

GEOSCIENCE, M.S.

The Department of Geoscience provides opportunity for advanced study leading to the master of science and the doctor of philosophy degrees. Broad research interests and numerous fields of specialization among the members of the faculty provide research opportunities in all major fields of earth science including geochemistry, geophysics, hydrogeology, microbial geoscience, mineralogy, nano-geoscience, paleontology, paleoclimatology/paleoceanography, petrology, quaternary geology, sedimentology, structural geology, and tectonics.

The graduate student is expected to acquire a broad foundation in geoscience and in the supporting sciences before specializing. Courses are selected by the student in consultation with a three-member guidance and evaluation committee. Individual research and scholarship is required in all graduate work. It is expected that the candidate for an advanced degree will make original contributions, develop new ideas, and complete a dissertation suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal, book, or report. Students may also obtain a joint master's degree in geoscience and water resources management if approved by both programs and the Graduate School.

The department maintains a variety of cutting-edge laboratories in Lewis G. Weeks Hall for the Geological Sciences. Strong connections also exist between the geoscience and geological engineering programs. Library and research facilities are available for advanced work in all important branches of the science. Geological survey offices in the Madison area, both state and federal, provide opportunities for cooperation with Survey geologists and the use of Survey facilities.

The program prepares students for teaching and research in academic positions, research work in state and federal organizations, and research and development in industry. The department coordinates interviews with potential employers several times during the year and maintains information on career placement. Students are actively involved in teaching and research programs and other scholarly activities of the department.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website. Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet** the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) **of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).**

Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	January 4
Spring Deadline	November 1
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.

English Proficiency Test Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency>).

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) n/a

Letters of Recommendation Required 3

Graduate students may enter the degree program with a bachelor's degree in geology or a related earth science, or some other field relevant to the intended field of specialization. In addition to meeting the minimum admission requirements of the Graduate School, candidates must have had one year each of college chemistry, physics, and calculus. Graduate students in paleobiology are allowed to substitute statistics courses for the calculus requirement. A student entering the program with an undergraduate degree in geology is expected to have completed a 6–8 credit course in geologic field mapping.

Applicants will not normally be admitted with deficiencies in more than two one-semester courses in the required cognate subjects (for example, a prospective student could be missing one semester of physics and one semester of calculus). Such deficiencies should be removed within the first year of graduate study. A deficiency in field geology normally must be removed before commencing graduate study. Promising students with excessive deficiencies may be advised to take courses as a Special student before becoming eligible to enter graduate studies. They cannot, however, receive financial aid while a Special student.

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/>) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Financial assistance sufficient to meet the ordinary expenses of graduate school is available to qualified students in the form of fellowships and teaching or research assistantships. Prospective students should contact the department for information on available financial aid. All applicants must take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (<http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirements>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students are able to complete a program with minimal disruptions to careers and other commitments.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Detail	
Minimum Credit Requirement	30 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	16 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	Half of degree coursework (15 credits out of 30 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university's Course Guide (https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide (https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/)).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required.
Other Grade Requirements	The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.
Assessments and Examinations	Contact the program for information on required assessments and examinations.
Language Requirements	No language requirements.

REQUIRED COURSES

Courses are selected by the student in consultation with a three-member Guidance and Evaluation Committee.

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.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

7 credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree are allowed to count toward the degree. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

UW–Madison University Special

With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master's degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

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), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

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.

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)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER

Qualified prospective students are considered for financial support in the form of graduate assistantships or fellowships at the same time they are considered for admission.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Articulates, critiques, or elaborates the scientific theories, scientific hypotheses, research methods, and approaches to inquiry or schools of practice in geoscience.
2. Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in geoscience.

3. Demonstrates understanding of geoscience in historical, social, or global context.
4. Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies and practices.
5. Evaluates or synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in geoscience.
6. Communicates clearly in ways appropriate to the geological sciences.
7. Recognizes and applies principles of ethical and professional conduct.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Carroll, DeMets, Feigl, Goodwin, Johnson, Kelly, Meyers, Peters, Roden, Singer, Thurber, Tikoff, Xu; Associate Professors Cardiff, Dutton; Assistant Professors Bauer, Bonamici, Ferrier, Marcott, Zahasky, Zoet