Atmospheric Sciences

http://www.atmos.und.edu/

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Degrees Granted: Master of Science (M.S.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences offers graduate programs leading to the degrees of Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy. The Master of Science program is intended to serve those who are interested in continuing studies at the doctoral level as well as those seeking advanced knowledge for professional work in the atmospheric sciences in general. The Doctor of Philosophy program is intended to prepare students for leadership roles in academia, government, and private industry in the field of atmospheric science by enabling graduates to fill critical roles in leading research efforts, guiding science policy, educating future scientists, and creating opportunities in private industry.

Our vision is to offer premier atmospheric sciences graduate programs serving our students and the broader scientific community. In striving to achieve this distinction, the Department of Atmospheric Sciences maintains graduate programs that are socially relevant, serve as an advocate for graduate education campus-wide, provide resources that support graduate student research, and foster interdisciplinary programs. Within the context of the broader university community, the Department of Atmospheric Sciences serves to create an academic and intellectual climate that appreciates and respects diversity, values creativity, and supports the academic potential of each graduate student.

Details pertaining to admission requirements, degree requirements and courses offered can be found in the Degree section.

Master of Science (M.S.)

Mission Statement and Program Goals

The mission of the Department of Atmospheric Sciences master's program is to provide quality educational experiences to students to promote critical thinking and foster an intellectual environment conducive to exemplary research, scholarship, and creativity among graduate students and faculty.

Goal 1: Students will develop a comprehensive understanding of atmospheric sciences in a changing world.

Goal 2: Students will develop critical thinking skills through research activities or focused project activities.

Goal 3: Students will develop skills to analyze, interpret, and synthesize scientific data and communicate the results in an effective and professional manner.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Mission Statement and Program Goals

The mission of the Department of Atmospheric Sciences doctoral program is to provide an educational environment that deepens student knowledge of the atmospheric sciences and related disciplines, enables growth of student skill sets (analytical, technical, and communication), and emphasizes leadership, research, and innovation among its students and faculty.

Goal 1: Students will develop deep knowledge in particular atmospheric sciences sub-disciplines through their research activities while also broadening their knowledge base through coursework.

Goal 2: Students will enhance their analytical, technical, and communication skills through their research activities and course work and will develop the ability to carry out independent and original scientific research.

Goal 3: Students will develop skills that will enable them to fill critical roles in leading research efforts, guiding science policy, educating future scientists, and creating opportunities in industry.

Master of Science (M.S.)

Admission Requirements

1. A four-year bachelor's degree from a recognized college or university. For U.S. degrees, accreditation must be by one of the six regional accrediting associations.
2. Completion of a minimum of 20 semester credits of appropriate undergraduate work, e.g., physics, mathematics, chemistry, engineering, and/or atmospheric science.
3. A cumulative GPA of at least 2.75 for all undergraduate work or a GPA of at least 3.00 for the last two years.
4. Scores on the general portion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
5. Satisfy the School of Graduate Studies' English Language Proficiency requirements as listed in the graduate catalog.

Applicants will be evaluated on an individual basis and those with limited backgrounds in the aforementioned areas (physics, mathematics, chemistry, and atmospheric science) but with a distinguished record in other disciplines may be accepted on a qualified basis with the understanding that deficiencies would be remedied early in the program.

Degree Requirements

Students seeking the Master of Science degree through the Department of Atmospheric Sciences at the University of North Dakota must satisfy all general degree requirements set forth by the School of Graduate Studies as well as particular requirements set forth by the Department of Atmospheric Sciences.

The Master of Science program requires that students complete a minimum of 30 credit hours for the thesis option or a minimum of 32 credit hours for the non-thesis option. Approval of the thesis option will be granted based upon alignment of research interests with departmental faculty's research interests and faculty availability. The non-thesis option requires the student to independently investigate a topic related to the major field and successfully complete a written comprehensive examination. This study need not be an original contribution to knowledge, but may be a presentation, analysis, and discussion of ideas already in the literature of the field. This non-thesis requirement ensures that students can investigate a topic and organize a scholarly report.

Required Courses: All students are required to complete at least one course from each of the core areas listed below in addition to completing ATSC 500 Introduction to Atmospheric Research. Non-thesis option students must also complete two credits of ATSC 997 Independent Study Report (Non-Thesis Option), and thesis option students must also complete 4-9 credits of ATSC 998 Thesis.

ATSC 500	Introduction to Atmospheric Research	1
Select one of the following (Dynamics):		3
ATSC 505	Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics	
ATSC 518	Advanced Synoptic Meteorology	
ATSC 548	Advanced Mesoscale Dynamics	
Select one of the following (Physical):		3
ATSC 450	Introduction to Cloud Physics Meteorology **	
ATSC 520	Atmospheric Chemistry	
ATSC 525	Atmospheric Radiation	
ATSC 555	Advanced Surface Transportation Weather	
ATSC 560	Boundary Layer Meteorology	
ATSC 565	Air Quality	
Select one of the following (Climate Systems):		3
ATSC 510	General Circulation	
ATSC 515	Advanced Climatology	
ATSC 545	Hydrometeorology	
ATSC 550	Tropical Meteorology	
ATSC 530	Numerical Weather Prediction	
Select one of the following (Tools):		3

ATSC 441	Radar Meteorology [**]	
ATSC 528	Atmospheric Data Analysis	
ATSC 530	Numerical Weather Prediction	
ATSC 535	Measurement Systems	
ATSC 540	Statistical Methods in Atmospheric Science	
Select one of the following (Thesis or Independent Study):		2
ATSC 997	Independent Study Report (Non-Thesis Option)	
or ATSC 998	Thesis	
Electives		9-17
Total Credits		24-32

[**] Courses taken at the undergraduate level cannot be repeated for graduate credit.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Admission Requirements

The applicant must meet the School of Graduate Studies' current minimum general admission requirements as published in the graduate catalog. In addition, students must fulfill the requirements below for admission to the Atmospheric Sciences doctoral degree program.

1. A bachelor's or master's degree from a recognized institution. For U.S. degrees, accreditation must be by one of the six regional accrediting associations.
2. A cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 for all undergraduate work.
3. A GPA of at least 3.00 in all graduate level work.
4. A combined score of 300 in the quantitative and verbal sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
5. Be recommended for doctoral work by the department.
6. Satisfy the School of Graduate Studies' English Language Proficiency requirements as published in the graduate catalog.
7. Students with a bachelor's degree may apply directly to the Ph.D. program and must include within their application:
   a. At least one letter of recommendation that comments on their research ability, and
   b. A sample of their previous research, or, provide a research topic proposal and how that research will be executed, completed, and presented within the first year of the Ph.D. program.
8. In rare circumstances, students who begin the M.S. program in Atmospheric Sciences may bypass the M.S. and be admitted into the Ph.D. program with a unanimous recommendation by the departmental faculty and by first satisfying all other Ph.D. admission requirements of the UND School of Graduate Studies and Atmospheric Sciences Department including #7 above. Application materials should be submitted to the Graduate Committee in the Department of Atmospheric Sciences. The student need not have completed their M.S coursework at the time of application. The student would then be subject to the additional ***degree requirements*** stated in section 6 of "Degree Requirements" below.

Degree Requirements

Students seeking the Doctor of Philosophy degree through the Department of Atmospheric Sciences at the University of North Dakota must satisfy all general requirements set forth by the School of Graduate Studies as well as particular requirements set forth by the Department of Atmospheric Sciences. These degree requirements include:

1. Completion of 90 semester credits beyond a bachelor's degree or 60 semester credits beyond a master's degree.
2. Two consecutive years of full-time academic work completed in residence at the University of North Dakota campus. With approval of a student's Faculty Advisory Committee, one of these years may be completed through full-time academic work and/or research at another institution or location.
3. At least 40 of the post-bachelor's credits or 27 of the post-master's credits must be formal coursework. A minimum of two-thirds of these credits must be taken in the Atmospheric Sciences department.
4. Up to 9 credits may be taken through distance education.
5. Completion of ATSC 500 Introduction to Atmospheric Research and ATSC 505 Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics or equivalent classes.
6. Students who have been admitted under admission requirements #7 or #8 above must successfully present research in written and oral form during their first year of the Ph.D. program, subject to approval by the Departmental Graduate Committee and the student's Doctoral Committee. Those students approved will finish classwork and progress toward comprehensive exams and Ph.D. candidacy while those not approved will be dismissed.
7. Satisfactory completion of a written and oral doctoral comprehensive examination in Atmospheric Sciences is required before advancement to Ph.D. candidacy is granted. Students may attempt the written comprehensive exam twice.
8. Students are required to complete independent research that culminates in a dissertation, a public departmental seminar, and final examination.

Courses

ATSC 500. Introduction to Atmospheric Research. 1 Credit.
This course is required for all Atmospheric Science graduate students. A course in the methodology and philosophy of doing research in the atmospheric sciences. Also includes discussion of related topics, including creativity, publication, science and society, and career-related activities. S/U grading.

ATSC 505. Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics. 4 Credits.
A graduate level course in linear perturbation theory, atmospheric oscillations, hydrodynamic instability and the life cycle of extratropical cyclones. F.

ATSC 510. General Circulation. 3 Credits.
Covers the large scale dynamical processes in the atmosphere, including the observed circulation, processes that maintain the circulation, mid-latitude wintertime circulation anomalies, large scale structure of the tropical atmosphere, and the stratosphere and its link to the troposphere. Prerequisite: ATSC 505.

ATSC 515. Advanced Climatology. 3 Credits.
A course on climate from the perspective of utilizing climatic knowledge and information to examine the current state of the climate and how this can be used to explore potential future states. Topics included are an introduction to climatology, basic data and their analysis, climatological analysis, statistical methods, applications and synoptic climatology. Prerequisite: ATSC 540.

ATSC 518. Advanced Synoptic Meteorology. 3 Credits.
Advanced analysis of atmospheric processes important to large-scale flows. Quasigeotropic and semi-geotropic theory, behavior of extratropical systems, fronts and jets, geotropic adjustment, blocking and IPV thinking. Prerequisite: ATSC 505 or equivalent.

ATSC 520. Atmospheric Chemistry. 3 Credits.
Composition of clean and polluted air. Sources and sinks of atmospheric gases and aerosols. The role of atmospheric chemistry in global environmental issues such as acid rain, visibility reduction, climatic change, oxidant enhancement, etc.

ATSC 525. Atmospheric Radiation. 3 Credits.
Radiation transfer processes in the atmosphere. Scattering and absorption of solar and thermal radiation by aerosols and gases. Effects of clouds on the atmospheric radiation budget.

ATSC 528. Atmospheric Data Analysis. 3 Credits.
Introduction to techniques used in the analysis of meteorological data and methods for interpreting their effects: polynomial fitting, method of successive corrections, statistical methods, variational techniques, model initialization, data assimilation, and filter design. Prerequisite: Proficiency in a programming language.

ATSC 530. Numerical Weather Prediction. 3 Credits.
Covers scale analysis in atmospheric prediction; numerical methods; various atmospheric prediction models; the use of filtering, smoothing, interpolation, weighting and adjustment in objective analysis techniques; numerical forecasting; current NWP structures and applications. Prerequisite: ATSC 505.

ATSC 535. Measurement Systems. 3 Credits.
An advanced course in meteorological measurement systems, including coverage of performance characteristics of sensors, calibration standards, measuring devices, the effects of making measurements in the atmospheric environment, meteorological measurement systems, and digital data logging and processing.

ATSC 538. Advanced Earth System Sciences. 3 Credits.
Introduction and synthesis of understanding of the components of the Earth system, their interactions, and the consequences of changes in the Earth system for life; identify and quantify Sun-Earth connections associated with solar variability and impact on the Earth System; explore interactions among the major components of the Earth system: continents, oceans, atmosphere, ice, and life; distinguish natural from human-induced causes of change; understand and predict the consequences of change; and consider analysis techniques, with emphasis placed on numerical modeling of phenomena. Prerequisite: Permission of instructor.

ATSC 540. Statistical Methods in Atmospheric Science. 3 Credits.
A course on statistical methods used to describe, analyze, test, and predict atmospheric phenomena. The topics will review basic statistical concepts, statistical data interpretation, theoretical probability distributions, hypothesis testing, uncertainty analysis, regression, time series analysis, and statistical weather prediction and verification. Prerequisite: Must have completed course work in statistics or consent of instructor.

ATSC 545. Hydrometeorology. 3 Credits.
A course designed to study the coupling of atmospheric and hydrologic processes. Topics will cover basic hydrologic concepts, review of atmospheric thermodynamics, atmospheric moisture, precipitation processes, hydrologic cycle, evaporation/evapotranspiration, infiltration, snow and snowmelt processes, runoff mechanisms, land surface processes, and hydrologic modeling.

ATSC 548. Advanced Mesoscale Dynamics. 3 Credits.
An in-depth theoretical and analytical examination of mesoscale convective processes, initiation and characteristics; mesoscale features of tropical systems; orographically-forced and -influenced circulations; local and regional circulations; high-latitude mesoscale systems; an introduction to mesoscale model design, parameterization development, and evaluation. Prerequisite: Upper division or graduate course in dynamics or constent of instructor; ATSC 505 is a recommend corequisite but not required.

ATSC 550. Tropical Meteorology. 3 Credits.
A study of tropical phenomena over a range of scales, including small scale (cumulus clouds, thunderstorms), mesoscale (sea breezes, squall lines), large scale (waves and cyclones), and planetary scale circulations (trade winds, equatorial trough, equatorial waves, monsoons, intraseasonal oscillations, ENSO). Methods for obtaining and using information to study tropical phenomena are examined. Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

ATSC 552. Satellite Meteorology. 3 Credits.
A study of remote sensing technologies for atmospheric applications. Topics include basic radiation and remote sensing methods, image data processing, atmospheric and geometric corrections, radiometric and geometric enhancements, image classification, and selected meteorological applications using satellite remote sensing. S, even years.

ATSC 553. Advanced Satellite Meteorology. 3 Credits.
Addresses advanced topics in satellite meteorology. Includes advanced topics in radiation, scattering by molecules and particles, and retrieval theory and methods for meteorological applications using passive and active satellite remote sensing. Prerequisites: ATSC 552 and ATSC 525. F, even years.

ATSC 555. Advanced Surface Transportation Weather. 3 Credits.
Addresses weather research topics in contemporary surface transportation. Includes maintenance decision support systems construction, applications of artificial intelligence methods, and investigation of land surface effects and applications of advanced mesoscale weather prediction modeling in a surface transportation environment. Prerequisite: ATSC 510 or consent of instructor.

ATSC 560. Boundary Layer Meteorology. 3 Credits.
The interaction of the atmosphere with the earth's surface. The transfer of heat, moisture, and momentum between the atmosphere and the underlying surface. The description of turbulence and the effects of turbulence on the transfer properties of the atmosphere. Prerequisite: ATSC 505.

ATSC 565. Air Quality. 3 Credits.
An in-depth introduction to important areas within the air quality field. Topics covered include the physical and chemical nature of air pollutants; their sources, control, and transport through the atmosphere; their interaction with other atmospheric constituents; their removal through cloud processes, fallout and wet deposition; their effects on visibility, human health, ecosystems, and global climate. Methods related to the measurements of atmospheric pollutants, air quality modeling, and air quality forecasting are discussed. Prerequisites: CHEM 121 or equivalent, and PHYS 251 or equivalent.

ATSC 570. Seminar. 1 Credit.
A discussion course on current research topics and publications related to the field of atmospheric sciences. Students, faculty and guest speakers will present their research and lead the discussion during seminar. Repeatable to 3 credits. Repeatable to 3 credits. S/U grading.

ATSC 575. Current/Special Topics in Meteorology. 3 Credits.
A course in specific advanced topics in atmospheric sciences. Largely delivered in a structured, lecture format. Repeatable to 12 credits. Repeatable to 12 credits.

ATSC 594. Independent Studies. 2-4 Credits.
Survey investigations, literature searches and/or preliminary research topic of interest to the student. Repeatable to 4 credits. Repeatable to 4 credits.

ATSC 596. Supervised Research. 1-4 Credits.
Research in consultation with departmental faculty. Repeatable to 12 credits. Prerequisites: Master's degree student and consent of the instructor. Repeatable to 12 credits. S/U grading.

ATSC 598. Dissertation Research. 1-8 Credits.
Research, in support of the doctoral dissertation, performed in consultation with the student's advisor. Repeatable to 15 credits. Prerequisite: Consent of the instructor. Repeatable to 15 credits. S/U grading.

ATSC 996. Continuing Enrollment. 1-12 Credits.
Repeatable. S/U grading.

ATSC 997. Independent Study Report (Non-Thesis Option). 2 Credits.
Students are required to complete at least one course from each of the core areas: dynamics, physical, earth system, and tools, as well as ATSC 500. This course is required for all Atmospheric Science graduate students enrolled in the non-thesis option. Students will be required to independently investigate a topic related to the major field. This study need not be an original contribution to knowledge, but may be a presentation, analysis, and discussion of ideas already in the literature of the field. Prerequisite: Students are required to complete at least one course from each of the core areas: dynamics, physical, earth system, and tools, as well as ATSC 500. S/U grading.

ATSC 998. Thesis. 1-6 Credits.
Repeatable to 9 credits. Repeatable to 9 credits.

ATSC 999. Dissertation. 1-9 Credits.
Repeatable to 18 credits. Repeatable to 18 credits.

Undergraduate Courses for Graduate Credit

ATSC 441. Radar Meteorology. 4 Credits.
Advanced radar theory, including basic radar principles, digital processing of radar signals, Doppler radar principles, displays, polarization techniques, and characteristic returns. Includes laboratory. Prerequisite: ATSC 345 or consent of instructor. S, odd years.

ATSC 450. Introduction to Cloud Physics Meteorology. 4 Credits.
A study of the physics of clouds with emphasis on microphysical processes involved in cloud formation, precipitation production, and dissipation. Includes Laboratory. Prerequisites: ATSC 350 and ATSC 353. F, odd years.