

M.S. in Environmental Science Program Student Handbook

The M.S. in Environmental Science is an interdisciplinary program housed in the College of Natural and Behavioral Science (NBS). The mission of the Program is to prepare leaders, thinkers and planners necessary to address and solve environmental challenges using interdisciplinary approaches. Because of our location and internship opportunities, the emphasis of the program is on the urban environment.

Core and elective courses in the natural and social sciences introduce students to the unique problems of the urban environment, to environmental analysis, policy and planning, to mathematical and analytic skills, and to the original research literature in environmental science. Elective courses allow students the flexibility to tailor their academic programs to meet specific goals. Real world experience is obtained through internships in governmental, non-governmental, or other organizations. The program culminates with an original research project leading to a thesis.

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College of Natural and Behavioral Sciences Carson, CA 90747
M.S in Environmental Science Program (310) 243-2547

Dear Student,

Welcome to the M.S. in Environmental Science Program (MSESP) at California State University, Dominguez Hills. We hope that your participation in the program will be intellectually stimulating and rewarding, and will help you further your educational and career goals.

This booklet is designed to help you navigate the often confusing procedures that you need to follow to make your way through the program. Strict adherence to the policies and procedures will decrease the amount of time you need to complete the program. You will be required to be advised every semester by either the Program Coordinator or your Graduate Committee Chair. The function of this mandatory advising is to monitor your progress through the program and to solve any problems that may arise. If you have any questions at any time during your participation in the program, please feel free to contact the Program Coordinator.

Two Tracks Toward MS in Environmental Sciences

The 'Internship' (Professional) track (i.e., without the thesis option) is primarily aimed for students who want to gain professional experience while pursuing their degree and seek immediate employment after graduating from the program.

Potential and current students interested in the Research Track are strongly advised to consult with the Program Coordinator and contact perspective faculty mentors before applying for the research track. The conventional 'Thesis' (Research) track is primarily suited for students who want to continue on to doctoral studies and/or pursue careers in the research-related agencies and industry.

A note on the program. There are three major components to the Program: classroom work, an internship, and research. The classroom component consists of a core of required courses plus electives. The internship requires a minimum of 135 hours of work in an academic, governmental, or private organization dealing with environmental issues. The research component involves completion of a research project, under the direction of a faculty research advisor, and culminates in the preparation of a thesis (Thesis track) or Culminating report and portfolio (Internship track). Academic credit is earned for the internship experience, research participation and thesis preparation.

A note on admission status and progress. You were admitted in either Classified Status, or Conditionally Classified Status. Classified Status means full, unconditional admittance to the program. If you were admitted in Conditionally Classified Status, the conditions for your admission and continuation in the program were detailed in your notice of admission. Once these conditions are satisfied, you will be promoted to Classified Status.

Again, welcome to the M.S. Program in Environmental Science.

MSESP Coordinator

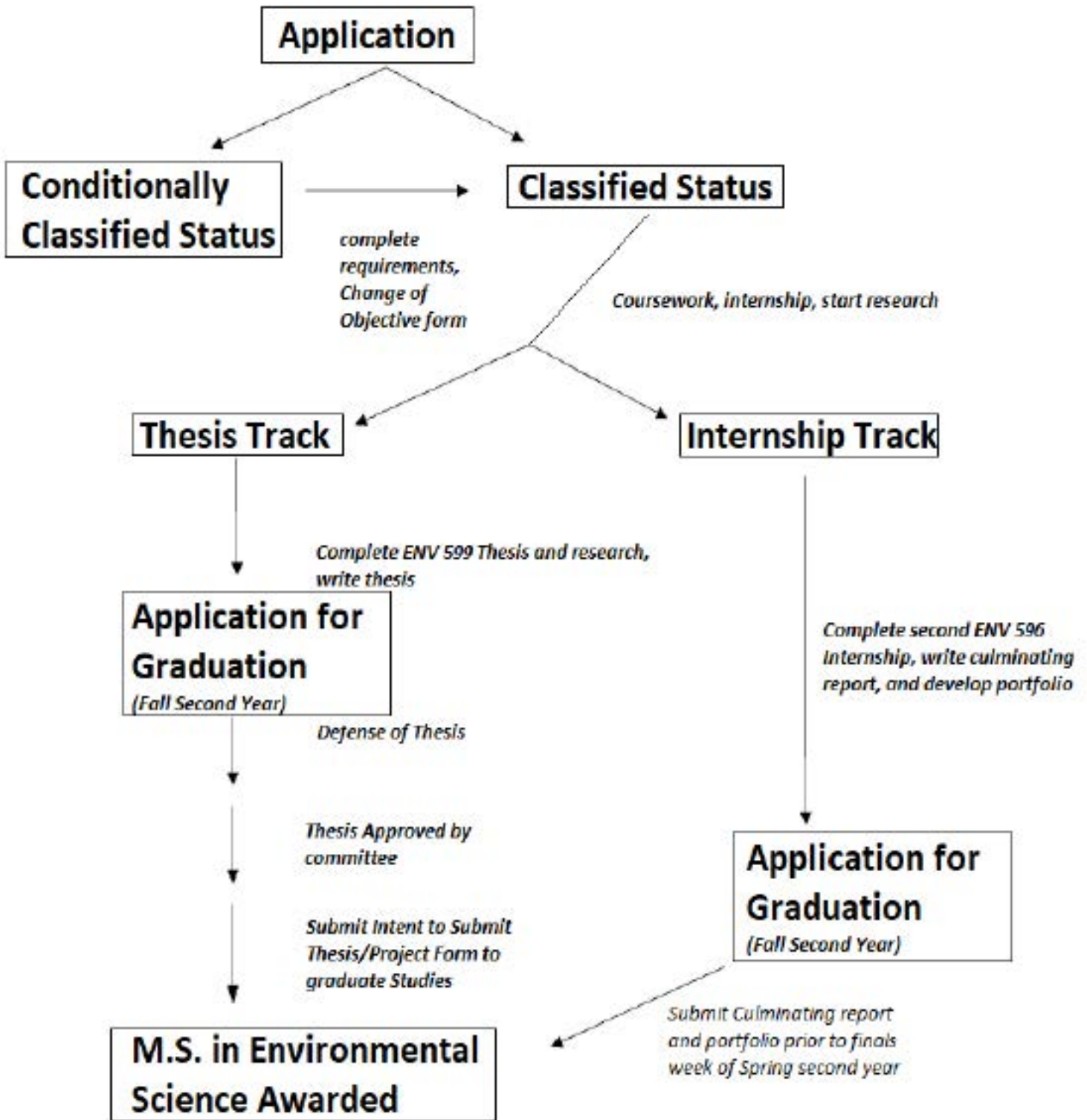
MSESP Checklist

- Prior to each semester students must schedule an advisor meeting to remove holds and discuss participation in Internship or Directed research courses.
- Students will complete ENV 596 Internship, ENV 598 Directed research, and ENV 599 Thesis contracts prior to being provided an add code.
- Students should present either their thesis research or directed research projects at student research day or other appropriate conference.
- Students need to apply for graduation during their second fall semester (<https://www.csudh.edu/registrar/graduation/graduation-application/>)
- **Internship track** students must submit their culminating report and portfolio prior to final exams week of their last semester.
- **Thesis track** students should complete their thesis defense and revisions prior to completing their intent to submit thesis /project form by their final semester. (<https://www.csudh.edu/gsr/graduate-studies/current-students/thesis/deadlines/>)

MSESP Course Plan

Course Flow (Based on Fall entry):
Fall - Semester 1 (8 units):
BIO 502 – Biostatistics <i>(Prerequisite: MAT 131 or equivalent.)</i> ENV 590 - Graduate Seminar in Environmental Science (2 units) Any Elective
Spring - Semester 2 (10 Units):
BIO 510 – The Urban Environment OR BIO 501 – Biological Literature (Substitution required) ANT 555 – People, Culture, and Environment GEO 433 – Environmental Analysis and Planning (Even Spring) OR Any Elective ENV 590 - Graduate Seminar in Environmental Science (1 units)
Fall - Semester 3 (6 units):
ENV 596 – Internship in Environmental Science ENV 598 – Directed Research
Spring - Semester 4 (6 units):
ENVS 599 - Thesis or Project (Thesis Track) OR ENV 596 – Internship (Internship Track) GEO 433 – Environmental Analysis and Planning (Even Spring) OR Any Elective Oral Defense (Thesis Option) Student Research Day Presentation

MSESP Roadmap



M.S. in Environmental Sciences Program Policies

Overview: The MSES Program includes a required core of courses and additional electives. The academic program is expected to culminate in a thesis based on original research (Thesis track) or culminating report and portfolio (Internship track). Consult the University Catalog for a list of required and elective courses.

The MSES Degree requires completion of 30 units, at least 15 of which must be graduate (500-level) courses. An overall "B" average is required in courses in the program and all courses must be passed with a grade of "B-" or above. Note that Full Time status for a graduate student consists of 8 units per semester.

Revalidation of Outdated Course Work: All course work taken in the program must be completed within the five years immediately preceding the date of graduation. If approved by the Graduate Committee and the Graduate Dean, a limited number of courses may be revalidated. Under no circumstances can a course taken more than seven years before graduation be revalidated and counted in the program.

Revalidation of outdated course work may be requested from the University Graduate Studies Office through the Program Coordinator. The request must be accompanied by a petition from the Program Coordinator that verifies that the student has done one of the following: 1) repeated the course and passed it with a grade of "B" or better; or 2) taken the exams and completed the assignments of the course as it is currently offered and earned a grade of "B" or better;

Graduate Committee (Thesis track). Students must select a Graduate Committee Chair to guide their research. The student and Graduate Committee Chair will select two additional members for the student's Graduate Committee. At least two members, including the Chair, must be CSUDH faculty. If the student and advisor agree that an additional member is needed for the committee, for example as an external research mentor, a fourth member may be added. This fourth member does not need to be CSUDH faculty, and may be selected from another institution or professional agency. This process must be completed, with forms signed and submitted, before enrollment in ENV 598.

The student and thesis advisor will prepare a proposal of the thesis research with a time of no more than two years to completion. This proposal must be approved by all members of the student's Graduate Committee and submitted to the Program Coordinator. Upon acceptance of the thesis, the student and advisor will arrange an oral defense of the thesis, to which the faculty, students and public are invited to attend.

Continuing Student Status. Students must maintain continuous enrollment throughout their time in the graduate program, including the semester they graduate. Students who miss a semester will have to reapply to the university and to the program. Students who have completed all course work may enroll in ENV 600 Graduate Continuation Course (0 units) to maintain continuous attendance.

Forms

Several documents and forms are required; they are listed below. The forms are available on the MESP website – <http://www.csudh.edu/mesp> - or from the MESP Coordinator. All require multiple signatures.

These forms are necessary to: 1) ensure that we are tracking your involvement and progress in the program; 2) provide liability protection; and, most importantly, 3) to protect you.

ENV 596 (Internship)

Contract. This form must be submitted when you begin your internship. Note that it must be signed by the Director of the Center for Service Learning, Internships, and Civic Engagement.

Time Log. This form must be completed and submitted at the end of your internship.

Service Hours/Service Learning Credits. This form must be completed and submitted at the end of your internship. It will ensure that your service/ internship will be noted on your transcripts

ENV 598 (Directed Research)

Contract. This form must be submitted for every Directed Research (ENV 598) course you take. The form should be filled out with your research advisor, and should detail what you intend to accomplish during the semester. Your grade will be based on how well you complete the described work.

ENV 599 (Thesis)

Thesis Approval Form. This form is to be completed prior to confirming thesis track between graduate student and Graduate Committee. Once agreed this document must be signed and submitted to the MESP Coordinator

Contract. This form is to be filled out with your chosen research advisor, submitted for approval to the other members of your Graduate Committee, and finally submitted to the MESP Coordinator.

Intent to submit thesis/project. Upon completion of the required thesis defense, students should complete this form with the office of Graduate Studies. <https://www.csudh.edu/gsr/graduate-studies/current-students/thesis/>

All additional forms can be obtained from the MESP Coordinator and should be completed with the MESP Coordinator or your thesis advisor.