

WELCOME

To incoming graduate students: we are happy that you are joining us and hope that your stay will be exciting, demanding, and rewarding. To returning graduate students: it's good to have you back.

The purpose of the Handbook is to tell you what to do and when. Incoming students should find it helpful in orienting themselves; students already in residence should check it over to see if changes have occurred during the year.

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REGISTRATION

Registration information, including registration dates, is provided each semester by the Office of the Registrar. With the exception of first-time enrollment for new graduate students, all students are strongly encouraged to register online at:

<https://registration.jhu.edu/>

The University in-person registration dates are:

Fall Term: 8/31/09-9/1/09

Spring Term: 1/21/10 - 1/22/10

You should make sure to register during the official period in order to avoid a University-imposed late fee (\$150 - \$300) that you would be responsible for. Do so even if your program is not finalized – you can easily add or drop courses later.

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ADVISOR AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Your primary advisor is the faculty member closest to your field. He or she along with two other members of the faculty will form your advisory committee. Your committee will meet with you prior to each semester and will help you select courses and plan a program. If you do not yet have a specialty, you may consult with the Chair or the Director of Graduate Studies (see below). However, remember that all of the faculty are willing and eager to help. You should feel free to seek advice from all faculty, especially those in your own areas of interest. As your contacts with the faculty develop, the time will come when you will have a clear idea who you would like to have as a thesis advisor if you don't have one when you arrive.

Do not forget that the aim of this Department is to allow you, in consultation with your advisor and your committee, to devise a program that fits your talents, interests, and goals. It is up to you to propose a program; it is not up to your advisor or your committee to tell you what to do. On the other hand, your advisor and committee have experience in designing workable programs, and you will probably want to give your advisor's and your committee's reactions to your proposed program a good deal of weight, especially during your first year or two.

Your advisory committee will also meet with you at the end of each academic year to discuss your progress and goals for the upcoming year.

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DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Dr. John Ferry, Director of Graduate Studies, can sign all registration and add-drop forms and is responsible, together with Kristen Gaines, for seeing that exams are scheduled at the proper time. In the absence of Dr. Ferry, your advisor or the Chair can also sign registration forms.

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STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

You should realize that the support offered to you for this academic year is **ONLY FOR THIS ACADEMIC YEAR**. Departmental funding is only guaranteed for four years of study and is contingent on your making satisfactory academic progress as well as the availability of funding. After the fourth year, funding is provided at the discretion of your advisor only. Please note that for international students, lack of funding may have visa implications. Please contact the OISSS to discuss any issues that may arise.

Our graduate student support comes from a variety of sources, including University and Departmental funds, research grants and contracts, and other outside sources. We are doing our best to generate as much support as possible, but it is very difficult to predict funding levels far in advance. We will make tentative allocations of student aid for Academic Year 2010-2011, based on our estimate of the funds that we will have available, later in Academic Year 2009-2010. Some grants may not be awarded, however, and last minute changes may have to be made.

You can maximize your chances for continued support by (1) obtaining your own outside fellowship or grant support; (2) doing well in your courses; (3) getting involved in research early so that at least one professor knows your capability and interests. As a rule, Departmental support is not available beyond the fourth year of study. Some supervisors have grant funds to support you for part or all of a fifth year. If not, you should expect to have to provide your own funds or to borrow money through the University for a fifth year. After that, you are politely asked to vacate your office, except in the event of special hardship.

All students are paid on the 15th and the last day of each month, from September 1 – May 31. Payroll concerns or questions should be addressed to Kristen Gaines or Teresa Marsee.

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SUMMER FUNDING

The Department has no funds to pay stipends to students over the summer. They must rely on their advisor's research grants or their own initiative.

The Department administers several funds that can be used to support summer laboratory research or fieldwork. The funds available, however, are limited, and they are for research expenses but not stipends. Travel costs, meetings and workshops are not considered eligible fieldwork expenses. You can help greatly by obtaining your own support from outside sources such as various scientific societies, especially the Geological Society of America and Sigma Xi.

Discuss the possibilities with your advisor, and submit your application well before the deadline. If – despite your best efforts – you are unable to support yourself, submit a brief proposal with a bare-bones budget to Teresa Marsee by the deadline provided at the end of each semester; the available field research funds will be allocated after taking into account your needs and the efforts you have made to obtain outside funds, and again, are not for stipends.

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HOUSING

The University Housing Office offers a variety of housing opportunities at Hopkins. Their help is invaluable, and we urge you to take full advantage of it. Additional housing options are provided in literature that can be found in Kristen's office or on the website <http://www.jhu.edu/hds/offcampus/index.html>

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FOR HELPFUL ADVICE

The more advanced graduate students have volunteered to make themselves available to incoming students for informal advice and guidance, not only on program problems, but on matters of general Departmental and University life. If you have a question, talk to one of them; they have probably been through it!

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FORMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE Ph.D. DEGREE

There are no formal course requirements for the Ph.D. degree in terms of number of courses or credit hours. Your advisory committee, however, will consult with you and advise on a program of coursework you will need to attain your professional goals. The formal requirements for the Ph.D. degree are:

(1) *Departmental Qualifying Exam (DQE)*: Graduate students in their second year of residence, normally in their third semester, are expected to present themselves for oral examination before a committee of the Department for the DQE. The exam can cover anything relevant to your program, but usually focuses on your courses and general knowledge in Earth and Planetary Sciences. The purpose of this examination is to decide whether (1) you have our blessing to continue to the Ph.D., (2) you can try for an M.A., but not for the Ph.D., (3) you must depart at the end of the second year. In certain cases a student may be allowed a second DQE if the first is unsuccessful. The first attempt is normally in November, and if allowable, the second in February. This timing allows you an opportunity to apply elsewhere for the following academic year if necessary. The absolutely final deadline for the DQE is the end of the final exam period of the fourth semester.

If you are now at the beginning of your second year of residence, please pick up a form from Kristen, which needs to be completed in advance of the DQE date. It requires the nominations of three faculty members to examine you.

Normally, these would be people you have taken courses from or with whom you have worked. Kristen will schedule your DQE.

(2) *Thesis Proposal:* At the end of the second year, you are expected to present a written thesis proposal, to be approved by two faculty members, usually the prospective readers of your thesis. The two readers are normally members of your advisory committee. You will consult with your advisor about the format and content of the proposal. Kristen has a file of recent thesis proposals that you may consult for additional guidance. The absolutely final deadline for completion and approval of the thesis proposal is before the start of the fifth semester.

(3) *Graduate Board Oral Examination (GBO):* During or before the first term of the third year of residence, students are expected to present themselves for a comprehensive University examination, an oral exam with five faculty members, three of whom will be from outside the Department. This is the so-called Graduate Board Oral or “GBO” exam. Copies of your approved thesis proposal are distributed to your GBO committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled exam date. Kristen will then schedule your GBO. The exam can cover anything relevant to your program but usually focuses on the thesis proposal. General science questions are fair game. After you pass the comprehensive examination for the Ph.D. degree you are expected to engage fulltime in research under the guidance of your supervisor. The absolutely final deadline for the GBO exam is before the start of the seventh semester.

(4) *Thesis Dissertation:* Your advisor will be the first reader of your thesis. Remember that you will need a second reader for your dissertation. The second reader is normally a member of your advisory committee. In the end, both readers sign a letter that recommends acceptance of your thesis to the Graduate Board. The faculty takes this seriously and you should too. Select both readers early and keep them informed of your progress or lack thereof all along. Changes in personnel are of course possible as your research develops, but keep your readers informed.

(5) *Thesis Presentation:* The final hurdle is the dissertation presentation. This happens right at the end and is usually a pleasant occasion for all concerned. Each student is responsible for inviting at least five E & PS faculty members, who must certify that the presentation is satisfactory before the degree can be awarded. The thesis presentation can take the form of a Journal Club or Seminar and should be about 50 minutes in duration. It will be announced explicitly as a thesis presentation.

A few guidelines on what is expected in the dissertation presentation may be helpful. The presentation should not assume that the audience is familiar with portions of the work presented in earlier seminars or Journal Club; it should be organized as a coherent, self-contained seminar presentation, and should generally include:

(a) A brief opening outline of the overall content of the dissertation, a summary of the major problems investigated, and a statement of why those problems are

important and how they relate to other research in the field;

(b) An extended discussion of the dissertation as a whole (or, where this is impractical, a discussion of several topics selected from the dissertation); and

(c) A concise summary of the main conclusions reached, emphasizing their implications for the field as a whole.

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ANNUAL EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

The faculty will evaluate the progress of every graduate student each year at a faculty meeting held at the end of the Spring semester. After evaluation and discussion of your record and the report from the annual meeting with your advisory committee, they will decide if you are making satisfactory progress. If not, they will either suggest remedies, or in extreme cases, decide on termination from the program.

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THE M.A. DEGREE

The Department does not offer a program that specifically leads to a Master's degree alone. Students, however, may receive the M.A. degree under two circumstances. First, they may receive it along the way to completing the Ph.D. degree following their passing the DQE and taking two years of coursework. If you qualify and would like to receive the M.A. degree, please inform Kristen Gaines. Second, the M.A. degree may be awarded to

students who pass the DQE and take two years of coursework but are not allowed to continue for the Ph.D. degree.

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JOURNAL CLUB

Intent and Level of Presentation: The intent of Journal Club is twofold. It informs the faculty and the Department on the research topic and research progress of each student. It also provides an environment for students to develop and hone a mature and professional style of delivering research talks.

You should present your motives and research achievements in the most understandable fashion possible. The heart of presentations should be as advanced and scholarly as possible and free from the constraint of insuring that all attendees fully understand it in all aspects. Students should, however, make every effort to preface and conclude the talk with appropriate remarks to furnish the average listener with a contextual and meaningful understanding of the overall presentation.

Through Journal Club, both faculty and students develop an appreciation of research in other areas and also develop an opinion of the scientific strength of students not in their immediate area of research. In this respect, it is essential that students always put their best foot forward. Students and faculty alike are expected to consistently attend Journal Club regardless of the presentation topic.

Style of Presentation: It is natural to expect the most advanced presentations

to be by the most advanced students. New students may wish to present research completed elsewhere, a proposed research topic, or even a critical review of one or more timely and influential journal articles. In succeeding years, students should aim at showing progress either in level of learning or research. Second year students, for example, might discuss early research results, a sharply focused and in-depth understanding of a proposed research problem, or even a scholarly overview of a research area. By the third year students should have a clear line of original research to report on; it may be incomplete, but its many facets can be presented.

Use of PowerPoint is standard, and presentations should definitely not be read. Cues for the speaker can be cleverly placed directly on the screen. The most enjoyable and effective presentations most often are those that appear spontaneous and lively.

Talks should be limited to 20 minutes plus a minute or two for introduction and five minutes for questions. To be fair to all, this schedule is to be adhered to even when there is a single presentation. After the talk, students are required to seek out three or more faculty members for their impressions of the effectiveness of the presentation and of ways in which to strengthen future presentations. Dr. Tom Wright is in charge of the Journal Club.

Abstracts: Abstracts are to be written in the active voice, 250 words in length, and in the format of an abstract for a professional meeting (AGU, GSA, Goldschmidt, etc). They are to be taken seriously and should be offered for

constructive criticism to two or three people (including one's advisor) before posting on the Friday before the presentation.

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SEMINARS

The Department sponsors four formal seminar series named in honor of distinguished alumni or former faculty members. The Bromery Seminars are held weekly and may involve any topic of interest to members of the Department. Graduate students are expected to attend all weekly seminars, regardless of the topic, for the same reason they are expected to attend all meetings of Journal Club. Students are encouraged to ask questions of the speaker as is expected after any seminar or talk at a professional meeting. Students are also encouraged to suggest individuals of their choosing to be invited as Bromery Seminar speakers (see Professor Thomas Haine, the faculty supervisor of the Bromery Seminars). Inviting a speaker, however, carries the responsibility of arranging their travel logistics (e.g., airport pickup and drop off), a schedule of meetings with interested members of the Department, and their social schedule (lunch, dinner).

Three additional formal seminar series involve inviting distinguished scientists to spend several days in the Department each year. The Cloos Scholarship and Lectureship is primarily intended for those in the geological sciences, the Elsasser Lectureship for those in the atmospheric sciences, geophysics and geobiology, and the Benton Lectureship for those in the atmospheric sciences and meteorology. The faculty usually

choose the Cloos, Elsassner, and Benton Lecturers, but student input is encouraged. Students are encouraged to ask questions after the lectures and to fully participate in all related social functions.

Other less formal luncheon groups meet weekly to discuss petrology, GFD, etc., where attendees are expected to participate by describing their current research efforts in detail, even if they are in the formative states or incomplete. Sometimes questions are posed rather than answers given, but all who attend are expected to participate.

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OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

(1) Graduate students in full-time residence must take a minimum of twelve credits each semester. If formal courses fail to add up to twelve credit hours, the difference is to be made up as Research (270.807-808).

(2) All students who wish to use the basic equipment in the rock preparation room should make an appointment with the grad student in charge so that he or she can check your technique and provide instruction when necessary. If you wish to do any unusual or difficult cutting jobs, please check with him or her first.

(3) If you are planning any change in status – going on leave of absence, becoming a nonresident student, or withdrawing – see Kristen Gaines. It is MOST important that we be informed of your plans at all times.

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SINGEWALD ROOM AND THE MEL

The Singewald Room is a small research library and reading room at the disposal of all members of the Department. It is not a lending library and books may be removed from the room only for copying, to be returned immediately. After use, all books must be reshelved by the user. Repeat offenders will lose user privileges. Steve Stich is the Singewald librarian and the grad student library representative changes each year.

The full JHU collections are sited at or accessed through the Milton E. Eisenhower Library (MEL). Steve Stich is the MEL librarian who specifically handles needs, questions and problems of E & PS.

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COMPUTING AND IT MATTERS

The equipment in the Computer Room, Olin 145, can be used free of charge. We currently contract a group of professionals from the Department of Physics and Astronomy to provide for our IT needs. You should submit an online request for IT assistance to eps-help@pha.jhu.edu. If you have more extensive needs, see your advisor. Your advisor will have accounts on the Departmental and University systems.

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OLIN BUILDING KEY POLICY

The Department lends keys to those who have the permission of a faculty member

or the departmental administrator. You will be asked to sign for any keys that you borrow and to return them at the end of your stay. There is a charge of \$30.00 for each lost key. Everyone who uses the Olin Building depends on your vigilant handling of your keys for their security while in the building.

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COPY/TELEPHONE/FAX

You will receive an invoice from Kim Trent for the personal use of the telephone (long distance) and copying machines, as well as for charges incurred for the personal use of UPS and FedEx services. These are to be paid on receipt if you wish to continue taking advantage of these conveniences. You may also pay for them at the time the service is rendered.

The fax machine (410-516-7933) is located in the main office. Students will have access between the hours of 8:30 – 4:30. Make sure all log sheets and cover sheets are filled out properly. Leave the cover sheet in the tray provided after transmission is complete.

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BULLETIN BOARDS

Watch the bulletin boards at various locations in the building for job and meeting announcements, financial aid, and other information.

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SECURITY

While security is a top priority of the Department and the University, Homewood Campus is located in a large city. Students should call Security (6-7777) immediately if they see anything irregular occurring in the building.

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LABORATORY SAFETY

Safety is also a top priority of the Department and the University. If you feel that any practices or procedures in the building are dangerous, consult the Departmental Safety Student or speak with one of the staff members in the main office. If it is an emergency, either call the Office of Health, Safety and Environment (6-8798) or Security (6-7777).

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflicts can arise either between students or between students and faculty. If the conflict cannot be resolved among the parties involved themselves, the Chair is always available to hear about conflicts and facilitate their resolution.

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IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Please remember that in order to be considered for financial support next year, you must pass your Departmental milestones on schedule. These are:

First Year: You will have a conference with your advisor and advisory committee during the second semester to review the quality of your work in courses during the year.

Second Year: You must pass the Departmental Qualifying Examination before the end of the final exam period of your fourth semester and prepare a thesis proposal before the start of the fifth semester. The proposal must be approved by two faculty in the Department, usually the prospective readers of your thesis. You will have a conference with your advisor and advisory committee during the fourth semester to review the quality of your work in courses and research during the year.

Third Year: Those of you in your third year of residence must complete your Graduate Board Oral Examination. The absolutely final deadline for the GBO exam is before the beginning of the seventh semester. You will have a conference with your advisor and advisory committee during the sixth semester to review the quality of your research and any course work during the year.

Fourth Year: Departmental support is not available after your fourth year of residence. You will have a conference with your advisor and advisory committee during the eighth semester to review the quality of your research during the year.

The Final Steps: As required by the Graduate Board, each Ph.D. candidate must prepare a dissertation approved by two faculty members appointed by the Department. In addition, the

Department requires that each candidate present the results of the dissertation to the Department in a seminar of approximately 50 minutes. The presentation must be certified as satisfactory by a group of at least five E & PS faculty members.

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