**M.P.S. IN EXPLORATION SCIENCE**

**Overview: Exploration Science (ESC)** ([https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/degree-tracks/exploration-science/](https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/degree-tracks/exploration-science/))

Exploration Science is a multi-disciplinary approach for better understanding our planet and challenges we collectively face. This track encourages field-based experiences and the application of expedition skills within a context acknowledging the cultural and ethical implications of exploration. Exploration Science encourages creative thinking and problem solving to find solutions across the natural sciences and humanities. This track includes curriculum in areas of citizen science, media production, and skills such as scientific diving, small boat handling, and expedition planning.

Students in this track have completed internships and been hired in areas of environmental education, surveying, the diving industry, resource management, citizen science, conservation, media production, government agencies, museums, and ecotourism companies.

This track is being offered at RSMAS in partnership with UM's Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy. ([https://abess.miami.edu/](https://abess.miami.edu/)) The Abess Center fosters innovative, interdisciplinary initiatives that bridge the gap between science and environmental policy.

**Admission Requirements**

1. Bachelor of Science degree (B.S.) or Bachelor of Arts degree (B.A.). Completed courses in biology, ecology, and chemistry are helpful, but not required, for pursuing graduate work in this program.

Note to students: Deficiencies in required coursework may be considered on a case by case basis for otherwise highly qualified students or those demonstrating experience with these skills.

Accepting applications for Fall 2021 admissions:

- July 25th, 2020 - July 5th, 2021 (U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents)
- July 25th, 2020 - June 1st, 2021 (International Applicants)

Accepting applications for Spring 2022 admissions:

- Now until December 1st, 2021 (U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents)
- Now until November 1st, 2021 (International Applicants)

An application to the MPS program consists of the following (fall & spring admissions only):

- Online CollegeNet application
- Transcripts from all past/present academic institutions (colleges and universities), including all study abroad and community colleges and, if applicable, a transcript evaluation report ([https://www.grad.miami.edu/apply/on-campus-graduate-programs/rosenstiel-school-of-marine-and-atmospheric-sciences-international-applicants/rsmas.html](https://www.grad.miami.edu/apply/on-campus-graduate-programs/rosenstiel-school-of-marine-and-atmospheric-sciences-international-applicants/rsmas.html)) from an approved international credentialing agency ([https://www.naces.org/members/](https://www.naces.org/members/)) (for non-U.S. academic institutions).
- NOTE: The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required for admission; however, an applicant may submit a valid score report for MPS merit-based partial tuition waiver ([https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/prospective-students/financing-your-education/](https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/prospective-students/financing-your-education/)) consideration. Three (3) or six (6) credits may be waived if eligible. GRE score reports are valid for 5 years from test date.
- Three (3) letters of recommendation
- Personal statement (also known as a statement of purpose)

If admission to the MPS program is granted, it will be contingent upon receipt of all items listed above (including official transcripts and test scores) and the following for international applicants:

- Color copy of current visa (if available).
- Color copy of valid passport (must include picture page and barcode page)
If applicable: most recent I-94 travel record (https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home)

Permanent Residents must provide a color copy of Permanent Resident Card (Green Card) (https://www.uscis.gov/greencard/).

Previous graduate and undergraduate scholastic performance, work and volunteer experience, valid test scores (GRE, TOEFL/IELTS) if applicable, and the letters of recommendation are all considered in evaluating an applicant.

**Transcript from U.S. Academic Institutions:**

Please make sure you possess the required undergraduate coursework and/or degree (https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/prospective-students/program-requirements/) before applying. Official transcripts must be mailed or e-mailed directly from the relevant academic institution (Office of the Registrar) to the MPS office. Our email is mps@rsmas.miami.edu; mailing address is available on the MPS website’s Contact Us (https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/contact/) page. If an applicant is not able to submit an unofficial transcript with his/her application, the applicant may submit unofficial transcripts via email to mps@rsmas.miami.edu. Unofficial transcripts are accepted for review purposes only, not for admission. If admission to the MPS program is granted, it will be contingent upon receipt of all official records. Please be advised, official transcripts will only be accepted if they are sent to us directly from the academic institution. Transcripts sent by you or issued to you (even if they are in a sealed envelope) are not considered official.

**Transcripts from Non-U.S. Academic Institutions:**

Domestic or international applicants that have academic credits from or attended an international institution must have their educational credentials earned outside the United States verified by an approved international credentialing evaluation service. Each of the university's 11 schools and colleges has specific procedures that must be followed by international applicants. Visit our International Applications page for more information (https://www.grad.miami.edu/apply/on-campus-graduate-programs/Application%20Instructions%20for%20International%20Students/international-students.html).

Documents Required
Submit the following educational documents to an approved international credentialing evaluation service for evaluation:

a) Official original diplomas and certificates in the original language, and  
b) Official original transcripts in the original language (names of courses, grades, and hours of instruction) for every year of study.  

Documents in a language other than English must be accompanied by professional, certified English translations. Translations supplement but do not replace the official documents.

**Type of Evaluation Required**

The Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science is requiring international applicants to their programs to complete a course-by-course evaluation with GPA.

Where to Submit Documents for Evaluation

Josef Silny & Associates (JS&A), Inc. International Education Consultants, is the preferred evaluation vendor for international applicants to the University of Miami due to their competitive prices and high-quality service. Click here (https://www.grad.miami.edu/_assets/pdf/2021-universityofmiami-graduate—course-by-course.pdf) for more information, including the Application for Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials.  

Please note that international applicants are not required to use the services of JS&A. The international credential evaluation services of any approved vendor may be used. Click here (http://naces.org/members.html) to view a list of approved vendors.

Please ensure the vendor sends your evaluation directly to mps@rsmas.miami.edu for MPS applications

**Evaluation Fee**
Applicants are responsible for the evaluation fee.

**Letters of Recommendation:**

Three (3) letters of recommendation are required for admissions consideration. Each applicant must request letters of recommendation from three (3) different references using the guidelines provided in the online application. Applications from CollegeNet may be submitted without letters of recommendation. However, an applicant’s file will not be reviewed by Track Leaders until all required admissions materials (including letters of recommendation) are received by the MPS office. Upon completion of the application, your references will receive an e-mail from CollegeNet, requesting the online submission of the required documentation (questionnaire + letter of recommendation). If your references have trouble using the online submission portal, they may e-mail their letters (signed and on letterhead) to the MPS office at mps@rsmas.miami.edu. We cannot accept letters that are not signed. Letters sent by the applicant or forwarded to the MPS office by the applicant will not be accepted.
Academic references are ideal and highly preferred, but we will accept letters from employers and/or supervisors. Please do not request letters from friends, family, ministers, or coaches.

Students enrolled in our dual-degree program with the School of Law may use their letters of recommendation from the law school for use in his/her graduate application. Please be advised, RSMAS track leaders may request additional letters of recommendation for admissions consideration into the MPS program.

**GRE:**

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required for admission; however, an applicant may submit a score report for MPS merit-based partial tuition waiver (https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/prospective-students/financing-your-education/) consideration. Three (3) or six (6) credits may be waived if eligible.

If requesting delivery of your official GRE score report, please use institution code 7690 (department code). This code indicates delivery of test scores to the RSMAS campus, home of the MPS office.

We currently offer a 3-credit or 6-credit merit-based tuition waiver through two different types of criteria:

**OPTION 1: COMBINED GPA/GRE CRITERIA**

- The minimum eligibility requirements for a 3-credit waiver is 297 on the GRE (a combined total score on the verbal and quantitative sections only), and a cumulative U.S. Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) of 3.0. The minimum eligibility requirements for a 6-credit waiver is 308 on the GRE (a combined total score on the verbal and quantitative sections only) and a cumulative U.S. Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) of 3.3.

- Applicants are still required to complete the analytical writing section of the GRE, however only the verbal and quantitative scores will be considered for tuition waiver purposes.

- The first reported GRE scores received by the MPS Office will be considered for waiver eligibility. However, applicants and newly-accepted students (not current students) may retake the GRE and submit an updated/higher score by July 23rd for U.S. citizens/permanent residents, and June 1st for international applicants.

- We recommend submitting updated scores after you've achieved your personal best. The MPS Office will consider the highest score listed on the GRE test report. GRE scores are valid up to 5 years from test date. Prospective applicants who submit an application before completion of the GRE are still eligible for waiver consideration, upon receipt of GRE scores by the MPS Office. Applicants and newly-accepted students (not current students) may submit "unofficial" GRE scores by downloading test scores from the ETS website while "official" records arrive in the mail. Send unofficial scores to mps@rsmas.miami.edu if you are unable to submit scores with your application. GRE scores are considered "official" if they are mailed directly to MPS from ETS.

**OPTION 2: GPA-ONLY CRITERIA**

- The minimum eligibility requirements for a 3-credit tuition waiver based on GPA alone is a GPA of 3.3. The minimum eligibility requirements for a 6-credit waiver based on GPA alone is a GPA of 3.6.

Please note that a portion of these waivers are sponsored through philanthropic missions and students may be matched with the best suited award. If a merit-based tuition waiver is awarded, an applicant will be notified upon acceptance and, depending of the source of the award, there may be certain requirements for acceptance. Those eligible to receive merit-based tuition waivers are not required to not apply, accept or reject the waiver; waivers are applied upon course registration. 3-credit waivers are applied to a student's first year at RSMAS. 6-credit waivers are distributed equally across your first two semesters at RSMAS (Fall & Spring semesters). Students who submit GRE scores will be awarded the higher of the two options. Students who do not submit GRE scores are only eligible for option 2.

**English Proficiency Requirement**

Academic success at the University of Miami depends on one's ability to communicate effectively in English. To prove language proficiency, students must take either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

- Paper Based TOEFL (PBT) - minimum score is 550
- Internet Based TOEFL (IBT) - minimum score is 80
- IELTS (Academic) - minimum score is 6.5

Please use institution code 2919 (no department code). This institution code is for the TOEFL only; please note that the GRE institution code is different (see above).

If English is not your native language, the TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo requirement may be waived if you hold an undergraduate or graduate degree from an academic institution within the United States or from one of the following English-speaking countries:
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Canada (except Quebec)
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- New Zealand
- Kitts and Nevis
- Lucia
- Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United Kingdom

Intensive English Program (IEP)

The University of Miami’s Division of Continuing and International Education offers a fully-accredited Intensive English Program (IEP) to prepare individuals to understand and use English in a variety of academic, professional, and personal situations. Some of the services that the IEP offers graduate students include an international teaching assistant training course, customized classes, LL.M. Intensive English, and volunteer opportunities.

VISIT THE IEP WEBSITE (https://iep.dcie.miami.edu/)

Personal Statement (statement of purpose):

Please indicate your track of choice, and all relevant field, lab, and work experience (past and present) in your personal statement. Include your academic and professional goals, and how you envision the MPS program contributing to those goals. We strongly encourage you to include information and/or links to relevant publications, organizations, research projects, supervisors, collaborators, project results, and your role in relation to this.

MPS Mailing Address:

University of Miami
Rosenstiel School Campus, MPS Office, Room S/A 132
4600 Rickenbacker Causeway
Miami, FL 33149

Email: mps@rsmas.miami.edu

Website: https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/index.html (https://mps.rsmas.miami.edu/)

Phone: (305) 421-4340
Fax: (305) 421-4246
## Curriculum Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RSM 600</td>
<td>Research Diving Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSM 667</td>
<td>Motorboat Operator Certification Course</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 664</td>
<td>Citizen and Participatory Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 674</td>
<td>Theoretical Practical Issues in Exploration Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 660 &amp; 661</td>
<td>Introduction to Marine Geographic Information Systems and Introduction to Marine Geographic Information Systems - Laboratory (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 665</td>
<td>Science and Natural History Media Production</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBE 621</td>
<td>Field Techniques and Instrumentation in Tropical Marine Ecology (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 627</td>
<td>Exploration Science Field Studies (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 662</td>
<td>Intermediate Spatial Analysis (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 805</td>
<td>MPS Internship (MPS Internship (Enrollment in 2-6 internship credits required during a student's time in MPS. Completion of less than 2 internship credits must be approved by MPS Director. Students may enroll in more than 6 internship credits with the approval of the Program Director. Typically, 2 semesters are needed to complete all aspects of the internship phase of MPS))</td>
<td>2-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 671</td>
<td>Marine Conservation Biology (OR OTHER ELECTIVE) [MES 671 and/or Elective optional if student needs to meet 30 credits for graduation]</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Credit Hours**: 30-35

## Elective Options

Students may take any elective on the RSMAS campus with the consent of their faculty advisor. Below are a few examples of courses past students in this program used as electives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MES 606</td>
<td>Advanced Fieldwork in Coastal Cultures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 612</td>
<td>Aquaculture I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBE 604</td>
<td>Biology of Marine Mammals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSM 620</td>
<td>Climate and Society</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 720</td>
<td>Coastal Law and Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 618</td>
<td>Coastal Zone Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 620</td>
<td>Environmental Law and Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 604</td>
<td>Fieldwork in Coastal Management: Tourism, Conservation, and Development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 625</td>
<td>Fisheries Socioeconomics and Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 671</td>
<td>Marine Conservation Biology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBE 642</td>
<td>Oceans and Human Health</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 601</td>
<td>Political Ecology of Marine Management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSM 612</td>
<td>Statistics for Marine Scientists</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBE 615</td>
<td>Tropical Marine Ecology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 614</td>
<td>Underwater Site Mapping and Visualization Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 635</td>
<td>Oceans of Thought: Exploring Marine and Environmental Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Suggested Plan of Study

### Year One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RSM 600</td>
<td>Research Diving Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RSM 667</td>
<td>Motorboat Operator Certification Course</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MES 664</td>
<td>Citizen and Participatory Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MES 674</td>
<td>Theoretical Practical Issues in Exploration Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Credit Hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 660 &amp; MES 661</td>
<td>Introduction to Marine Geographic Information Systems and Introduction to Marine Geographic Information Systems - Laboratory (Or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td><strong>Credit Hours</strong></td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 665</td>
<td>Science and Natural History Media Production</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBE 621</td>
<td>Field Techniques and Instrumentation in Tropical Marine Ecology (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 627</td>
<td>Exploration Science Field Studies (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 662</td>
<td>Intermediate Spatial Analysis (or ELECTIVE)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td><strong>Credit Hours</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MES 805</td>
<td>MPS Internship (MPS Internship (Enrollment in 2-6 internship credits required during a student’s time in MPS. Completion of less than 2 internship credits must be approved by MPS Director. Students may enroll in more than 6 internship credits with the approval of the Program Director. Typically, 2 semesters are needed to complete all aspects of the internship phase of MPS))</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credit Hours</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>31-32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mission**

The mission of Exploration Science (ESC) is to prepare the next generation of explorers to address problems and questions related to environment and society.

The Master of Professional Science in Exploration Science (ESC) fosters scientific inquiry and the application of expedition skills within a context that acknowledges the cultural and ethical implications of exploration. The ESC track exposes students to citizen science project design, exploration technology applications, and field-based skills training, while receiving essential background information on the history, ethics and risks related to exploration. This program prepares students to lead and conduct professional exploration initiatives and expeditions in a variety of environments. A flexible curriculum allows students to focus on courses and subjects that best fit their interests and goals for careers in environmental education, surveying, resource management, citizen science, conservation, media production, government agencies, museums, and ecotourism companies among others. This track is being offered at RSMAS in partnership with UM's Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy. The Abess Center fosters innovative, interdisciplinary initiatives that bridge the gap between science and environmental policy.

**Goals**

The goal of this track is to prepare students for careers built on a foundation of observation, communication, and documentation skills. These are incorporated into expeditions, fieldwork, and research having a focus on exploratory inquiry and problem solving.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- Exploration Science (ESC) students will develop a working understanding of expeditions, risk management, and planning.
- Exploration Science (ESC) students will become familiar with major aspects of citizen science, media production, and field work as it relates to exploration.
- Exploration Science (ESC) students will develop a professional approach to exploration incorporating ethical and inclusive practices.
- Students will demonstrate professionalism in all aspects of field and lab work during their internships.
- Students will submit a final, written report and deliver a final presentation based on the work completed in their internship.