ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES

https://graduate.earth.miami.edu/phd-and-ms-programs/atmospheric-sciences/index.html

Dept. Code: ATM

The Atmospheric Sciences (ATM) program is designed to prepare students with the tools, training, and education necessary to tackle critical research problems in the atmospheric sciences today. Our faculty are experts in a wide range of research areas, including tropical meteorology, climate dynamics, cloud and aerosol processes, and atmospheric chemistry. Their expertise and guidance and our world-class facilities prepare our students for successful careers in the atmospheric sciences and related fields.

Degree Programs

- Master of Professional Science (M.P.S.) (p. 2)
    - (p. 2)Requires 30 credit hours, including a minimum of 24 course credit hours and 2-6 internship credit hours.
- Master of Science (M.S.) (p. 2)
    - Requires 30 credit hours, including 24 course credit hours and 6 research credit hours.
- Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) (p. 2)
    - Requires 60 credit hours, including a minimum of 25 course credit hours and a minimum of 12 research credit hours.

Research Areas

Atmospheric Chemistry

The atmospheric chemistry group in ATM is interested in understanding the atmospheric emissions, transport, and fate of gases and particles that influence air quality and climate. These interests are explored through laboratory studies and fieldwork. Using state-of-the-art instrumentation and techniques, ATM scientists take measurements in tropical and high-latitude oceans, in forests and urban centers, and at the critical air-sea and troposphere-stratosphere interfaces. These measurements are used in models to predict the impact of atmospheric chemistry on human health and climate. An atmospheric chemistry observatory in Barbados at the University of Miami's Barbados Atmospheric Chemistry Observatory (BACO) is used to examine the impact of African dust transport on air quality and climate.

Climate Dynamics & Prediction

Climate research in ATM includes numerical climate modeling at both regional and global scales, and analysis of satellite data, global data products, and observations. There is a large focus on the diagnosis and modeling of climate variability on interannual, decadal, and millennial timescales, the prediction and modeling of El Niño, and the observation and modeling of anthropogenic climate change.

Cloud & Aerosol Processes

Scientists in ATM study aerosols, clouds, their interactions with each other, with radiation, and with the larger-scale environment. We strive for a better understanding of the cloudy boundary layer structure, its processes, and the effects of atmospheric transport of aerosols such as dust, smoke, and air pollutants, upon both air quality and climate. A focus on marine aerosols and south Florida's Cloud-Aerosol-Rain-Observatory (CAROb) takes advantage of Miami's unique location on the edge of the Atlantic basin.

Tropical Meteorology & Hurricanes

One broad area of research in ATM is aimed at improving our understanding and prediction of tropical weather and hurricanes. Through a combination of field observations, modeling, and theory, faculty and students study the dynamics of hurricanes: their formation, rapid intensification, and how their behavior might change in a warming climate. Other research foci include the advancement of computer model forecasts of tropical cyclones, data assimilation schemes, and observation strategies. Other weather phenomena in the tropics are also investigated in ATM and through the Rosenstiel School, such as monsoons, the intertropical convergence zone, and the Madden-Julian Oscillation.

Other Research Areas

Researchers in ATM also perform research in a number of other areas including:

- Geophysical Fluid Dynamics
- Tornado Dynamics
- Atmospheric Boundary Layer

- Atmospheric Convection
- Model Parameterizations

Master of Professional Science (M.P.S.) Program

- M.P.S. in Atmospheric Sciences (ATM) (http://bulletin.miami.edu/graduate-academic-programs/marine-atmospheric-science/atmospheric-sciences/atmospheric-sciences-mps/)

Master of Science (M.S.) Program

- M.S. in Atmospheric Sciences (ATM) (http://bulletin.miami.edu/graduate-academic-programs/marine-atmospheric-science/atmospheric-sciences/atmospheric-sciences-ms-phd/)

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program

- Ph.D. in Atmospheric Sciences (ATM) (http://bulletin.miami.edu/graduate-academic-programs/marine-atmospheric-science/atmospheric-sciences/atmospheric-sciences-phd/)

ATM 611. Geophysical Fluid Dynamics I. 3 Credit Hours.
The basic equations of state, continuity, and motion. Topics include wave motions, group velocity, theory of stratified fluids and internal waves turbulence.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 614. Introduction to Weather and Climate. 3 Credit Hours.
This course will cover the structure, physics, dynamics and thermodynamics of the atmosphere; including weather analysis, weather forecasting, climate and climate change. Contemporary topics covered in this class will include global warming, the ozone hole, hurricanes, thunderstorms and other severe weather phenomena.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 624. Applied Data Analysis. 3 Credit Hours.
The course is intended to jump-start students in strategies for fruitful computer interaction practices for careers in MPO areas of science. Academic topics include key concepts in probability & statistics, issues of graphical evidence and inference, linear models and regression, spectral analysis, and matrix decomposition. Practical topics include hands-on exercises in data analysis and the sharing of code+results and interpretation. Students do projects on data from their research or interests.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 632. Broadcast Meteorology. 3 Credit Hours.
Students will learn the proper techniques involved in preparing and presenting a complete and professional weathercast with a heavy emphasis on communication skills, computer graphics, and on-camera delivery.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 633. Atmospheric Boundary Layer. 3 Credit Hours.
The boundary layer is the lowest 1-2 km of the atmosphere, where we live. It is necessary to understand boundary layer processes to pursue research in clouds and radiation, weather and climate, air/sea/land interaction, and chemistry of the lower atmosphere. In this course, students will learn the basic physical concepts, from observational, theoretical and modeling perspectives.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 634. Introduction to Atmospheric Chemistry. 3 Credit Hours.
This course covers the basic principles of atmospheric chemistry. Concepts taught will include gas phase reactions, the production and destruction of ozone, aerosol size and composition.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 636. Hurricanes. 3 Credit Hours.
This course is intended to provide a broad overview of tropical cyclones, starting from the basic structure, dynamics and thermodynamics, then expanding through to observations, modeling, forecasting and impacts.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 637. Natural Hazards: Atmosphere and Ocean. 3 Credit Hours.
This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of natural hazards in both the atmosphere and ocean. In the atmosphere, we will explore both weather events such as storms and hurricanes and tornadoes as well as longer term phenomena such as monsoons and excess rainfall in the tropics. Oceanographically, the course will address hazards such as storm surge and flooding, rogue waves, rip currents, and tsunamis that occur on short time scales as well as the longer terms effects such as sea level rise and the impacts of El Niño and La Niña oceanographic conditions on weather conditions. Thus, the course focus is on hazards and their impacts around the globe.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 651. Introduction to Atmospheric Dynamics. 3 Credit Hours.
This course surveys the dynamics of atmospheric flow and the physically-grounded description and depiction of weather phenomena. It is intended to serve as core preparation for incoming PhD students whose research will be dynamical, while also serving as an accessible overview for students in other subdisciplines. For these reasons, it stresses phenomena and the essentials of our physical discourses about them (emphasizing useful approximations and lucid treatments), with enough exposure to the underlying full-complexity fundamentals to facilitate more advanced study in the future.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 652. Introduction to Atmospheric Physics. 3 Credit Hours.
The goal of this class is to develop an understanding of the fundamental physical processes governing cloud behavior and atmospheric radiative transfer, including atmospheric thermodynamics. The class will focus on processes with temporal scales of one day or less, and spatial scales of 1km or less, and will recognize the links to weather and climate, or through the student presentations. Students will learn about: cloud formation, lifetime, and dissipation, and how clouds interact with the aerosol, thermodynamic, and dynamic environments; about how clouds and clear skies interact with sunlight and infrared. This course is split into two sections: the first half will cover thermodynamics and cloud physics, and the second half will cover atmospheric radiation. Guest lectures by advanced graduate students and postdoctoral research associates will introduce students to current research areas.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 653. Climate Change. 3 Credit Hours.
Overview of the physical processes which regulate the earth's climate and response to forcing.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 654. Climate Variability. 3 Credit Hours.
This class will cover the physical mechanisms that govern the earth's climate and climate variability. It is intended for beginning graduate students in marine and atmospheric science, and upper-level undergraduate physical science students.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 660. Tropospheric Chemistry I. 3 Credit Hours.
Process-Oriented lower atmospheric chemistry. Topics include photochemical oxidant formation, nighttime chemistry, air-sea exchange, cloud droplet and aerosol reactions, physical properties of aerosols, and transport properties of the troposphere.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 662. Advanced Weather Forecasting. 3 Credit Hours.
Students will learn the skills needed in researching and preparing a professional weather forecast. There is a plethora of forecast resources available online. Students will learn about using these forecast resources and share resources of their own. Specifically, we will cover topics such as the basics of atmospheric meteorology, large and small scale weather forecasting, operational weather forecasting, tropical weather, severe weather, nor'easters, lake effect snow, oscillations and various other weather phenomena. During the course of the semester a couple of Guest speakers in various parts of the field will visit to discuss relevant topics.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 663. Mesoscale Meteorology and Severe Storms. 3 Credit Hours.
Course topics include the structure and dynamics of clouds, thunderstorms, and mesoscale convective systems, radar and satellite observations of clouds and precipitation, severe storm forecasting, mesoscale disturbances, frontal and orographic clouds, and precipitation.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 681. Special Topics. 1-4 Credit Hours.
Lectures, research projects or directed readings in special topics related to Atmospheric Sciences.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 682. Special Topics. 3 Credit Hours.
Lectures, research projects or directed readings in special topics related to Atmospheric Sciences.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 683. Special Topics. 1-4 Credit Hours.
Lectures, special projects or directed readings in special topics related to Atmospheric Sciences.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 684. Special Topics. 1-4 Credit Hours.
Lectures, special projects or directed readings in special topics related to Atmospheric Sciences.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 685. Special Topics. 1-4 Credit Hours.
Lectures, research projects or directed readings in special topics related to Atmospheric Sciences.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 711. Geophysical Fluid Dynamics II. 3 Credit Hours.
The focus of this course is on the effects of stratification, on time variable phenomena, and on the interaction between large-scale circulation and mesoscale eddies. Course topics include quasi geostrophic scale analysis, Rossby waves, barotropic and baroclinic instability, wave-mean flow interaction and non-geos trophic waves.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 713. Predictability. 3 Credit Hours.
Introduction to concepts of predictability and error growth, beginning from the seminal papers of Ed Lorenz, and expanding into state estimation, data assimilation, forecast sensitivity and ensemble prediction.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 716. Lagrangian Fluid Dynamics and Predictability. 3 Credit Hours.
The ash cloud produced by the eruption of Eyjafjallajokull in Iceland, the oil spill produced by the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico, and release of debris and radioactive contamination into the Pacific Ocean after the Fukushima nuclear reactor was hit by the Tohoku tsunami, are examples of events that have caused considerable impact to the environment. They all represent problems in Lagrangian ocean or atmospheric dynamics in which predicting where the material released into the environment will be transported by the ocean currents or winds is critical. A common approach to predict the outcome of an event like the above is to run an ocean or atmosphere circulation model simulations and then integrate the resulting velocity fields from a given release location to predict pollutant trajectories. An important drawback of such an approach is that the predictions are highly sensitive to small changes in the release time and location. Attempts to cope with the sensitivity to initial conditions include running several different models for the same scenario, but this typically leads to even larger distributions of advected tracers, hiding the key organizing structures of the flow. Improved understanding and forecasting requires novel notions and techniques capable of casting light on why material is transported the way it is by a given flow. The goal of this course is acquaint the student with a series of recent developments originated at the interface of nonlinear dynamics and fluid dynamics that have led to a number of novel such notions and techniques.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 731. Air-Sea Interaction. 3 Credit Hours.
Oceanic and atmospheric mixed layers including fluxes of heat, momentum, moisture and salt between the ocean and atmosphere; vertical distribution of energy sources and sinks at the interface including the importance of surface currents; forced upper ocean dynamics, the role of surface waves on the air-sea exchange processes and ocean mixed layer processes. Students interested in enrolling for this course should have a math background (through differential equations).
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 732. Climate Dynamics. 3 Credit Hours.
Basic understanding of the Earth's Climate System and its variability on time scales ranging from weeks to millennia. Topics include internal atmospheric variability, coupled ocean-atmosphere interactions, and the theory, observations and modeling of climate change.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 750. Reaction Kinetics and Molecular Dynamics. 3 Credit Hours.
Theories and experimental techniques for studying kinetics in the gas-phase, association, unimolecular and bimolecular reactions, chain reactions, flames, statistical theories, potential energy surfaces, collision dynamics, kinetics in solution and the solid-state, experimental methods, diffusion-controlled processes, transition state theory, thermal decomposition, and nucleation are discussed.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 761. Atmospheric Chemistry II. 3 Credit Hours.
Advanced atmospheric chemistry.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 762. Computer Models in Fluid Dynamics. 3 Credit Hours.
Course topics include numerical techniques of dealing with dynamic problems in meteorology and oceanography. Dynamic prediction models, initial data conditioning, computational stability, and error estimates are also included.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 764. Atmospheric and Oceanic Turbulence. 3 Credit Hours.
Structure and dynamics of planetary boundary layers, turbulent transport processes, Fickian and statistical theories of turbulence, influence of stratification, and rotation on turbulent motion are discussed.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 765. General Circulation of the Atmosphere. 3 Credit Hours.
Course topics include structure and behavior of planetary scale motions, energy, momentum, and moisture budgets of the general circulation, and models of the general circulation and climatic change.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Spring.

ATM 767. Spectral and Finite Element Methods in Computational Fluid Dynamics. 3 Credit Hours.
The simulation of fluid flows in geometrically complex domains (like ocean basins) and/or with high fidelity requires the adoption of new discretization techniques that can simultaneously handle the complicated geometry and permit high accuracy solution. The finite element method has traditionally been used to tackle the geometric complexity while spectral methods have been developed to handle high accuracy in simple geometries. Here we present an approach to handle both complexity within a single framework, namely the spectral element method. The course starts by describing the weak formulation common to all finite element methods which, by design, are geometrically flexible. The second part of the course describe how high order polynomial can be implemented within the finite element framework to achieve high accuracy rates.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 768. ENSO Dynamics, Prediction, and Predictability. 3 Credit Hours.
This course will provide students with a comprehensive observational and mechanistic understanding of the El Nino and the Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomena and how ENSO impacts the natural variability of the global climate system. Topics will include: Observations and theories of the seasonal and interannual changes in the ocean circulation and temperature, and interactions with the atmosphere; equations of motion and theories of tropical ocean and atmosphere circulation; tropical wave dynamics; large scale air-sea coupling; mechanisms for ENSO: delayed oscillator theory, recharge oscillator theory, slow SST modes; ENSO prediction and predictability; ENSO-monsoon-Indian Ocean interactions; Global climate response to ENSO; decadal ENSO variability; ENSO in a changing climate. This course has a phenomenological focus, which complements current MPO course offerings. In particular, students who have taken dynamic and physical meteorology, ocean general circulation or geophysical fluid dynamics will be exposed to how general theory (e.g., wave dynamics) relates to particular phenomena and current research foci. In addition, student will have the opportunity to design and implement numerical hypothesis testing experiments.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Fall.

ATM 770. Seminar in Atmospheric Science. 1 Credit Hour.
Oral presentation of research and special topics by students, faculty, and visiting scientists.
Components: SEM.
Grading: SUS.
Typically Offered: Fall & Spring.

ATM 772. Vortex Dynamics. 3 Credit Hours.
This course will cover fundamental to advanced topics in vortex dynamics. A review of fluid dynamics and vorticity in two dimensions will be followed by studies of vortex dynamics in three-dimensional, incompressible flow and in three-dimensional, stratified flow.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 774. Advanced Studies. 1-4 Credit Hours.
Supervised study of special interest to graduate students.
Components: LEC.
Grading: GRD.
Typically Offered: Offered by Announcement Only.

ATM 805. MPS Internship. 1-6 Credit Hours.
The MPS internship is an approved, supervised internship project with an organization engaged in activities associated with the student's degree track. The internship results in a collaborative project, written report, and oral presentation on a topic approved by the student's advisory committee. Up to 6 credits are necessary for graduation.
Components: PRA.
Grading: SUS.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 810. Master's Thesis. 1-6 Credit Hours.
The student working on their master's thesis enrolls for credit, in most departments not to exceed six, as determined by their advisor. Credit is not awarded until the thesis has been accepted.
Components: THI.
Grading: SUS.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 820. Research in Residence. 1 Credit Hour.
Used to establish research in residence for the master's degree, after the student has enrolled for the permissible cumulative total in appropriate thesis research. Credit not granted. May be regarded as full-time residence as determined by the Dean of the Graduate School.
Components: THI.
Grading: SUS.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 830. Doctoral Dissertation. 1-12 Credit Hours.
Required of all candidates for the Ph.D. The student will enroll for credit as determined by their advisor, but for not less than a total of 12 hours. Up to 12 hours may be taken in a regular semester, but not more than six in a summer session. Where a student has passed their (a) qualifying examinations, and (b) is engaged in an assistantship, they may still take the maximum allowable credit stated above.
Components: THI.
Grading: SUS.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.

ATM 850. Research in Residence. 1 Credit Hour.
Used to establish research in residence for the Ph.D., after the student has been enrolled for the permissible cumulative total in appropriate doctoral research. Credit not granted. May be regarded as full-time residence as determined by the Dean of the Graduate School.
Components: THI.
Grading: SUS.
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, & Summer.