

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) DEGREE IN THE FIELD OF EARTH, ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANETARY SCIENCES

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

Upon completing the PhD 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. Demonstrate peer-reviewed literature, and to write and publish a substantial contribution.

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

For general university requirements, please see [Doctoral Degrees \(https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-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 Degrees 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 two years beyond the bachelor's degree to complete the MS or four 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. Students pursuing the MS and PhD degrees in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences must:

- 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

Students with a bachelor's degree and department approval may work directly toward the PhD, in which case the course of study is equivalent to that required for both degrees; performance on the examinations and the thesis, however, should be at the level required for the PhD. Because the graduate programs require full-time study and close interaction with faculty and fellow students, the department discourages students from holding full-time (or nearly full-time) jobs outside the university. Outside employment must be approved by the chair.

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 for the PhD Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences	90

Policies for the PhD 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.

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 PhD Degree in the field of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences

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