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DEPARTMENT of  
GEOSCIENCES

College of Arts & Sciences

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EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Academic Year**  
**2021- 2022**

East Tennessee State University

Department of Geosciences

Graduate Student Handbook

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. Purpose of the Graduate Student Handbook

This Graduate Student Handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the policies, procedures, and general information specific to the M.S. and Certificate Programs within the Department of Geosciences at East Tennessee State University. The information in this guide should supplement, not substitute, information published in the East Tennessee State University Graduate Catalog ([East Tennessee State University - Acalog ACMS™ \(etsu.edu\)](http://www.etsu.edu/cas/geosciences/)).

Successful matriculation and graduation from an academic program requires adherence to all policies, procedures, and regulations as stipulated by the Department of Geosciences, College of Arts and Sciences, and the university. If you have any questions regarding requirements or policies, do not hesitate to refer them to your graduate advisor or graduate coordinator.

This handbook presents the policies, procedures, and general information in effect at the time of publication. Students affected by any changes to this handbook will be notified in writing. The current handbook will also be available online at <https://www.etsu.edu/cas/geosciences/> in the Graduate Programs section. Please refer to this handbook often while enrolled in the Graduate Program.

While we strive to keep information in this handbook current, all material is subject to updates (updated 08/18/2021). All revisions to the handbook during the respective academic year are applicable for fall, spring, and summer sessions

## B. Overview of the Geosciences Graduate Program

The Geosciences Graduate Program at ETSU provides students with experience and training in all aspects of scientific research, including the formulation and testing of hypotheses, acquisition of skills necessary for their chosen project, collection and interpretation of original data, and writing the results of their research in a thesis or publication format. The student's graduate advisor and committee play an important role in defining the scope, scale, and objectives of a M.S. thesis. The full requirements for Master of Science degrees can be found at the School of Graduate Studies website (<https://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/>).

## C. Success in the Geosciences Graduate Program

The Geosciences Graduate Program has as its primary mission the provision of graduate study and research training opportunities for degree-seeking students wishing to study in an interdisciplinary environment and desiring to achieve intellectually-stimulating careers as productive geoscientists.

We are committed to:

1. Providing a quality graduate program consistent with freedom of inquiry and student welfare.

2. Recruiting and retaining excellent graduate students, with diverse backgrounds, from a large pool of candidates.
3. Financially supporting graduate assistants competitively with other institutions.
4. Providing students access to highly skilled faculty in an adequately staffed graduate program.
5. Making supportive academic counseling and research mentoring available to students.
6. Furnishing course and field work in the geosciences that yields a productive graduate educational experience.
7. Ensuring engagement of students in a high-quality research program under the supervision of a mentor and committee of graduate faculty.

Students in the program are expected to:

1. Attend - It is very important that students attend classes. In addition, regular attendance at research activities in the department is expected of all graduate students. Make sure you are aware of seminars and attend whenever possible. It is very important to support your fellow students when they present their research at seminars and during their thesis defenses.
2. Interact - Success in many undergraduate courses is dependent on doing well on exams and written assignments, and class time may largely be devoted to listening to the instructor and taking good notes. In graduate school, success also requires that students actively participate in class. Classes are small and interactive and most include a participation component as part of the final grade.
3. Be involved - The Department of Geosciences and East Tennessee State University Museum of Natural History offer many ways for students to be involved in organized activities, such as Geosciences Club (<https://www.etsu.edu/cas/geosciences/club.php>), special events (Earth Day, Darwin Day, National Fossil Day, and Mapping/GIS Month), as well as other outreach and research opportunities with faculty.
4. Get help - Let someone know if you have a problem. Many sources of support and advice are available for students. Some important sources of information and assistance are listed at the end of this handbook.

## II. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

### A. Administrative Personnel

Arpita Nandi, PhD  
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For a current and full listing of faculty and staff in the Department of Geosciences, please visit the Geosciences Department Website (<https://www.etsu.edu/cas/geosciences/>).

## III. CURRICULUM

### A. M.S. Degree Requirements

The Geosciences M.S. Program of Study is designed to be a two-year full-time experience, requiring at least 30 credits. The courses offered each year vary, but the typical sequencing of courses can be discussed with the graduate program coordinator or your graduate advisor.

### B. M.S. Curriculum

The M.S. program offers two curriculum options to students enrolled, with a series of core classes and concentrations in either Geospatial Analysis or Paleontology.

#### Major Field Core: 9 credit hours

- GEOS 5000 - Geosciences Research Methods (3 credits)
- GEOS 5350 - Statistics for Geosciences (3 credits)
  - Typically, the Fall GEOS 5350 section covers statistics relevant to paleontology, while the spring class covers spatial statistics, more relevant to the geospatial concentration. As such, students should enroll in the section relevant to their concentration.
- GEOS 5700 - Seminar in Geosciences (1 credit)
  - (Must be taken three (3) times for a total of 3 credits.)

#### Geospatial Analysis Concentration: 9 credit hours

- GEOS 5010 – Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)
- GEOS 5300 - Topics in Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)
- GEOS 5320 - Geographic Information Systems Projects (3 credits)

#### Paleontology Concentration: 11 credit hours

- GEOS 5100 - Paleoherpetology (4 credits)
- GEOS 5150 - Paleomammalogy (4 credits)
- GEOS 5200 - Topics in Paleontology (3 credits)

#### Electives: 7-9 credit hours

All electives must be approved by the student's advisory committee chair and graduate coordinator. Electives from other departments can be considered with permission. Examples are listed below:

- GEOS 5200/5300 – Topics in Paleontology / Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)
  - May be taken multiple times as the topics vary each semester.
- GEOG 5237 – Advanced Remote Sensing (3 credits)
- GEOG 5317 – Advanced GIS (3 credits)
- GEOS 5587 – Engineering Geology (4 credits)
- GEOS 5617 – Structural Geology (4 credits)
- GEOS 5700 – Seminar (1 credit)
  - May be taken multiple times as the topics vary each semester.



- GEOL 5857 – Hydrology (4 credits)
- GEOS 5900 – Independent Study (3 credits)
  - May be taken multiple times as the topics vary each semester. Students can take up to 9 hours of 5900 or 5910 and count these on the Program of Study.
- GEOS 5910 – Research in Geosciences (3 credits)
  - May be taken multiple times as the topics vary each semester. Students can take up to 9 hours of 5900 or 5910 and count these on the Program of Study.

**Thesis: 3 credit hours**

- GEOS 5960 - Thesis (3 to 6 credits)
  - Taken during the student’s 2<sup>nd</sup> academic year.

**C. Certificate Program Requirements**

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Graduate Certificate program requires 18 total credits, and can be completed in one academic year and fully online.

Required Courses: 6 credits

GEOS 5010 - Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)

GEOS 5320 - Geographic Information Systems Projects (3 credits)

Advisor Approved Electives: 12 credits

Choose 12 credits from the following:

GEOS 5237 - Advanced Remote Sensing (3 credits)

GEOS 5317 - Advanced Geographic Information Systems (3 credits)

GEOS 5300 - Topics in Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)

GEOS 5350 - Statistics for Geosciences (3 credits)

GEOS 5017 - Advanced Cartography: Web & Mobile Mapping (3 credits)

GEOS 5357 - Environmental Consulting (3 credits)

GEOS 5587 - Engineering Geology (4 credits)

GEOS 5857 - Principles of Hydrology (4 credits)

GEOS 5900 - Independent Study (1-3 credits)

A student who completes the Graduate Certificate in GIS and later wishes to pursue the M.S. in Geosciences may transfer all 18 credits into the master’s program with approval of the M.S. Geosciences graduate coordinator and the School of Graduate Studies. All transfer credit, however, must meet GPA requirements and must be within the six-year matriculation limit.

**D. Registration**

All registration for the Graduate Program in Geosciences is done via Goldlink, but you can receive assistance from your graduate advisor, the graduate coordinator, or the executive aide. Students must enroll in the Fall and Spring semester each year. Students should plan ahead and talk with their graduate advisor well before the start of the semester about the courses they plan to take.

If a student wishes to take an Independent Study or Research in Geosciences class, this should be arranged with the professor who will supervise the Independent Study. An Independent Study Contract must be completed, which lays out expectations, timing, and deliverables for the course. Once complete, the contract should be signed by both the student and the faculty member, and forwarded to the Executive Aide. After this, the Executive Aide will build the course and issue a registration permit to the student.

## IV. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Students in the Geosciences graduate program must meet the requirements of the department (outlined below) and the School of Graduate Studies to remain in good standing.

### A. Thesis Prospectus

In their first semester in the Geosciences M.S. Program, all students are required to take Geosciences Research Methods (GEOS 5000). As a part of that course, you will be tasked with developing a thesis prospectus. Different disciplines expect slightly different content in terms of a prospectus; so, in simplest terms you should think of it as your thesis proposal. Consequently, a prospectus should contain at least the information indicated below. Your individual committee might want a little more or a little less detail, so consider this to represent a basic template.

1. Title page: working title, your name, date you created the prospectus, thesis advisor, and thesis committee.
2. Research questions: hypotheses or questions to be addressed.  
\*Note: there may be several and they may build on one another. If your thesis is more descriptive in nature, there will still be a basic question that you are trying to address.
3. Background/introduction: Why is this question/topic of importance? Relate the topic to existing literature; ultimately, this will become part of the Introduction section of your thesis.
4. Methods: How will you answer your questions/hypotheses? The methodological approach and techniques used should be described in some detail.
5. Results: What results do you expect? While you most likely do not have results at this point, you should state what results are expected and their importance.
6. Discussion: How does this work relate to other research? This should discuss subunits of your project and how this research relates to the broader field and the work of other researchers.
7. Budget: Depending on the project, you may need to include a page describing and justifying your budget for the project.
8. Schedule: Provide a proposed work schedule including an estimated date of completion.
9. Bibliography: You should demonstrate critical awareness of literature that is relevant to your particular topic and methodology employed.

M.S. students should present a copy of their thesis prospectus to their proposed graduate committee members, usually in their second semester in the program. The prospectus is intended to inform the committee on the course of research that will eventually lead to a thesis. The committee will either approve the prospectus or make recommendations for rewriting. The student should use this as an opportunity to gain advice from the committee on their research plans. By establishing specific research objectives, the prospectus will serve as a guide for what is expected of the student. It is important for the student to keep the committee informed on the progress of the research before and after the prospectus has been approved. This may involve additional meetings of the entire committee, but, more often, will consist of informal contacts. Major changes in the direction of the research should be brought to the attention of the entire committee.

## B. Normal Progress Toward the Degree

Students are expected to maintain "normal progress toward the degree" to ensure that they are moving through the series of steps necessary to obtain a M.S. degree at a reasonable pace, and at the level of performance required of all graduate students. These steps are outlined below and described in detail throughout this document, as well as the Degree and Graduation Requirements listed in the ETSU Graduate Catalog. Although the graduate advisor and the graduate coordinator will monitor student's progress in the program, it is the responsibility of the student to complete the appropriate steps within the required time frame. *Failure to maintain normal progress toward the degree will render the student ineligible for financial support and may lead to dismissal from the program.*

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Expected Date of Completion</b>
Selection of graduate advisor ( <i>see section V below for details</i> )	End of first semester
Completion of thesis prospectus	End of first semester
Selection and approval of graduate committee ( <i>see section V below for details</i> )	End of first year
Meetings with graduate committee ( <i>see section V below for details</i> )	At least once during year one, then as-needed
Submission of Application to Graduate and Committee Forms to School of Graduate Studies	Typically, the first month of third semester – Check Academic Calendar
Submission of drafts, chapters, maps, products, etc. to graduate advisor	Periodically, with a final rough draft expected at the start of the fourth semester (e.g., mid-January)
Submission of Complete Draft of M.S. Thesis to graduate committee	At least two weeks prior to thesis defense (note, thesis defense may only be scheduled with committee approval)
M.S. Thesis Defense ( <i>see appendices for rubrics for each concentration</i> ) – note that this must be scheduled at least 10 days prior to the defense	End of second year – Check Academic Calendar
Committee Approved M.S. Thesis, Manuscript Review Form, and Turnitin report submitted to School of Graduate Studies	End of second year – Check Academic Calendar

Current deadlines for the College of Graduate Studies can be found here ([Dates & Deadlines \(etsu.edu\)](https://etsu.edu/dates-deadlines)).

### **C. Preparation and Defense of the Thesis**

The primary product in fulfillment of the M.S. degree is a written thesis that summarizes the scientific research performed by the student. The thesis should represent a unique and substantial scientific contribution that warrants broad dissemination to the scientific community. The thesis topic will be selected by the candidate with the advice and approval of the graduate advisory committee. The student must present a prospectus describing the research project for review and approval by the graduate advisory committee. Prior to submitting forms to the graduate school and scheduling a defense, the committee should determine that the student has made sufficient progress in their research and has completed work that is the foundation for their thesis. It is expected that the graduate committee will receive a draft of the thesis, which has been thoroughly edited by the student and graduate advisor, well in advance of a scheduled thesis defense. A thesis defense may only be scheduled on a date approved by the graduate advisory committee, please note that many faculty have 9-month appointments and may not be willing or able to attend a thesis defense during the summer. Students will present their thesis research in a seminar, which is open to the public and announced (via flyer or email) at least one week in advance. The defense must be scheduled with the School of Graduate Studies at least 10 days prior to the proposed defense date and a member of the graduate faculty from outside the candidate's committee and department must be present to monitor the process. The thesis defense is intended to establish the student's ability to orally present and defend their research. Students are also expected to be able to apply the information learned in their graduate education to specific scientific problems. Therefore, students should expect questions that probe their general scientific knowledge as it relates to the subject matter of their concentration. The committee will convene immediately after the defense to determine if the student has successfully passed (see Appendices 2 and 3 below for sample rubrics for evaluation of the thesis defense). The student will immediately be notified of the outcome of their defense. After the thesis has been researched, written, defended, and accepted by the committee, it must be prepared in the proper form and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for approval. ETSU has approved a requirement for electronic submission of theses. Students should follow the Style Guide for Electronic Theses and Dissertations posted on the Graduate Studies website (<https://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/etd/documents/etdguide.pdf>), please note that theses in Geosciences should follow the CSE (Council of Science Editors) Style Manual. Additional resources for preparing the thesis can be found on the School of Graduate Studies website ([Electronic Thesis & Dissertations \(etsu.edu\)](https://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/etd/documents/etdguide.pdf)).

### **D. Intent to Graduate**

To graduate from a graduate program at East Tennessee State University, a student must fulfill all degree requirements, meet all deadlines, and conform to all policies as set forth by the university (see Graduate Catalog) and the Department of Geosciences Graduate Student Handbook. A time limit of six (6) years to obtain the M.S. degree is imposed by the School of Graduate Studies and is counted from the date of registration for the first course applied to degree requirements, including transfer work. As stated in the Graduate Catalog a student must be enrolled for a minimum of one (1) graduate credit hour during the term of graduation. If a student enrolls in thesis hours (GEOS 5960), but does not defend in that semester, then they must enroll in one (1) graduate credit hour (typically GEOS 5990 – Readings & Research) every

semester thereafter (including summer) until they defend their thesis. Scholarships are available for 1 semester (<https://www.etsu.edu/gradstud/gscholarships/thesisdissertationscholarship.php>). The deadline to apply for a thesis scholarship for a subsequent semester is typically the same day as the deadline for submitting the final thesis to the School of Graduate Studies (e.g., April 1<sup>st</sup> in the spring semester).

Students must Apply to Graduate ([Apply to Graduate \(etsu.edu\)](https://www.etsu.edu/graduate)) early in the semester prior to the one in which the student expects to complete the requirements for a graduate degree. If the student does not graduate in the selected term, they must complete and submit a new Intent Form before the published deadline. All debts to the university must also be cleared before the end of the second week of the final semester of study.

## **E. Grades**

Graduate credit will be given for grades of "A", "A-", "B+", "B", "B-", "C+", and "C" in graduate level courses. Graduate credit is not awarded for Pass/Fail grades. Grades of P or F do not count toward degree requirements. All graduate course grades earned at East Tennessee State University by a student will be used in computing the grade point average.

The letter grades of "S" (satisfactory completion), "SP" (satisfactory progress) and "U" (unsatisfactory) are given for Readings & Research and Thesis. A grade of "S" carries graduate credit and indicates satisfactory completion of the course. "Thesis Research" (3 credits) is required for M.S. degree students. Degree completion requires an "S" on the most recent hours associated with Thesis. "SP" indicates progress toward project or research completion, but carries no credit. This grade does not affect the student's GPA. Students who receive an "SP" must, in subsequent semesters (including summer), enroll in additional hours of Thesis/Dissertation or Readings and Research until the requirements are completed. The "U" grade carries no credit and indicates unsatisfactory progress toward research or project completion. Students who receive a "U" must enroll for the course the next semester, including summer. The first "U" does not affect the GPA; the second "U" is equivalent to an "F."

A grade of "I" (incomplete) indicates that a student was passing the course at the end of the semester, but due to circumstances beyond the student's control, was unable to complete the course requirement. It also indicates that the student has received consent from the instructor to complete the work for which an "I" is assigned. The "I" grade cannot be used to allow a student to do additional work to raise a deficient grade or to repeat a course. An "I" grade must be removed no later than one calendar year from the time the grade is awarded. Time extension requests for removal of "I" grades must be submitted to and approved by the dean of the School of Graduate Studies before the allotted time expires. An "I" grade not removed under the guidelines noted above will be converted to an "F." When an "I" grade converts to an "F" after one calendar year, the GPA is adjusted retroactively; consequently, a student may be subject to dismissal without a probationary term. A student cannot withdraw from or drop a course after a grade of "I" has been assigned or after one year has elapsed. To remove an "I" grade, the student must complete the work independently and must not register for the course a second time or attend the same course at a later time in order to complete the course requirements.

To remain in good standing, a graduate student (degree or non-degree), must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 (B) or better on all graduate work attempted. In order to graduate, students must have a minimum 3.0 grade point average overall and in the program of study. When the cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0, the graduate student will be placed on academic probation. If the student does not achieve a 3.0 cumulative grade point average at the conclusion of one probationary semester, the dean of the School of Graduate Studies and the Geosciences Graduate Program will determine whether the student should be dismissed from graduate study at East Tennessee State University or continued on probation. No student will be allowed more than two probationary semesters, whether consecutive or cumulative. At the end of a second probationary semester a student whose cumulative grade point average is still below 3.0 will be dismissed from graduate study. A student will be removed from probationary status upon attaining a cumulative 3.0 grade point average.

#### **F. Criteria for Student Dismissal**

A student may be dismissed from the ETSU Geosciences graduate program for issues related to academic performance and conduct. Criteria for student dismissal include but are not limited to:

- Failure to meet the conditions of acceptance
- Failing course grades
- Failing the thesis defense
- Exceeding the allowed number of probationary semesters
- Poor performance during research or teaching assistantships
- Unprofessional conduct (detailed in section VI below)

Some additional areas that may lead to concern are addictive behaviors, illegal behaviors, beliefs and behaviors that are oppressive to individuals or groups, and behaviors which suggest possible danger to self or others. Additionally, the faculty reserves the right to consider data regarding student attitudes and behaviors from a variety of sources, including public records, professional communications, and direct observation.

#### **G. Reinstatement**

As stated in the Graduate Catalog, a student who has been dismissed from the Geosciences M.S. program and the School of Graduate Studies may address a written request for reinstatement to the Department Chair no earlier than one academic year following dismissal. The request should include reasons why the reinstatement should be considered. The Chair will review the request for reinstatement and invite the student to meet with him/her and other faculty associated with admissions to allow the student to provide evidence that they (the student) are ready to resume study. Following the meeting with the student, the Chair will make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the student's request is denied at the department level, the student may then direct a written appeal to the Dean of the Graduate School, and a final decision will be made in accordance with policies established by the Graduate Council. The student has the right to an appeal process as detailed in the Graduate Catalog.

## H. Leave of Absence

If a student elects to take a leave of absence from the program of study, they must first consult with their graduate advisor. After receiving input and direction from the advisor, the student may submit a written request for a leave of absence to the Department Chair providing their rationale and plan of action. It is also advised that the student and advisor discuss modifications to the student's program of study as a result of the intended leave of absence. If a student does not re-enroll before the end of one academic year from the time the leave of absence was granted, Graduate Studies will require a readmission form and approval of the graduate program before the student can register for classes.

## I. Student Appeal Procedures (<https://catalog.etsu.edu/index.php>, under Policies and Procedures)

A student may appeal a course grade if the student has evidence that the grade was assigned in a malicious, capricious, erroneous, or arbitrary manner. The following steps provide a guideline for the appeals process. All persons concerned with this process should make every attempt to adhere to the time schedule outlined in the following description of the appeals process:

### *Appeal to the Faculty Member for Review of the Assigned Grade*

Within 21 calendar days after the beginning of the next term, excluding summer school, the student should discuss the assigned grade with the faculty member. If it is found that the assigned grade is incorrect in the judgment of the faculty member, they will initiate the appropriate change. If the change is made at this point, the matter is concluded. If the faculty member is no longer with the university, the student should confer with the Department Chair that will then make every effort to receive written input concerning the matter from the former faculty member. If it is not possible to receive information from the former faculty member regarding the grade, then the student may appeal the grade as described below and the departmental chair will represent the interests of the faculty member who issued the grade.

### *Appeal to the Department Chair*

If the question of the assigned grade cannot be resolved between the student and the faculty member, the student may appeal in writing to the Department Chair. The written appeal must be made by the end of the fourth week of the term. The student should include all known information relating to the appeal with the written appeal. After receiving such an appeal in writing from the student, the Department Chair shall review with the faculty member the substance of the student's appeal and seek to determine its validity. If the Department Chair determines that the assigned grade, in his/her judgment, is inappropriate, the Department Chair should recommend to the faculty member that the grade be changed. The faculty member may or may not concur with the Department Chair's recommendation.

The Department Chair will notify the student in writing, within 14 calendar days of the appeal, whether or not the assigned grade will be changed by the faculty member. If the grade is changed to the student's satisfaction, the matter is concluded. If the grade will not be changed, the Department Chair will also advise the student of the right of appeal to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. If the grade will not be changed, copies of all written communication



mentioned above should be sent by the Department Chair to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies as described below.

*Appeal to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies*

If the grade is not changed to the satisfaction of the student at the departmental level, a graduate student may appeal the assigned grade, in writing, to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. With the written appeal, the student should provide all information possible relating to the appeal. The written appeal to the dean must be made within seven calendar days of receipt by the student of the notice from the Department Chair.

If the dean, the student, and the faculty member are unable to resolve the appeal informally, the dean shall convene an *ad hoc* committee, comprised of three members of the graduate council and three graduate students, all of whom shall have voting privileges. This committee shall elect a chair and hold a hearing concerning the appeal. At this hearing, all material relevant to the appeal shall be presented by the student, faculty member, the department chair, the dean of the college in which the course was taught, the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, and any others who may be called to assist the committee.

## V. ADVISORY SYSTEM

Advisement at ETSU is a continuous, interactive process between an advisor and a student which facilitates the development and achievement of the student's overall goals. Advisement is a distinct part of a student's educational experience provided by ETSU as a service.

A successful relationship between an advisor and a student depends upon shared responsibility. Advisor and student responsibilities are outlined on the ETSU Academic Advisement website (<https://www.etsu.edu/advisement/continuingstudents/#StudentandAdvisorResponsibilities>). Advisors and others at ETSU provide mentoring, advice, referrals, and information to help students make wise, informed decisions. The relationship students develop with their advisors is important to their success at ETSU. Students should consult with their advisors each semester and especially before making decisions that may affect their academic progress and success. Discussions with the advisor may include: understanding degree requirements, selecting courses, dropping a class, withdrawing from ETSU, and exploring career options. Students are ultimately responsible for their academic decisions, including course selection, meeting prerequisites, and adhering to policies, procedures, and deadlines at ETSU.

### A. Graduate Advisor & Committee

To receive a graduate degree, you must first assemble a graduate advisory committee. The committee will consist of at least three members. Early in your time at ETSU, you must find a faculty member to serve as the chair for your committee and academic advisor (your "Graduate Advisor"). The graduate advisor will help you put together the rest of your committee, which must be approved by the department chair and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies. Committee members may be from outside the department or occasionally from outside the university. Selection of committee members should be designed to ensure that together they have experience and expertise to appropriately guide and evaluate the research areas covered by your thesis. As you develop your prospectus during your first semester, you will also be introduced to departmental faculty and work with your advisor to identify potential committee members. The graduate committee is formally appointed by submission of the Appointment of Advisory Committee Form (found here [Forms ETSU Graduate School](#)), which must be completed the semester prior to the one in which you plan to graduate (for Spring 2022 Graduation, this is due September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021).

The advisory committee has the following duties: they approve your program of study and candidacy application, review and approve your proposed thesis project, monitor the project, review the final written thesis, suggest corrections and revisions to the thesis, examination of the student at the thesis defense, and approve the thesis for submission to the School of Graduate Studies. Additionally, the graduate advisor is responsible for the following: primary oversight of the project, monitoring and guiding corrections and revision to the thesis, confirming that the student and graduate advisor have reviewed the finalized thesis, and informing the School of Graduate Studies of the thesis defense.

Students should feel comfortable with their graduate advisor so that they can freely seek advice and discuss problems. The graduate advisor should serve as an advocate for the students'

interests. Students select a graduate advisor within the first year of study. The graduate advisor should provide guidance in the selection of a thesis research project with emphasis on the development of the student's capability for independent research. In addition to guiding the student in the development of specific research skills, the graduate advisor should: be responsible for the student's overall professional development; provide adequate opportunity for manuscript writing and presentations at scientific meetings; assist in career development by introducing students to researchers in their field and assist the development of the student as a scholar through guidance in areas such as creative thinking, leadership, and ethics.

The advisory committee will meet formally with the student at least once each year to review their research and academic progress. It is the responsibility of the student (with reminders from the graduate advisor) to ensure that these meetings are held and schedule them so that all committee members may attend. It is mandatory that faculty committee members attend scheduled graduate advisory committee meetings. Students should come to the meeting prepared to update the committee on research and academic progress, and the student is expected to provide the committee with their current curriculum vitae or resume. At that meeting the committee will complete an Annual Review of Graduate Progress Form (Appendix 4).

## VI. STUDENT CONDUCT AND RIGHTS

### A. The Honor Code of the University

The Department of Geosciences follows the Graduate Studies University Honor Code policy, which states: "I pledge to act with honesty, integrity, and civility in all matters" (Honor Code revised and adopted February 16, 2012). Students are to display a character of veracity and a genuineness to learn which promotes and supports intellectual development and ethical behaviors. Students are expected to act with honesty, integrity, and civility in all matters. Students who do not follow these policies will be held accountable in violation to the university's academic misconduct rules and regulation policies on plagiarism, cheating, and/or fabrication. Any knowledge of academic misconduct should be reported.

### B. Student Conduct

Graduate students should read and abide by all policies outlined in the Graduate Catalog. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog for complete policies and procedures related to plagiarism, student bill of rights, student disciplinary policies, sexual harassment, complaints, and other important information. Graduate students using university related resources or participating in activities on or off campus are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This may include, but is not limited to, the Office of Student Services, Library, and Learning Resource Centers. Students are expected to be familiar with and follow university regulations on graduate student conduct as outlined in the Graduate Catalog. Failure to abide by these policies and procedures may result in disciplinary sanctions including, but not limited to, dismissal from the Geosciences graduate program.

Students and faculty of East Tennessee State University Department of Geosciences are expected to be honest and honorable in all academic and professional endeavors. All forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited and incur severe disciplinary sanctions. The Department of Geosciences adheres to the ETSU Policies and Procedures as presented in the Graduate Catalog. Students may find further information on academic misconduct policy in the Graduate Catalog ([Policies and Procedures - East Tennessee State University - Acalog ACMS™ \(etsu.edu\)](#)).

Graduate students are expected to act professionally and refrain from any activity which might impair the image of the university, college, or the department. Students who violate any of the following professional standards may be subject to disciplinary sanctions by the Department of Geosciences and the university.

It is the expectation that all students enrolled in the Geosciences Graduate Program at ETSU will conduct themselves in the manner that:

1. Shows respect towards others
2. Values contributions from other students, colleagues, and faculty
3. Contributes to mutual respect, effective communication, and collaboration

The following behaviors will not be tolerated, and if displayed by any student enrolled in the Geosciences Graduate Program at ETSU will result in disciplinary sanctions and possible dismissal from the program:

1. Use of abusive, obscene, lewd, indecent, violent, excessively noisy, disorderly, or other conduct which disrupts other groups or individuals.
2. Threatening others, including physical, verbal, nonverbal, and implied threats.
3. Interference with or obstruction of college activities or facilities.
4. Misuse of or damage to any university property or facilities, including computers.
5. Theft.
6. Misuse of documents or identification cards.
7. Failure to cooperate with faculty, staff, graduate assistants, or student workers who are acting in the performance of assigned duties in university facilities.
8. Absence or repeated tardiness in classes or work assignments.
9. Not listening or paying attention to others who address you.
10. Not responding to email, letters, or voice mail that require a reply.
11. Not sharing credit for collaborative work.

### **C. Student Complaint Policy and Procedure**

East Tennessee State University is committed to respecting all members of the university community and providing fair treatment regarding complaints by students. The objective of the Student Complaint Policy and Procedure ([Policies and Procedures - East Tennessee State University - Acalog ACMS™ \(etsu.edu\)](#)) is to ensure that concerns and complaints of undergraduate or graduate students are addressed fairly and are resolved promptly. Complaints usually involve actions affecting students that are alleged to be unjust, inequitable, or create unnecessary hardship. A student may pursue this complaint procedure if they believe a problem is not governed by other complaint or appeal procedures at the University.

East Tennessee State University seeks to provide students, staff, and faculty members with a safe and secure learning environment, free of crime and or violations motivated by discrimination, sexual and other bias-related harassment. There are two important complaint policies not governed by the Student Complaint Policy and Procedure; Sexual, Racial, and Other Harassment, and Hate Crimes and Bias-Related Incidents. These types of complaints should be filed with the Special Assistant to the President for Equity and Diversity/Affirmative Action Director or, when a charge is by one student against another student, with the Dean of Students according to the procedures described in those policies. Complaint procedures are found within the graduate catalog.

## VII. FINANCIAL AND OTHER SUPPORT

The East Tennessee State University (ETSU) Graduate Catalog provides information regarding financial aid available in the form of assistantships, work-study programs, and loans. For more information check out [GA/TS Information and Positions \(etsu.edu\)](https://etsu.edu/graduate/gats).

The Department of Geosciences also provides additional financial support opportunities specific to graduate students. A limited number of Graduate Assistantships (GAs) and Tuition Scholarships (TSs) are available in the Department of Geosciences and East Tennessee State University Museum of Natural History each semester. A full-time annual GA appointment provides for a waiver of out-of-state tuition (fall, spring); waiver of in-state tuition (fall, spring); and a monthly stipend. A TS provides for a waiver of out-of-state and in-state tuition (fall, spring). To be eligible for a GA or TS, a student must be enrolled in at least nine (9) graduate hours per semester (fall, spring). All students who are awarded a GA or TS must register for a designated one-credit-hour course, this course counts as one of the required credits. Students holding a GA or TS must maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average. Placements are coordinated in conjunction with the School of Graduate Studies.

### A. Graduate Assistantships

Specific guidelines for graduate assistantships are found in the Graduate Assistant/Tuition Scholar Handbook ([Microsoft Word - gats-handbook \(etsu.edu\)](https://etsu.edu/graduate/gats-handbook)). Students who receive assistantships must register for a minimum of nine (9) hours during the fall and spring semesters. Most Geosciences graduate students on assistantships are on a 9-month appointment. Graduate assistants must maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average. Graduate assistantships include support in the form of a stipend and tuition waiver. The current base stipend for M.S. students is \$8,800. Out of state tuition is also waived for all graduate students who are on assistantships. Students are typically responsible for all program service fees beyond the cost of tuition (called the “maintenance fee”), which may include any or all of the following: technology fee, campus access fee, activity fee, and debt service fee. Fee costs may be covered by grant funds. Full- and half-time Graduate Assistants require a work commitment of 20 and 10 hours per week, respectively.

Students who accept Graduate Assistant positions (Teaching or Research) within the Department of Geosciences are expected to be full-time students who do not hold another on- or off-campus job during the academic year. Students are expected to work 20 hours per week on their assistantship assignment and ~20 hours per week on their class assignments and thesis research. Any additional on- or off-campus work must be approved by the Graduate Advisor and cannot exceed 9 hours per week. A degree-related internship is an example of an allowable off-campus job. Violation of this policy will result in non-renewal of the GA position.

Students who accept Graduate Assistant positions may have a variety of duties associated with their position. Teaching Assistant responsibilities may include instruction of laboratory classes, grading course materials, driving vans on field trips, and work with the GIS Help Desk. If teaching laboratory classes, Teaching Assistants are required to attend weekly lab meetings. Research Assistant responsibilities may include work at the ETSU Museum of Natural History or Center of Excellence in Paleontology, or work on research funded by faculty grants.

## **B. Tuition Scholarships**

A limited number of tuition scholarships are available from the School of Graduate Studies to the basic science departments. These are nine-month appointments and include a waiver of out of state tuition. Recipients must register for a minimum of nine hours in the fall and spring semesters. These are usually only given to new degree students admitted to the School of Graduate Studies and accepted unconditionally into a graduate program at East Tennessee State University. They must have a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) on any prior graduate level courses. They must maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average to remain eligible for scholarship support. The awards cover no more than two calendar years for a master's program. Tuition Scholarships require a work commitment of 120 hours per semester to the Department (about 8 hours per week). Like Teaching Assistants, Tuition Scholar's work for the department may include instruction of laboratory classes, grading course materials, driving vans on field trips, and work with the GIS Help Desk. If teaching laboratory classes, Tuition Scholars are required to attend weekly lab meetings.

## **C. Program Support for Student Academic Travel**

Scientific conferences and meetings provide an important educational experience and graduate students are urged to attend and present the results of their research. Every effort is made to provide travel support for graduate students for career development opportunities, such as presenting at conferences, conducting research for publication, or attending professional development workshops. The Geosciences Graduate Program and Center of Excellence in Paleontology sometimes allocate a portion of their annual budgets to support the expenses of academic travel. The regular University policy for allowable travel expenses applies. Travel authorizations will be submitted and approved by the department (*Note: a travel authorization is required for all official travel, regardless of how it is funded*). Additional funds for student travel are also available through the School of Graduate Studies. The maximum amount is \$300 and the request must be made to the Dean of the Graduate School.

## **D. Office Space, Other Facilities and Equipment**

Graduate students with the Department of Geosciences at ETSU are provided office space within Ross Hall, typically on the building's 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors. Assignment of and access to offices are coordinated by the department's executive aide. Several different computer labs are also available to graduate students, including an open computer lab on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Ross Hall and the Geoinformatics and Disaster Science (GADS) Lab on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Computers in both labs have a wide range of software packages installed, including ArcGISPro, SPSS, Terraset, Image Processing software, etc.. Information Technology support for these labs is provided by ETSU Information Technology Services (<https://www.etsu.edu/its/>).

## VIII. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### A. Geosciences Club (GeoClub)

The ETSU Geosciences Club's mission is to support and advance geosciences on the ETSU campus and in the community at large. Information about the club can be found on the department website (<https://www.etsu.edu/cas/geosciences/club.php>). The primary contacts for the GeoClub are Dr. Mick Whitelaw ([whitelaw@etsu.edu](mailto:whitelaw@etsu.edu)) and Dr. Ingrid Luffman ([luffman@etsu.edu](mailto:luffman@etsu.edu)). Among GeoClub activities are regular field trips to local sites (ex. caves, lakes, waterfalls, mines, roadcuts) and many special events (ex. Geo Movie Nights, Earth Day Celebration, Mapping Parties). The club participates in the Knoxville and Kingsport gem and mineral shows during the fall semesters. The club also sponsors student travel to academic conferences and several student awards.

### B. Appalachian Student Research Forum

The Appalachian Student Research Forum (ASRF) is an annual event (during the Spring Semester) in which undergraduate and graduate students can present their research in a formal, juried setting. There is no cost to participate, but students must register and submit an abstract before the posted deadline in order to do so. The ASRF hosts both poster and oral presentations. The poster presentation session is open to all participants (undergraduate, graduate, medical residents, and post-doctoral fellows). Only graduate students are eligible to participate in the oral sessions. Research presented must have been conducted under the direction of an ETSU faculty member. More information can be found at the ASRF website: (<http://www.etsu.edu/studentresearch/>).



## **IX. AWARDS AND HONORS**

### **A. Awards and Honors**

Recognition of graduate students at ETSU and within the Department of Geosciences can come in several forms. Each spring there are a diverse array of awards given to both first year and continuing graduate students at the Department's Earth Day event. Excellence in research and teaching are the primary areas considered by faculty when providing awards to students. Awards vary, with some including a certificate or plaque, and others including monetary awards. In addition to departmental awards, there are [Geosciences Scholarships](#). The School of Graduate Studies has a number of awards ([Graduate Student Awards \(etsu.edu\)](#)) that are given annually at the ETSU Graduate Student Awards event, hosted by the university president.

## **X. IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

### *The Graduate Catalog*

The Graduate Catalog is the primary source of information on graduate curriculum, academic requirements and regulations, and other academic matters. The catalog that is published during the year of a student's admission is the basis for that student's academic requirements. Thus, it is important for students to consult the catalog regularly and to use it as the authoritative source of information on academic matters. The catalog for the current academic year and for several previous years is available online at the graduate program website (<https://catalog.etsu.edu/>).

### *Course Schedule*

The ETSU Course Schedule is published each semester and lists all available courses. Students should consult the schedule when planning their courses for registration ([homepage \(etsu.edu\)](http://homepage.etsu.edu)).

### *Counseling Center*

The University Counseling Center, staffed by licensed psychologists and other behavioral health professionals, offers free and confidential counseling for personal, career choice, and academic concerns to all ETSU students. Staff also present a series of workshops each semester on topics such as time management, stress management, relationship skills, sexuality, and assertiveness. The University Counseling Center is located in the D.P. Culp University Center, Room 345. For more information, visit the center website (<https://www.etsu.edu/students/counseling/>).

### *Disability Services*

Services and accommodations are provided for students with documented disabilities to provide an accessible learning environment. Any student who has a special need as a result of a disability must contact Disability Services, Room 326, D.P. Culp University Center (<https://www.etsu.edu/students/ds/>). Students are required to obtain documentation for needed accommodations each semester and are encouraged to file the documentation in the Testing Center.

### *Libraries*

Many area libraries are available to ETSU students. The on-campus Sherrod Library contains resources to support the university's programs and research (<https://libraries.etsu.edu/home>). It is very important that students respect the guidelines for each individual library in order for all students to be able to continue to use these resources.

### *School of Graduate Studies*

Located in Burgin Dossett Hall, Room 309, the School of Graduate Studies provides information on the G.R.E., Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Scholarships, graduate school policies and procedures, thesis policies and procedures, and all graduate school offerings. For more information, visit their website ([ETSU Graduate School](http://ETSU Graduate School)).

### *Security and Fire Safety Report*

East Tennessee State University makes available to students the ETSU Security and Fire Safety Report. This annual report includes campus crime statistics for the three most recent calendar years and various campus policies concerning law enforcement, the reporting of criminal activity, and crime prevention programs. For more information, visit the ETSU Safety website (<https://www.etsu.edu/safety/>).

### *University Health Center*

The University Health Center clinic is available to all registered ETSU students. A valid current ETSU ID card is required to access services. The clinic is part of the Faculty Practice Network of the College of Nursing and most care is provided by nurse practitioners and registered nurses. The clinic is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Students are advised to call early in the day to schedule same-day appointments with the nurse practitioners. Immunizations are available from 8:00a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Students are not charged for visits to the clinic, but there are charges for medications, immunizations, lab tests and some procedures. The Student Health Clinic can help students with episodic illnesses and injuries, preventive services, health education and can assist students with meeting clinical health requirements. The clinic is located in Nicks Hall, Suite 160. For more information, visit the University Health Center website (<https://www.etsu.edu/nursing/shserv/>).

## **XI. APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: INDEPENDENT STUDY FORM Department of Geosciences, ETSU**

#### **Course information**

Course Code and Number:

Course Title: Independent Study:

Credit Hours:

Semester and Year Offered:

#### **Instructor Information**

Instructor Name:

Instructor Contact Information:

Instructor Office Hours:

#### **General Course Description**

Limited opportunities are provided to our students to enroll for Independent Study courses. A student interested in this option should fill out the Independent Study Form, have it signed by the instructor and return it to the Geoscience Office (Ross Hall 322), before a permit can be issued.

#### **Description for This Independent Study**

Include purpose and goal, major topics covered

#### **Grading Policy**

#### **Course Schedule**

#### **Specific Student Expectations**

#### **Syllabus Attachment**

[Syllabus Attachment \(etsu.edu\)](#)

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[Instructor Name and Signature]

[Student Name, E# and Signature]

## APPENDIX 2: THESIS DEFENSE RUBRIC – GEOSPATIAL CONCENTRATION

Consensus of Thesis Committee

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

	Excellent 8-7 points	Good 6-5 points	Fair/Average 4-3 points	Poor/Inadequate 0-2 points	Pts
<b>ACCURACY OF DATA IN THESIS AT PRESENTATION</b>	All of information presented accurate	Majority of information presented accurate	Information presented accurate and inaccurate	Information presented largely inaccurate	
<b>THOROUGHNESS OF COLLECTED DATA IN THESIS</b>	Student has produced a wealth of information and has gone beyond what might be expected for the project; has discovered some intriguing data/results	Student has obtained some good data but has not gone into the obvious next step	Student has done the bare minimum of data production; no innovation expressed related to the project	Appears to be mostly guess work; not sure the student really understands the thesis project	
<b>THOROUGHNESS OF REFERENCED DATA AND LITERATURE CITED</b>	Clearly student is well-read and fully understands previous publications	Student has done a fair job at obtaining a published literature background survey	Student has an average grasp of the literature background but could have produced more	Student is not well-read in the area of study, not sure who has published what in the subject	
<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	Clearly the student has taken the data and gleaned as much intriguing results from it as is possible given the project set limits	Student has taken the data set and found some interesting results	Student as analyzed the data and produced just the minimum about of results and discussion; much more could have been produced given the project limits	Student shows that they really do not know what to do with the data set, how it fits with that data from other publications or what the next step should be for the project	
<b>THESIS PRESENTATION</b>	Presentation was professional and within set time limits	Presentation was good, but not well polished	Presentation was not well rehearsed but conveyed the information, not overly professional	Presentation not rehearsed, seems slapped together, not well organized, missing data obvious; possibly over time limit	
<b>GEOSPATIAL CONCEPTS AND USES</b>	Student describes various geospatial techniques, how to use the, and when to use them – shows full knowledge of subject	Student describes many geospatial techniques, how to use the, and when to use them – has a fair grasp of the subject	Student can describe only the single geospatial technique used in the thesis but lacks breadth of subject	Student really did not know the required variety of geospatial techniques	
<b>GEOSPATIAL</b>	Student	Student shows a fair	Student shows some	Student does not	

<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	demonstrates full knowledge about the application and appropriate use of geospatial hardware and software.	knowledge about the application and appropriate use of geospatial hardware and software	knowledge about geospatial hardware and software but not a good command of them.	really understand geospatial technology, how to use it, or when to use it.	
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Total Points ( $\geq 35$  pts. required to pass): \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 3: THESIS DEFENSE RUBRIC – PALEONTOLOGY CONCENTRATION**

Consensus of Thesis Committee

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and year: \_\_\_\_\_

	Excellent 8-7 points	Good 6-5 points	Fair/Average 4-3 points	Poor/Inadequate 0-2 points	Pts
<b>ACCURACY OF DATA IN THESIS AT PRESENTATION</b>	All of information presented accurate.	Majority of information presented accurate.	Information presented partially accurate and partially inaccurate.	Information presented largely inaccurate.	
<b>THOROUGHNESS OF COLLECTED DATA IN THESIS</b>	Student has produced a wealth of information and has gone beyond what might be expected for the project; has discovered some intriguing data/results.	Student has obtained some good data, but has not gone into the obvious next step.	Student has done the bare minimum of data collection; no innovation expressed related to the project.	Data appears to be mostly guess work; uncertain whether the student really understands the thesis project.	
<b>THOROUGHNESS OF REFERENCED DATA AND LITERATURE CITED</b>	Student is clearly well-read and fully understands previous publications.	Student has done a good job obtaining a survey of published background literature.	Student has an average grasp of the published background literature, but could have done more.	Student is not well-read in the area of study, and is not sure who has published what in the subject.	
<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSION WARRANT PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATION</b>	Student has clearly taken the data and gleaned as much intriguing results from it as is possible, given the limits of the project. Discussion places results in a broader context.	Student has taken the data set and found some interesting results. Discussion is appropriate, but does not necessarily place results into a broader context.	Student has analyzed the data and produced just the minimum amount of results and discussion; much more could have been produced given the limits of the project.	Student shows that they really do not know what to do with the data set, how it fits with data from other sources, and does not know what the next step should be for the project.	
<b>THESIS PRESENTATION</b>	Presentation was professional, rehearsed, and given within set time limits.	Presentation was good, but not particularly polished.	Presentation was not well rehearsed or not particularly professional, but conveyed the information to the audience; possibly exceeds time limit.	Presentation was not rehearsed, may be slapped together, slides not well-organized, may obviously be missing data; possibly exceeds time limit.	
<b>OSTEOLOGY</b>	Student knew how	Student knows	Student displays	Student has no clue	

	to approach an unknown specimen, made identifications correctly and with well-reasoned justification.	how to approach an unknown specimen, may have made identifications correctly, may not have well-reasoned justifications.	average knowledge of how to approach an unknown specimen, may or may not make identifications correctly, and displays lack of ability to justify identifications.	of how to approach an unknown specimen, did not make identifications correctly, and displays no ability to justify identifications.	
<b>PALEONTOLOGICAL CONCEPTS</b>	Student displays a broad knowledge of paleontological concepts. Can effectively convey understanding of paleontological concepts (e.g. evolution, paleobiology, biochronology).	Student displays good knowledge of paleontological concepts and can effectively convey that understanding, particularly of concepts directly related to their thesis project.	Student displays average knowledge of basic paleontological and some ability to convey understanding of concepts directly related to their thesis project.	Student lacks knowledge of and ability to convey understanding of basic paleontological concepts, even those directly related to their thesis project.	
<b>PALEONTOLOGICAL METHODS</b>	Student displays a broad knowledge of methods commonly used in paleontology. Knows more than just basics of methods and can describe in detail the methods used for thesis project (e.g. systematics, statistics, taphonomy).	Student displays a good knowledge of methods commonly used in paleontology and can effectively convey understanding of basic methods, particularly those used for thesis project.	Student displays average knowledge of methods commonly used in paleontology and some ability to convey understanding of methods used for thesis project.	Student lacks knowledge of and ability to convey understanding of basic methods commonly used in paleontology, even those directly used for their thesis project.	

Total Points ( $\geq 40$  pts. required to pass): \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX 4: ANNUAL REVIEW OF GRADUATE PROGRESS – Faculty Review**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student E Number \_\_\_\_\_

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Your Graduate Advisor, Graduate Advisory Committee, Graduate Coordinator, and Departmental Chair have assessed your performance for the most recent academic term in the following areas:

1. Graduate Assistant (GA) or Tuition Scholar (TS) contract Assignments
2. Grade Point Average (GPA)
3. Thesis Progress
4. Service Activities

Your performance in these areas is:

Fall Term	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does not meet expectations*	Assessment & Outcome
GA / TS Contract				
GPA				
Thesis Progress				
Service Activities				
Spring Term	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does not meet expectations*	Assessment & Outcome
GA / TS Contract				
GPA				
Thesis Progress				
Service Activities				

\* If a student drops below a 3.0 GPA, or does not meet expectations in any of these categories for any term of their GA/TS support, rules of the School of Graduate Studies and Department of Geosciences are that the student is placed on probation and may be granted one term of GA support while on probation. If the student fails to remedy the deficiency, the student will not be eligible for additional GA support.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Graduate Advisor

## APPENDIX 4: ANNUAL REVIEW OF GRADUATE PROGRESS – Student Narrative

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student E Number \_\_\_\_\_

This document provides you an opportunity to detail aspects of your graduate performance that are not captured by your GPA or progress in writing your thesis. The information provided here can also be helpful in preparing an updated curriculum vitae.

### **Self-reflection on Performance in Courses**

For the last academic year, please provide a brief assessment of your performance in courses. Did your performance meet your own expectations? What work are you most proud of? What areas could you improve?

### **Self-reflection on Performance in GA / TS Duties**

For the last academic year, please provide a brief assessment of your performance in completion of your graduate assistant or tuition scholar duties. Did your performance meet your own expectations? What work are you most proud of? What areas could you improve?

### **Research and Creative Activities**

For the last academic year, please provide a list of publications, presentations, and completed research. For completed projects, provide citations and a brief statement of their significance. For ongoing projects, please provide a brief but informative description of their status, with anticipated completion dates.

Publications (include full citation, or status if in preparation, in review)

Presentations (with dates and venues)

Ongoing Research (with anticipated completion dates)

## **Service Activities**

For the last academic year, please describe the service activities in which you have participated, and your role. For each item, please provide a brief statement of the contribution of these activities to the community, university, or your profession.

On-campus service (please list department, event names, and dates)

Off-campus service (please list event names and dates)

Participation in professional societies (please list event names and dates)

Mentoring (describe activities and number of students involved)

## APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE RESEARCH AGREEMENT WITH GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Research Agreement with Graduate Students

This document serves as a written agreement between graduate advisor and graduate student. The purpose of this is to have a clear understanding of my expectations as we move forward. As your graduate advisor, I require a signed copy of this agreement for my file.

- We will meet regularly to discuss progress.
  - *I expect you to be prepared with questions, thoughts, data, and analyses. You will demonstrate significant progress from one meeting to the next.*
- You will be senior author on your thesis work, and I expect it to be published when completed.
  - *We will work together, but you will be the lead author.*
- I will be second author on the work.
  - *This relates to the fact that most of the projects I supervise reflect ongoing research that I am conducting, or projects that I have invested in. Under rare circumstances this is not the case (and therefore I wouldn't be a co-author).*
- Unless it is cleared with me there will not be any other authors on our work.
  - *At times it is very appropriate to have additional authors. Ask first though.*
- Unless we agree otherwise, I will be the corresponding author on publications from your thesis work.
  - *This is a standard policy by most advisors.*
- I will receive copies of all data prior to you leaving ETSU.
  - *This includes images, raw data, graphs, analyses, notes, etc.*
- I expect you to make every attempt to finish your MS degree in two years.
  - *To accomplish this you need to make a major time commitment.*
- If you do not make an attempt to publish the work for one year after leaving ETSU, then I will take on the responsibility of getting it published.
  - *This may result in changing the authorship level.*
- You will not take on any other projects or publication initiatives during your thesis project without my approval.
  - *Side projects can be good, but they can also result in low productivity.*

Sincerely,

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Graduate Student:

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_