

Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences

Degree Requirements

PhD in Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences

The degree requirements for a PhD in Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences are intended to ensure that all students develop independence and originality of thought and that they acquire knowledge of sufficient breadth and depth to be scientific leaders in the field. Students are required to complete eight courses, five of which must be taken in the Department of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences. Students entering with an AM degree in a closely related field may waive two of these course requirements if approved by the faculty.

Students begin research early in the program, completing a small project during their second semester. At this time, each student selects a faculty member to serve as their major advisor as well as two additional faculty members to provide further guidance; these three faculty members comprise the student's Research Advisory Committee. During their second year, students continue their research as they work toward the oral examination that occurs at the end of their second year, which requires the preparation of a research paper, an oral presentation of research results, and a question-and-answer session with the student's Research Advisory Committee. Students are also required to obtain experience in teaching during their studies. The PhD program culminates in the writing of a dissertation and its defense in an oral presentation.

AM in Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences

Students who intend to earn only a master's degree are not admitted. However, graduate students usually earn one on the way to doctorate. Students working toward a master's degree must maintain a B average in their course work. There are two tracks for the master's degree:

- **Track I.** Completion of a minimum of 36 units including a thesis (up to 6 credits)
- **Track II.** Completion of a minimum of 36 units plus an examination