduate student may count toward the EOI program curriculum. Those credits taken as an undergraduate student cannot count toward the graduate residence or graduate coursework requirements, but they can count toward the graduate degree requirement if the courses were at least 300 level and completed within three years of matriculating in the program.

##### UW–Madison University Special

With program approval and payment of the difference in tuition (between special student and graduate student), up to six credits of selected coursework taken as a UW–Madison special student may count toward the EOI program curriculum. Those credits taken as a special student can count toward the graduate residence and graduate degree requirements if the courses were at least 300 level and completed within three years of matriculating in the program, and they can also count toward the graduate coursework requirement if the courses were 700 level or above.

### PROBATION

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above). This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School. 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

Every student in the program will be required to have an advisor. Program staff will work with the student to identify an advisor during the spring semester. Once an advisor has been identified, the student is expected to maintain communication with their advisor to ensure they are making satisfactory progress toward their degree.

### CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

### TIME CONSTRAINTS

If a student has been absent for a semester or more, they must file a new Graduate School application for admission and submit it with a new application fee. UW–Madison master's degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits they had earned before their absence. The Graduate School will not count that coursework toward their graduate residence, graduate degree, or graduate coursework requirements. Students who have been absent for three or more consecutive years cannot count credits they had earned before their absence toward EOI named option requirements.

### GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Dean of Students Office (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)

- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

This document was reviewed by the Graduate Student working group and approved by vote of Nelson Institute Governance with subsequent review by campus HR; please note that this was prior to the revision of GAPP by campus in 2019-20, as well as present and expected changes in 2020 after to Title IX, Office of the Dean of Students, etc.

### Preamble:

Any student who feels that they have been treated unfairly by a faculty or staff member has the right to seek redress and to receive a hearing of the grievance following these procedures. It applies only to grievances about those persons who are employees of the Nelson Institute, who teach for the Nelson Institute or otherwise are subject to administrative oversight by the Institute. The complaint may concern course grades, program admission, classroom treatment, hostile or intimidating behavior, or any other issue. Note that these procedures are for students bringing grievances to the Nelson Institute, they do not cover issues relating to the classroom behavior of students which must be referred to the Dean of Students.

The procedures outlined below are used in the Nelson Institute to ensure a prompt and fair hearing of complaints, and to protect the rights of both the student and the person at whom the complaint is directed. These policies describe formal procedures. A student is free to bypass these procedures if they do not wish for an Institute sanctioned resolution.

A complaint covered here may involve issues that either require or that would benefit from being directed to one of the campus programs or offices addressing complaints and grievances. See <https://compliance.wisc.edu/> and [https://compliance.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/102/2018/09/Safe-Learning-and-Work-Guide.Fall\\_FY19-Accessible.pdf](https://compliance.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/102/2018/09/Safe-Learning-and-Work-Guide.Fall_FY19-Accessible.pdf) (Accessed Oct. 2020). Please review the most recent information on Title IX on campus, as guidelines and contacts may change. Graduate students should review information at <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/> (Accessed Feb. 2019). Undergraduate students may wish to review information available in the undergraduate course catalog. There they will find this option presented: "For assistance in determining options, students can contact the on-call dean in the Dean of Students Office, 608-263-5700, Room 70 Bascom Hall, Monday- Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m."

Also, students should know that academic administrators may be required to report instances of sexual harassment or violence in accordance with university policy and the Clery act. (See: <http://uwpd.wisc.edu/crime-data/clery-act/> Accessed Oct. 2018).

State law contains additional provisions regarding discrimination and harassment. Wisconsin Statutes 36.12 reads, in part: "No student may be denied admission to, participation in or the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any service, program, course or facility of the system or its institutions or center because of the student's race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status or parental status." In addition, UW-System prohibits discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression. Students have the right to file discrimination and harassment complaints with the Office for Equity and Diversity.

Questions about Nelson Institute procedures can be directed to the Associate Dean for Research and Education.

### Procedures:

1. If possible, the student (complainant) should first talk with the person against whom the grievance is directed to advise them of their complaint and to determine if resolution is possible.
2. If the student is not satisfied, or if they do not feel comfortable addressing the person to whom the grievance is directed, they should ask to speak to the immediate supervisor of the person involved. If the complaint is directed against a teaching assistant, the student should talk to the TA's supervisor, who is usually the course professor. If the student grievance concerns a faculty or staff member in Nelson, the next formal step is for the student to meet with the Associate Dean for Research and Education. If the complaint is not resolved at this level, the student may continue to the next step (4).
3. It is recognized that a student may be reluctant to bring their grievance to the person against whom the complaint is directed, or to their supervisor, or to anyone else in the administrative hierarchy. In that case, the student should seek out a person who can guarantee confidentiality to the extent allowed by the law and university policy and provide non-judgmental advice as to appropriate next steps. Note that if criminal activity is involved confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. If a student does not know of any suitable person, they may approach any member of the Nelson Institute Academic Programs staff who will be able either to serve as a confidential discussant or who will be able to direct the student to someone who can assure confidentiality. Their role is to be that of Ombuds, meaning that they are not to take a position with respect to the validity of the grievance. Their role is to advise the student as to appropriate next steps.
4. To start a formal grievance process, the student must submit the grievance in writing to the Nelson Institute Associate Dean for Research and Education (hereafter Associate Dean) as soon as possible. An email for which receipt is acknowledged will be considered a written submission.
5. On receipt of the written complaint, the Associate Dean will acquaint themselves with the issues. This may involve face to face meetings or other means of establishing the facts in dispute. The Associate Dean will have the option of proposing a resolution. If the proposed resolution is accepted by parties directly involved, the matter will be considered settled at this level. Relevant documents will be archived by the Office of the Assistant Dean for Administration. At any point in the proceedings after the receipt and acknowledgement of the grievance by the Associate Dean, the complainant or the compliance will have the option of requesting that the matter be referred to an ad hoc committee. This request must be submitted in writing and acknowledged by the Associate Dean.
6. If the matter cannot be settled through the mediation of the Associate Dean, or if the Associate Dean has concluded that the case merits further attention, or if the complainant has requested that the matter be referred to an ad hoc committee an ad hoc committee will be appointed by the Dean of the Nelson Institute or their designee. The committee will consist of at least three members. Within 10 working days, the student will be allowed to revise the complaint or to add material to the complaint document to be provided to the committee. The complainant may request a change in committee membership, but the final decision on the committee will remain with the Dean. The committee may request a written response from the person toward whom the complaint is directed. This response shall be shared with the person filing the grievance. The ad hoc

committee will meet to discuss the case. They are authorized to seek additional information if they feel it is necessary. They will convey their written decision regarding the case including any recommendations for remediation or mediation to the Associate Dean within 30 working days from the charge to the committee. The Associate Dean will provide a copy of the committee's written decision to the student regarding the case within 10 working days of receiving the committee's report; the Associate Dean will also confirm that the past record on file of any grievances regarding the parties involved has been investigated; and, the Associate Dean will provide the student a statement outlining the formal plan of steps that will be taken officially on the part of the Nelson Institute.

7. The complainant then has the option of taking their grievance to the university level. There are several options available. Consult websites referenced above.
8. The written documents relevant to the grievance will be archived in hard copy and electronic form as appropriate in a "Grievance Record" by the office of the Assistant Dean of Administration and will be maintained for a minimum of five years.
9. The cumulative record involving any of the parties to a grievance will be reviewed each time a formal grievance is presented as in Step 4, above, in order to determine whether the pattern of grievance, such as past filings, indicates any actions are warranted.

## **OTHER**

Because of the immersive nature of our program, with condensed time on campus and remote experiences, EOI students are only eligible for campus appointments that total 30% time or less, or hourly work. We encourage all students to apply for our EOI program scholarship, and to seek additional sources of grants, scholarships, or loans. Students in the EOI program are not permitted to seek dual degrees or take courses outside of the listed required coursework.