

# MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS) DEGREE IN THE FIELD OF EARTH, ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANETARY SCIENCES

## Program Learning Outcomes for the MS Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

Upon completing the MS degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences, students will be able to:

1. Understand the structure and composition of the Earth and Planets, their evolution, and how the Earth changes over time.
2. Use appropriate computational or analytical techniques in the conduct of research investigations.
3. Demonstrate significant skills in scientific communication, written and oral.
4. Develop the ability to contribute to the peer-reviewed literature.

## Requirements for the MS Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

The MS degree is a thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, please see [Thesis Master's Degrees \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-thesis-masters-degrees/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-thesis-masters-degrees/). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see [All Graduate Students \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/). All incoming students should have a strong background in physics, chemistry, and mathematics and should have, or should acquire, a broad grounding in fundamental earth science. The department encourages applications from well-qualified students with degrees in the other sciences, mathematics, or engineering. The requirements for the MS and PhD in earth, environmental and planetary sciences are similar, but the PhD demands a significantly higher level of knowledge, research skills, and scholarly independence. Most students need at least 2 years beyond the bachelor's degree to complete the MS or 4 years beyond the bachelor's degree to complete the PhD.

Candidates determine, with their major professor and thesis committee, a course of study following the *Guidelines for Advanced Degrees in the Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences* handbook, distributed to all incoming students. For both degrees, candidates must:

- Complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of graduate-level study (graduate semester credit hours, coursework at the 500-level or above) to satisfy degree requirements.
- Complete 20 semester hours of coursework at the 500-level or above (or other approved courses), not including research hours.
- Pass a written preliminary exam.
- Maintain a grade point average of 3.00 (B) or better.
- Prepare a written thesis comprised of peer-reviewed publication(s) that represent an original contribution to science.

- Defend the research and conclusions of the thesis in an oral examination.

The requirements listed in the General Announcements (GA) satisfy the minimum requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses (or requirements) not officially listed here may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions or any exceptions to the stated official curricular requirements must be approved by the [Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies \(https://graduate.rice.edu/\)](https://graduate.rice.edu/). Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

## Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
	Total Credit Hours Required for the MS Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences	30

## Policies for the MS Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

### Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences Graduate Program Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, the department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: [https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2024\\_25/EEPS\\_Graduate\\_Handbook.pdf](https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2024_25/EEPS_Graduate_Handbook.pdf).

### Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see [Transfer Credit \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Requests for transfer credit must be approved for Rice equivalency by the appropriate academic department offering the Rice equivalent course (corresponding to the subject code of the course content) and by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

### Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences website: <https://eeps.rice.edu/>.

## Opportunities for the MS Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

### Additional Information

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