

Updated: April 2026

Department of Atmospheric Sciences

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

University of North Dakota



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the [Department of Atmospheric Sciences](#) at the University of North Dakota!

This handbook consolidates departmental policies, School of Graduate Studies procedures, and student-developed guidance to support you from admission through graduation.

This document supplements the official [UND Academic Catalog](#) and [School of Graduate Studies](#) policies, which always take precedence. The handbook is organized to support your full student lifecycle: pre-arrival, onboarding, program requirements, resources, and graduation, with checklists and quick-reference tools.

This handbook has been written by the Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Association (ASGSA) in collaboration with faculty to provide you with the necessary information to progress through graduate school at UND. As a graduate student in the AtSci program, you are automatically enrolled as a member in ASGSA, whose role is to unite graduate students through organized events, workshops, and seminars, provide feedback to the Graduate Program Committee, and offer professional growth opportunities.

QUICK-START CHECKLISTS

These checklists integrate tasks from the Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Handbook and the School of Graduate Studies guide, organized by time period.

You've Been Accepted (Immediately After Admission)

- Carefully read your admission letter and note any provisional requirements or prerequisites you must complete.
- You will receive an email from UND informing you of your acceptance to the email on your application 1-2 weeks after the Atmospheric Sciences department has accepted your admission.
- Within 1 week of the email informing you of your admission, you will receive another email to activate your North Dakota University System (NDUS) and UND email accounts. Do so immediately.
- Once your NDUS and UND account has been activated, ensure that you can log into [Campus Connection](#).
- **Make sure to check your UND email regularly.** This is where you will receive official communications going forward.
- Review the [UND Graduate Catalog](#) section for Atmospheric Sciences (M.S. and Ph.D.) for degree requirements.
- Review assistantships offer details (if applicable), including stipend, 9-month or 12-month appointment, and tuition waiver conditions.
- If you are an international student, follow instructions from the [UND International Center](#) regarding visa and arrival documentation.
- Begin exploring housing options in Grand Forks (on-campus and off-campus) using the departmental housing guidance and [UND Housing](#).

While You Are Waiting (2–3 Months Before Arrival)

- Review recommended background materials in meteorology and atmospheric science to refresh core concepts.
- Contact your assigned advisor to discuss fall course options and research interests. If you are unsure whether you
- Confirm whether you will be a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), or self-funded, and clarify expectations for each role.

- Investigate health insurance options (if applicable):
 - Domestic students: review Affordable Care Act Marketplace resources via [HealthCare.gov](#) and North Dakota Navigators; see [UND Student Health Services](#) health insurance page.
 - International students: review NDUS student health insurance requirements via the [UND International Center](#).
- Review the [Graduate School's Guide to Graduation](#) to understand major milestones (Program of Study, candidacy, topic proposal, defense).
- Review the departmental Onboarding Checklist and MS/PhD checklists so you understand the full sequence of forms and deadlines.

Before You Arrive on Campus (1–2 Months Before Arrival)

- Submit all required immunization and health forms through [UND Student Health Services](#).
- Apply for on-campus or off-campus housing; use departmental guidance on neighborhoods, flood risk, and utilities.
- Arrange transportation to Grand Forks and review parking permit options and costs via [UND Parking Services](#).
- If you will drive in North Dakota, plan to obtain a ND driver's license within your first months; review [NDDOT license transfer requirements](#).
- For assistantship holders:
 - Prepare documents for payroll (passport or ID, Social Security card if available, tax information).
 - Clarify start date (typically around 16 August) and work expectations with your advisor or supervisor.
- Ensure you can access [Blackboard](#), [Campus Connection](#), and your UND email.
- Review the UND [Code of Student Life](#) and School of Graduate Studies Standards and Professional Conduct.

First Day on Campus

- Complete federal and state tax forms (W-4 and any ND or other state forms) with Aerospace HR if required.
- Obtain your U Card via [UND One-Stop](#).

- Pick up your office key(s) from Facilities after the department submits a key request.
- Meet in person with your advisor to confirm fall courses, initial research expectations, and meeting cadence.
- Attend departmental orientation sessions and Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Association (ASGSA) welcome meetings.
- Confirm with the department admin assistant(s) that you are subscribed to relevant listservs (Meteorology, AtSci graduate student, Graduate School, Aerospace).
- Log into your assigned office computer; request any missing software or access (servers, shared drives) via the [Aerospace Help Desk](#)
- Purchase required textbooks or obtain access to electronic materials for your courses.
- Review the [Graduate Academic Calendar](#) and add key dates (tuition due dates, add/drop deadlines, graduation application dates) to your calendar.

KEY CONTACTS AND POINT-OF-CONTACT PAGE

Use this page to quickly identify who to contact for common issues.

Department of Atmospheric Sciences

Position	Name	Contact
Department Chair	Dr. Aaron Kennedy	Clifford Hall 454 701.777.5269 aaron.kennedy@UND.edu
Graduate Program Director	Dr. Jared Marquis	Clifford Hall 452 701.777.4707 jared.marquis@UND.edu
Administrative Assistant (Department/Travel)	Wanda Seyler	Clifford Hall 400 701.777.3884 wanda.seyler@UND.edu
Administrative Assistant (HR/Payroll/Assistantships)	Shelby Holte	Clifford Hall 300 701.777.2869 shelby.holte@UND.edu

Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Association (ASGSA)

ASGSA officers change annually. Current officers include President, Vice President, Secretary, MS Student Representative, PhD Student Representative, First-Year Student Representative, Graduate Teaching Assistant Representative, Treasurer, and National Weather Service Liaison. Contact information is available on the department website and in the annual ASGSA handbook update.

UND Academic and Student Services

Office	Location/Phone	Website
School of Graduate Studies	Twamley 103 701.777.2784 gradschool@UND.edu	gradschool.UND.edu
One-Stop Student Services (Financial Aid, U Card)	Memorial Union 302 701.777.1234 onestop@UND.edu	UND.edu/one-stop
Office of the Registrar	Twamley 201 701.777.2711 und.registrar@UND.edu	UND.edu/registrar
Student Health Services	McCannel 100 701.777.4500	UND.edu/student-health
University Counseling Center	McCannel 200 701.777.2127	UND.edu/counseling-center
Wellness Center	801 Princeton St 701.777.WELL	UND.edu/wellness-center
Community and Belonging	Twamley 100 Memorial Union 201	UND.edu/community-belonging
Parking Services	Facilities Building 701.777.3551	campus.UND.edu/parking

Aerospace and IT

Name and Title	Contact
Dr. Robert Kraus Dean, John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences	Odegard Hall 229
Aerospace Help Desk	Clifford Hall 120 701.777.4357 helpdesk@aero.UND.edu

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

Degrees Offered

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences offers the Master of Science (M.S.) in Atmospheric Sciences with thesis and non-thesis tracks, and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Atmospheric Sciences. Degree requirements are detailed in the [UND Graduate Catalog](#) Atmospheric Sciences section.

Coursework and Categories

Graduate ATSC courses are grouped into four categories:

1. **Dynamics:** Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics (ATSC 505, required), Advanced Synoptic Meteorology (ATSC 518), Advanced Mesoscale Dynamics (ATSC 548)
2. **Physical:** Introduction to Cloud Physics (ATSC 450), Atmospheric Chemistry (ATSC 520), Atmospheric Radiation (ATSC 525), Cloud Physics Parameterization (ATSC 532), Boundary Layer Meteorology (ATSC 560), Air Quality (ATSC 565)
3. **Climate System:** General Circulation (ATSC 510), Advanced Climatology (ATSC 515), Advanced Earth System Sciences (ATSC 538), Hydrometeorology (ATSC 545), Tropical Meteorology (ATSC 550), Earth Systems Processes and Vulnerability Analysis (ESSP 507)
4. **Tools:** Advanced Forecasting (ATSC 420), Radar Meteorology (ATSC 441), Atmospheric Data Analysis (ATSC 528), Numerical Weather Prediction (ATSC 530), Measurement Systems (ATSC 535), Statistical Methods (ATSC 540), Satellite Meteorology (ATSC 552), Professional Meteorology (ATSC 456)

Required courses: ATSC 500 (Introduction to Atmospheric Research, 1 credit) and ATSC 505 (Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics, 4 credits).

MS thesis-track and PhD students must take at least one course in each of the four categories. MS non-thesis students must take at least one course in at least three different categories. Most courses are offered every two years; consult your advisor and the department for the current schedule.

Minimum and Maximum Loads

- **Full-time status:** 6 credits in summer for on-campus students.
- **Graduate assistants:** Must carry at least 6 during fall and spring semesters. During summer, assistants are not required to take credits.
- **Self-funded students:** May carry up to 12 credits in any given semester.

All courses should be part of your approved Program of Study. Tuition waivers apply only to courses on your Program of Study; additional courses must be paid out-of-pocket.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS, STIPENDS, AND TIME EXPECTATIONS¹

Types of Appointments

The Atmospheric Sciences program uses two main assistantship types:

- **Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA):** Appointments supporting research projects; often align with thesis/dissertation work under faculty supervision. May be 9-month or 12-month appointments contingent upon funding availability.
- **Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA):** Appointments supporting teaching and grading duties for courses and labs. Typically, 9-month appointments.

Note, students who are GTAs serving as Instructor of Record for a course (not a lab) are paid at Ph.D. 3 rates.

Stipends and Tuition Waivers

Assistantships provide a stipend and may include a tuition waiver. As of August 2026, half-time stipends are:

Degree Status	Monthly	12-Month	9-Month	Hourly
M.S.	\$2328.75	\$27,945	\$20,958.75	\$26.87
Ph.D. 1 (Pre-Written Comprehensive Exam)	\$2587.50	\$31,050	\$23,287.50	\$29.86
Ph.D. 2 (Post-Written Comprehensive Exam)	\$2760.00	\$33,120	\$24,840.00	\$31.85
Ph.D. 3 (Post-Prospectus)	\$2932.50	\$35,190	\$26,392.50	\$33.84

¹ <https://und-public.courseleaf.com/graduateacademicinformation/financialinformation/>

Tuition waivers cover tuition only (not university fees) and apply up to the number of credits on your approved Program of Study. Waivers are awarded via the department, college, and School of Graduate Studies. As the cost of waivers are based upon a student's residency status, students are encouraged to attain North Dakota residency by 01 November for Fall or 01 April for Spring of their first year. More information on North Dakota residency for the university is available at One-Stop Student Services²

Time Commitment

- **Half-time assistantship:** Average of 20 hours per week on assistantship duties; this average includes academic breaks (winter break, spring break).
- **Quarter-time assistantship:** Average of 10 hours per week.

During the Fall and Spring Semesters, the School of Graduate Studies defines 100% effort for half-time assistants as 50% employment and 50% coursework. Students should view their assistantship and academics together as approximately a 40-hour-per-week commitment, though academic workload often exceeds the remaining 20 hours. Students who wish to complete their degree in 2 years (MS) or 4 years (PhD) should expect to work more than 40 hours per week regularly.

Students who consistently exceed contracted weekly duties should address workload concerns through the grievance pathway. It is expected that GTAs communicate time-off needs with supervising instructors, especially during the academic year, and that GRAs discuss planned time off with advisors.

Duration and Term of Appointments

Assistantships are typically issued as either 9-month (academic year) or 12-month (calendar year) contracts. Additional years are typically contingent upon maintained funding and satisfactory academic progress.

MS Assistantships

For MS students, typical assistantship support is designed for a two-year duration. This two-year duration aligns with the Department's recommendations for progress towards

² <https://und.edu/one-stop/residency.html>

the MS degree. Accordingly, students should not expect to receive more than four (4) total fall/spring semesters of assistantship support during their MS program.

PhD Assistantships

The PhD program in Atmospheric Science is primarily a research-intensive degree. To ensure that doctoral candidates have the necessary resources for data analysis, publication costs, and conference travel, the Department prioritizes Graduate Research Assistantships (GRA) for PhD students from the time of admission. Accordingly, PhD students are typically accepted into the program with a 12-month GRA appointment tied to a specific research project and Advisor.

While the GRA is the preferred funding mechanism, PhD students may be assigned to a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) under specific circumstances:

- Professional Development: Students may request a limited number of GTA semesters to gain classroom experience, subject to Advisor and Departmental approval and departmental need.
- Bridge Funding: In the event of a gap between research grants, a student in good academic standing making sufficient progress towards graduation may be moved to a GTA appointment for a maximum of four (4) semesters, contingent upon departmental need and budget availability.
- Educational Research Exception: For PhD students whose primary dissertation research focuses on Education or Pedagogy. In such cases, a GTA appointment may be considered an integral part of their research methodology. *Note: to ensure long-term progress and professional development, these students should still seek GRA funding whenever possible.*
- Departmental Instructional Need: The Department may offer a GTA appointment to a qualified PhD student to cover course vacancies resulting from faculty sabbaticals, or research/administrative buy-outs.

Assistantship Requirements

To remain eligible for a Graduate Assistantship, students must meet the following criteria throughout their appointment:

- **Admission Status:** Students must be fully admitted to the School of Graduate Studies and enrolled in a degree-seeking program.
- **Credit Load:** Students must maintain a minimum of six (6) credits per fall/spring semester. Note that *Continuing Enrollment* credits do not count toward this six-credit minimum.
- **Academic Standing:** Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00.
- **Job Performance:** Students must demonstrate satisfactory performance in all assigned teaching or research duties.

It is the expectation of the Department that students will complete their required coursework within the timeframe established by their Program of Study. In the rare event that a student requires an additional semester of support after their formal coursework is exhausted, they may submit an Assistantship Petition (via the Assistantship Petition – AERO form) to request a waiver of the 6-credit minimum. Note, students must be enrolled in at least one (1) credit during the semester they plan to graduate and defend, as university policy requires active enrollment to confer a degree. If a student has completed the coursework on their program of study, they should take a Continuing Enrollment (ATSC 996) credit.

DEGREE TRACKS, PROGRAM OF STUDY, MILESTONES, AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Program of Study (PoS)

Your Program of Study is an official document listing all courses and credits that apply to your degree, including any minor or cognate. The PoS must:

- Be developed in consultation with your advisor and approved by your advisory committee (for thesis/dissertation programs).
- Be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies via DocuSign, typically by the end of your second semester and **at least one semester prior to graduation**.
- Include at least half the credits at the 500 level or above.
- Total at least 30 credits for MS degrees and 90 credits beyond the bachelor's degree for PhD degrees (with additional requirements specific to the student's degree track).

Over-age courses (older than seven years) cannot count toward the degree unless revalidated under Graduate School policies. Transfer credits are subject to Graduate School approval and must be listed exactly as they appear on transcripts. Non-degree credits (up to nine) may be applied if approved on your PoS.

Consult the [Program of Study form](#) and instructions on the Graduate School website.

Master of Science (Non-Thesis Track)

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. All M.S. students are required to take ATSC 500 Introduction to Atmospheric Research and ATSC 505 Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics.

The MS Non-Thesis track is designed for students seeking advanced meteorological training with a focus on professional application and broad coursework. While this track does not require a formal thesis, students must still demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research and communicate scientific findings through a final research project and public seminar.

Research Advisor

Upon admission to the non-thesis track, the student must select a Research Advisor from the graduate faculty. This Advisor provides guidance on course selection and serves as the primary mentor for the Non-Thesis Research Project. Unlike the thesis track, a full committee is not required; however, the Research Advisor (in coordination with the Graduate Program Committee) oversees the final evaluation of the student's work.

Program of Study

The Program of Study (PoS) is an official document that serves as the formal contract between the student, the Department, and the School of Graduate Studies. It outlines the specific coursework approved by the Research Advisor to fulfill degree requirements. For the MS Non-Thesis Track, the Program of Study must total **exactly 30 credits (24 of which must come from ATSC 575 or lower).**

Students should only include courses they intend to complete; conversely any course taken that is not listed on the approved PoS may not be covered by departmental or grant funding (if applicable) and could result in out-of-pocket tuition costs. While the PoS must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies no later than one semester prior to graduation, it is expected to be **submitted by the end of your second semester** for departmental course planning.

Students must take at least one course in no less than three of the four core areas: Dynamics, Physical, Climate Systems, and Tools.

While the PoS serves as a formal contract, it can be modified to if academic plans change. In such case, the student should submit an amendment to the PoS (via the

Change Form) as soon as the change is decided. Changes to the PoS should be done sparingly.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the credits on the PoS accurately reflect the requirements for graduation.

Non-Thesis Research Project & Topic Proposal

In lieu of a thesis, students must complete a Non-Thesis Research Project. This project is flexible in scope and format, allowing students to tailor their work to their professional goals. When developing the research plan, students should be aware that regardless of project, there is still a written requirement for the non-thesis project. Examples of acceptable projects and possible written requirements include, but are not limited to:

- **Original Research:** A technical report or case study addressing a specific meteorological event or scientific question. **Written Requirement:** A formal technical paper or “white paper” summarizing the findings.
- **Software Development:** The creation of a documented software package, library, or data visualization suite. **Written Requirement:** A comprehensive user manual and technical documentation detailing the architecture, installation, and application of the software.
- **Curriculum Design:** The development of advanced course materials, laboratory modules, or educational outreach programs. **Written Requirement:** A complete instructor’s guide including learning objectives, lesson plans, and assessment rubrics.

TOPIC PROPOSAL

Before beginning the work, the student must submit a brief, one-page, text-only Topic Proposal to their Research Advisor and the School of Graduate Studies. This proposal outlines the project objectives, the intended “deliverables”, and the methodology.

Written Report

The student must produce a formal written report documenting their project. Once the report is complete, the student must submit the report to their Research Advisor for review. Following approval from the Research Advisor, the student must send the

report to the Graduate Program Committee. **The student may only proceed to the Public Research Seminar once the Graduate Program Committee has granted approval of the written document.**

Public Research Seminar

The student is required to deliver a formal, one-hour Public Research Seminar. The seminar is scheduled for a one-hour block consisting of:

- **Public Presentation and Q&A (45-min):** The candidate delivers a formal, roughly 30-min, seminar-style presentation of their research or product. This is followed by a brief period for questions from the general public.
- **Committee Examination (Closed Session):** Following the public Q&A, the room is cleared of all except the Graduate Program Committee and the Research Advisor. The Committee and Advisor will conduct a private examination of the candidate, diving deeper into technical details, theoretical applications, and any necessary revisions to the written report.

The Public Research Seminar must be scheduled with the Department Admin Assistant(s) for a time in which the Graduate Program Committee is available.

Scheduling must occur with at least 2 weeks' notice. Once the Seminar has been scheduled, the student must provide the Admin Assistant(s) with an abstract of their presentation for public advertisement.

Following a successful seminar, the Research Advisor or the Graduate Program Director will initiate the **Non-Thesis, DPT, Specialist Diploma – AERO** final report.

Timeline & Checklist

FIRST SEMESTER

- Determine Research Advisor (aka: Thesis Chair)
- Complete Prerequisite Coursework (If Applicable)

SECOND SEMESTER

- Finalize Committee by Submitting Program of Study

THIRD SEMESTER

- Submit Thesis Proposal to Advisor and Graduate School

FOURTH SEMESTER

- Apply for Graduation (Deadline is typically the first month of semester)
- Define a Preliminary Seminar Date
- Provide Completed Draft of Report to Advisor and GPC at Least 1-Month Prior to Defense Date
- Finalize Seminar Date at Least 2-Weeks Prior to Seminar
- Hold Public Seminar
- Provide the Graduate Program Director the Final Report and/or Products
- Remind Advisor to Submit Final Report on Candidate

Master of Science (Thesis Track)

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. All M.S. students are required to take ATSC 500 Introduction to Atmospheric Research and ATSC 505 Advanced Atmospheric Dynamics.

Research Advisor

The research advisor serves as the primary mentor for the MS student and acts as the Chair of the student's Thesis Committee. The Advisor is responsible for the intellectual and professional development of the student and shall guide research direction, provide technical resources, timely feedback and review, and professional mentorship. The student is expected to be the primary driver of the research project and maintain consistent communication, demonstrate technical initiative, adhere to ethical standards, manage project milestones and deadlines, and respond to guidance from their advisor and committee.

Students are expected to have identified who their Research Advisor is no later than the beginning of their second semester.

Thesis Committee

The Thesis Committee is composed of at least three members: the Research Advisor (who serves as Chair) and a minimum of two additional members. These members provide diverse perspectives on the student's research and evaluate the final thesis and defense. The committee acts as the final authority on the student's progress. A student may only schedule and proceed to their Oral Defense once the committee has granted preliminary approval of the written thesis. Final approval of the MS degree is contingent upon the committee's formal sign-off on the final thesis document following a successful Oral Defense.

Committee members are typically drawn from within the Department of Atmospheric Sciences, with the chair and at least one additional member being from the Department of Atmospheric Sciences. For the final member, students may include persons external to the department or university though any member that is not faculty at the University of North Dakota must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies (via submitting a current CV to the School of Graduate Studies attached to the Program of Study form). The School of Graduate Studies will only approve committee members who: have a terminal degree in their field, and/or, have significant knowledge, expertise, or experience in the particular area of research to be considered an expert.

The committee is submitted for consideration by the School of Graduate Studies via the Program of Study form.

Program of Study

The Program of Study (PoS) is an official document that serves as the formal contract between the student, the Department, and the School of Graduate Studies. It outlines the specific coursework approved by the Research Advisor and Thesis Committee to fulfill degree requirements. For the MS Thesis Track, the Program of Study must total **exactly 30 credits (21 of which must come from ATSC 575 or lower).**

Students should only include courses they intend to complete; conversely any course taken that is not listed on the approved PoS may not be covered by departmental or grant funding (if applicable) and could result in out-of-pocket tuition costs. While the PoS must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies no later than one semester

prior to graduation, it is expected to be **submitted by the end of your second semester** for departmental course planning.

Students must take at least one course in each of the four core areas: Dynamics, Physical, Climate Systems, and Tools.

While the PoS serves as a formal contract, it can be modified to if academic plans change. In such case, the student should submit an amendment to the PoS (via the Change Form) as soon as the change is decided. Changes to the PoS should be done sparingly.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the credits on the PoS accurately reflect the requirements for graduation.

Committee Meetings

To ensure consistent progress toward the degree, students are expected to meet with their full Thesis Committee at least once per semester. These meetings serve as a formal venue for the student to provide an update on their research and progress towards completing their Program of Study. During the meeting, the student is expected to present a summary of their progress since the last meeting, discuss any technical or data-related challenges, and outline specific research goals to be completed by the following Committee meeting. The committee's role is to provide constructive feedback, offer technical guidance, and verify that the proposed timeline remains feasible for graduation. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate these meetings.

Topic Proposal

The Thesis Topic Proposal serves as a formal agreement between the student and their Thesis Committee, defining the scope of the research required for the degree. Once approved, this document acts as a contract ensuring the student has a clear path to completion while protecting against "scope creep" by establishing the mutually agreed-upon requirements for a successful thesis. **The Topic Proposal should be completed by the end of the student's third semester.**

DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Atmospheric Sciences requires a comprehensive Topic Proposal that typically serves as the foundation for the first two chapters of the thesis. The proposal must include:

- **Literature Review:** A thorough synthesis of existing research that establishes the context and motivation for the study.
- **Proposed Methodology:** A detailed description of the data sources, analysis techniques, and computation tools to be employed.
- **Anticipated Results:** A discussion of the expected or preliminary outcomes.

The proposal should include a text-only abstract that is limited to one page.

References should be included via in-text citations and a bibliography using a reference style that aligns with your research as approved by your advisor (e.g., AMS, APA, etc.).

The full topic proposal is to be submitted to the Department Graduate Program Director for archival.

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES REQUIREMENTS

While the Department requires a full technical proposal, the School of Graduate Studies requires a simplified, one-page formal submission. For this administrative requirement, students should submit their one-page abstract to the School of Graduate Studies via the **Topic Proposal - AERO** form once the Committee has approved the full technical proposal. The Topic Proposal must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies no later than one semester prior to the semester of expected Oral Defense and graduation.

Thesis

The Master's Thesis is the culminating scholarly work of the MS program. It must demonstrate the student's ability to conduct independent research and communicate complex scientific findings effectively. While specific structure of the thesis is determined in consultation with the Research Advisor, a standard MS thesis includes an Abstract, Introduction, Methodology, Results & Discussion, Conclusions, and Bibliography sections.

Students are responsible for ensuring the thesis meets the formatting requirements set by the School of Graduate Studies, including specific margins, font sizes, and required title, copyright, table of contents, and approval pages. All figures must be rendered at a minimum of 300 dpi to ensure clarity in the final archived document.

Citations and references must follow a consistent style approved by the Thesis Committee (typically AMS or APA). The department maintains a LaTeX formatted thesis template which can be provided by contacting the Department Graduate Program Director.

PRELIMINARY APPROVAL FOR DEFENSE

The completed thesis must be submitted to the full Thesis Committee for review prior to scheduling the Oral Defense. **The student may only proceed to the Oral Defense once the committee has granted preliminary approval of the written document** (via the **Preliminary Approval and Notice of Defense - AERO** form). This stage ensures that the research and writing meet departmental standards and that the student is prepared for the public examination.

Note that students must be enrolled in credits during the semester in which they intend to graduate. If a student has completed their Program of Study, they must be enrolled in Continuing Enrollment (ATSC 996).

Students should allow the committee a minimum of **one month** to review the document before expecting a decision on preliminary approval. **The School of Graduate Studies requires a minimum of a two week notice from preliminary approval to the scheduled defense date.** Work with the department admin assistant(s) to schedule the date and location for your defense. Once the Preliminary Approval form has been approved, provide the admin assistant(s) with the abstract of your thesis so that your defense may be advertised.

Oral Defense

The Oral Defense is a public presentation and examination of the student's thesis research. It serves as the final requirement for the MS degree and must demonstrate the candidate's mastery of their research topic and their ability to defend their methodology and conclusions.

The defense is scheduled for a two-and-a-half-hour block consisting of two distinct parts:

- **Public Presentation and Q&A (one-hour):** The candidate delivers a formal, roughly 50-min, seminar-style presentation of their research, including a review of the literature, methodology, results, and scientific significance. This is followed by a brief period for questions from the general public.
- **Committee Examination (Closed Session):** Following the public Q&A, the room is cleared of all non-committee members. The Thesis Committee will conduct a private examination of the candidate, diving deeper into technical details, theoretical applications, and any necessary revisions to the manuscript.

Following the Committee Examination, the Thesis Committee will deliberate without the student present. Once coming to a decision, the Thesis Committee will inform the student whether they have passed the Oral Defense or not as well as any requirements prior to thesis submission.

The candidate and committee members are typically expected to be physically present. The department does allow virtual defenses for MS degrees for students no longer residing near Grand Forks or virtual committee participation via real-time synchronous technology.

Upon the successful completion of the defense and the closed-door session, two formal documents must be initiated via DocuSign:

- **Approval Page:** This document must be included in the final thesis manuscript. Students have the option to include either the DocuSign-signed copy or an unsigned version in their final thesis submission.
- **Final Report on Candidate:** This form officially notifies the School of Graduate Studies of the defense outcome. This form is initiated by the Research Advisor

Thesis Publishing

Theses are submitted as PDF documents to ProQuest/UMI Publishing. Once submitted, it will be logged, indexed, and published. Once the PDF has been submitted, no further changes can be made.

Approximately 8 weeks following the submission, your thesis will be available on the ProQuest/UMI database, unless you have placed an embargo for up to two years on access.

Students are required to purchase a hardbound copy of their thesis for the Chester Fritz Library via ProQuest/UMI at a cost of \$30. A second hardbound copy for the Department Library is also required. This Department copy can be ordered through ProQuest/UMI (for \$62) or a printing/binding service of your choice. Students may also wish to order bound copies for their Committee.

While you automatically own the copyright to your thesis upon publication, ProQuest offers an optional formal registration service for a fee of \$55. This registration is not required by the Department or UND, but it provides additional legal protections (such as the ability to sue for statutory damages) should your work be infringed. Students interested in pursuing a career in commercial research or publishing may find this service beneficial.

When submitting the final manuscript to ProQuest/UMI, students may opt to publish Open Access for \$95. Traditional (non-Open Access) will typically meet all student’s needs as all UND theses are made freely and openly available via UND Scholarly Commons regardless of the ProQuest/UMI publishing choice. Therefore, paying the additional fee is generally unnecessary to ensure your research is accessible to the global scientific community.

Failure to Meet Deadlines

To ensure timely progress toward graduation, students must adhere to the following milestones. Failure to meet these primary deadlines may result in delayed graduation.

Milestone	Deadline
Committee & Program of Study	End of Second Semester
Thesis Proposal	End of Third Semester
Thesis Defense	End of Fourth Semester

MANDATORY PROGRAM CONVERSION

If the following secondary deadlines are not met, the student’s degree track will be **automatically converted from Thesis Track to Non-Thesis Track** to ensure completion of the MS degree.

Milestone	Deadline
Committee & Program of Study	End of Third Semester
Thesis Proposal	End of Third Semester
Thesis Defense	End of Fifth Semester

APPEALS PROCESS

A student may appeal a track conversion by submitting a written request to the Graduate Program Committee via the Graduate Program Director. The appeal must clearly explain the cause of the delay, provide a justification for why these specific obstacles will not recur in the future, and outline a detailed schedule for all remaining milestones. If an appeal is granted, failure to meet the newly established deadlines will result in an immediate and final conversion to the Non-Thesis Track.

Timeline & Checklist

FIRST SEMESTER

- Determine Research Advisor (aka: Thesis Chair)
- Complete Prerequisite Coursework (If Applicable)
- Hold an Advisor or Committee Meeting

SECOND SEMESTER

- Finalize Committee by Submitting Program of Study
- Hold a Committee Meeting

THIRD SEMESTER

- Defend Thesis Proposal in Committee Meeting
- Submit Thesis Proposal to Department
- Submit Topic Proposal to Graduate School

FOURTH SEMESTER

- Apply for Graduation (Deadline is typically the first month of semester)
- Define a Preliminary Defense Date
- Provide Completed Draft of Thesis to Committee at Least 1-Month Prior to Defense Date
- Submit Preliminary Approval & Notice of Defense Form
- Hold Public Defense
- Submit Thesis Approval/Signature Page
- Submit Final Thesis & Purchase Copies for UND and Department Library
- Remind Advisor to Submit Final Report on Candidate

Ph.D.

Research Advisor

The research advisor serves as the primary mentor for the doctoral student and acts as the Chair of the student's Dissertation Committee. Given the scope of the doctoral research, the Advisor-Student relationship is the cornerstone of the PhD program, transitioning from guided instruction to professional collaboration over the course of the degree.

The Advisor is responsible for the intellectual and professional development of the student and shall guide research direction by assisting the student in identifying an original research problem that contributes new knowledge to the field of Atmospheric Science. The Advisor shall also provide resources, funding oversight, and timely feedback and review.

The PhD student is expected to be the principal investigator of their own dissertation research. The student shall maintain professional communication, demonstrate technical initiative, adhere to ethical standards, manage project milestones and deadlines, and respond to guidance from their advisor and committee.

Students are typically matched with a Research Advisor upon admission to ensure immediate integration into a research group.

Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee is composed of at least four members: the Research Advisor (who serves as Chair), two other members (one of which must be from the department), and one additional, *at-large* member from a different department on campus. These members provide diverse perspectives on the student's research, represent the standards of the School of Graduate Studies, and evaluate the final dissertation and defense. The committee acts as the final authority on the student's progress. A student may only schedule and proceed to their Oral Defense once the committee has granted preliminary approval of the written dissertation. Final approval of the PhD degree is contingent upon the committee's formal sign-off on the final dissertation document following a successful Oral Defense.

Committee members are typically drawn from within the Department of Atmospheric Sciences, with the chair and at least one additional member being from the Department of Atmospheric Sciences. The *at-large* member must be a faculty member from a UND department outside of Atmospheric Sciences to ensure the procedural and academic rigor of the doctoral process. For the final member, students may include persons external to the department or university though any member that is not faculty at the University of North Dakota must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies (via submitting a current CV to the School of Graduate Studies attached to the Program of Study form). The School of Graduate Studies will only approve committee members who: have a terminal degree in their field, and/or, have significant knowledge, expertise, or experience in the particular area of research to be considered an expert.

The committee is submitted for consideration by the School of Graduate Studies via the Program of Study form.

Program of Study

The Program of Study (PoS) is an official document that serves as the formal contract between the student, the Department, and the School of Graduate Studies. It outlines the specific coursework approved by the Research Advisor and Dissertation Committee to fulfill degree requirements. For the PhD, the PoS must reflect exactly 90 credits beyond a bachelor's degree, or 60 credits beyond a master's degree. At least 40 of the

post-bachelor's credits (or 27 of the post-master's credits) must be from formal coursework, with a minimum of two-thirds of these formal credits taken within the Department of Atmospheric Sciences. Up to 9 credits of the total may be completed through distance education.

Students in the PhD program must complete two consecutive years of full-time academic work in residence at the University of North Dakota campus. With approval from the Dissertation Committee, additional years may be completed through full-time academic work or research at another institution or location that benefits the student's research mission.

Students should only include courses they intend to complete; conversely any course taken that is not listed on the approved PoS may not be covered by departmental or grant funding (if applicable) and could result in out-of-pocket tuition costs. While the PoS must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies no later than one semester prior to graduation, it is expected to be **submitted by the end of your second semester** for departmental course planning.

While the PoS serves as a formal contract, it can be modified to if academic plans change. In such case, the student should submit an amendment to the PoS (via the Change Form) as soon as the change is decided. Changes to the PoS should be done sparingly.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the credits on the PoS accurately reflect the requirements for graduation.

Committee Meetings

To ensure consistent progress toward the degree, students are expected to meet with their full Dissertation Committee at least once per academic year. These meetings serve as a formal venue for the student to provide an update on their research and progress towards completing their Program of Study. During the meeting, the student is expected to present a summary of their progress since the last meeting, discuss any technical or data-related challenges, and outline specific research goals to be completed by the following Committee meeting. The committee's role is to provide

constructive feedback, offer technical guidance, and verify that the proposed timeline remains feasible for graduation. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate these meetings.

Written Comprehensive Examination (Qualifying Exam)

The Written Comprehensive Exam is the first major milestone of the PhD program. Its primary purpose is to ensure that all doctoral candidates possess the broad, foundational knowledge required to succeed in the field of Atmospheric Sciences, regardless of their specific research focus. This examination evaluates a student's mastery of the core competencies within the discipline. Students are expected to take the written comprehensive exam once they have finished, or nearly finished, all in-class courses, typically at the end of the fourth semester. **Students requesting to take the Written Comprehensive Exam must submit, in writing, their intent to the Graduate Program Director by the end of the fourth week of the semester in which they intend to take the exam.** The exam only covers courses offered by the Department of Atmospheric Sciences. Courses taken out of department may count for credit towards a category but not offer a comprehensive examination question (e.g., ESSP 507).

Typically, the Written Comprehensive Examination is held in May.

The examination is a "closed-book" assessment held over two consecutive days, with four hours allotted for each day. The exam covers the four core areas: Dynamics, Physical, Climate Systems, and Tools. Students are required to answer two questions for each core area.

Each question is graded on a 0-10 scale by two faculty members. The results are averaged across the four core areas to determine the outcome:

- **Unconditional Pass:** An overall average of 7.0 or higher, with no single category below a 4.0.
- **Pass with Remediation:** An overall average between 6.0 and 7.0, or an average above 7.0 with a deficiency (below 4.0) in one or more categories.
- **Unconditional Fail:** An overall average below 6.0.

Full written comprehensive examination rules are available via request to the Graduate Program Director.

Once a student has passed the written comprehensive exam, they are promoted to PhD 2.

Oral Comprehensive Examination and Topic Proposal (Prospectus)

Following successful completion of the written examination, the student must complete the Oral Comprehensive Examination, commonly referred to as the Prospectus Defense. The purpose of this examination is to ensure that the student has a viable, well-defined, and original research plan that constitutes a legitimate contribution to the field.

The Oral Comprehensive Examination is typically scheduled one year prior to the student's final dissertation defense (e.g., one year after the Written Comprehensive Examination). This timeframe ensures that the committee has ample opportunity to provide feedback and that the student has sufficient time to address any gaps in the proposed research plan before the final defense.

Once the student has passed the Oral Comprehensive exam, they are promoted to PhD 3 and may advance to PhD Candidacy.

THE WRITTEN PROSPECTUS & TOPIC PROPOSAL

Prior to the oral presentation, the student must submit a formal, long-form Prospectus (i.e., topic proposal) to the Dissertation Committee. This document serves as the foundation for the Oral Examination and must include:

- **Abstract:** A text-only abstract limited to one page acting as the Topic Proposal for the School of Graduate Studies.
- **Background and Literature Review:** A comprehensive summary of the current state of the field motivating the dissertation research.
- **Research Accomplishments:** A detailed overview of the methodology and findings to date, including any published results.

- Proposed Research: A clear definition of the work remaining, including specific methodologies, expected timelines, and anticipated contributions to the scientific community.

Only once the committee has verbally approved the written prospectus and it has been sent to the Graduate Program Director for archival, may the student schedule the Oral Examination.

Once the committee has approved the written prospectus, the student should submit the abstract to the School of Graduate Studies using the Topic Proposal – AERO form.

THE ORAL EXAMINATION

The Oral Examination is a closed-door meeting with the Dissertation Committee. The student is expected to provide a formal presentation summarizing the written prospectus, followed by a rigorous question-and-answer session. The committee will evaluate the student's mastery of the research topic, feasibility of the proposed work, and ability to communicate complex scientific concepts effectively.

Following completion of the Oral Examination, the student should submit the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam – AERO form on the School of Graduate Studies website.

Dissertation

The Doctoral Dissertation is the culminating scholarly work of the PhD program. It must demonstrate the candidate's ability to conduct original, independent research and communicate significant scientific findings to the international research community. While the specific structure of the dissertation is determined in consultation with the Research Advisor and Dissertation Committee, a standard dissertation typically includes an Abstract, Introduction, detailed Methodology, multiple chapters of Results & Discussions, Conclusions, and Bibliography sections.

Students are responsible for ensuring the dissertation meets the formatting requirements set by the School of Graduate Studies, including specific margins, font sizes, and required title, copyright, table of contents, and approval pages. All figures must be rendered at a minimum of 300 dpi to ensure clarity in the final archived document. Citations and references must follow a consistent style approved by the

Dissertation Committee (typically AMS or APA). The department maintains a LaTeX formatted dissertation template which can be provided by contacting the Department Graduate Program Director.

PRELIMINARY APPROVAL FOR DEFENSE

The completed dissertation must be submitted to the full Dissertation Committee for review prior to scheduling the Oral Defense. **The student may only proceed to the Oral Defense once the committee has granted preliminary approval of the written document** (via the **Preliminary Approval and Notice of Defense – AERO** form). This stage ensures that the dissertation meets departmental standards and that the student is prepared for the public examination.

Note that students must be enrolled in credits during the semester in which they intend to graduate. If a student has completed their Program of Study, they must be enrolled in Continuing Enrollment (ATSC 996).

Students should allow the committee a minimum of **one month** to review the document before expecting a decision on preliminary approval. **The School of Graduate Studies requires a minimum of a two week notice from preliminary approval to the scheduled defense date.** Work with the department admin assistant(s) to schedule the date and location for your defense. Once the Preliminary Approval form has been approved, provide the admin assistant(s) with the abstract of your dissertation so that your defense may be advertised.

Oral Defense

The Oral Defense is a public presentation and examination of the student's dissertation research. It serves as the final requirement for the PhD degree and must demonstrate the candidate's mastery of their research topic, their ability to defend their methodology and conclusions, and their readiness to operate as an independent scientist.

The defense is scheduled for a three-hour block consisting of two distinct parts:

1. Public Presentation and Q&A (one-hour): The candidate delivers a formal, roughly 50-min, seminar-style presentation of their research, including a review of the

literature, methodology, results, and scientific significance. This is followed by a brief period for questions from the general public.

2. Committee Examination (Closed Session): Following the public Q&A, the room is cleared of all non-committee members. The Dissertation Committee will conduct a private examination of the candidate, diving deeper into technical details, theoretical applications, and any necessary revisions to the manuscript.

Following the Committee Examination, the Dissertation Committee will deliberate without the student present. Once coming to a decision, the Committee will inform the student whether they have passed the Oral Defense or not as well as any requirements prior to dissertation submission.

PhD defenses are expected to be conducted in-person at the University of North Dakota campus. Virtual participation or remote defense requests are only considered under extenuating circumstances and must be approved by the Dissertation Committee and the Department Chair well in advance of the schedule date.

Upon the successful completion of the defense and the closed-door session, two formal documents must be initiated via DocuSign:

- Approval Page: This document must be included in the final dissertation manuscript. Students have the option to include either the DocuSign-signed copy or an unsigned version in their final dissertation submission.
- Final Report on Candidate: This form officially notifies the School of Graduate Studies of the defense outcome. This form is initiated by the Research Advisor

Dissertation Publishing

Dissertations are submitted as PDF documents to ProQuest/UMI Publishing. Once submitted, it will be logged, indexed, and published. Once the PDF has been submitted, no further changes can be made.

Approximately 8 weeks following the submission, your dissertation will be available on the ProQuest/UMI database, unless you have placed an embargo for up to two years on access.

Students are required to purchase a hardbound copy of their dissertation for the Chester Fritz Library via ProQuest/UMI at a cost of \$30. A second hardbound copy for the Department Library is also required. This Department copy can be ordered through ProQuest/UMI (for \$62) or a printing/binding service of your choice. Students may also wish to order bound copies for their Committee.

While you automatically own the copyright to your dissertation upon publication, ProQuest offers an optional formal registration service for a fee of \$55. This registration is not required by the Department or UND, but it provides additional legal protections (such as the ability to sue for statutory damages) should your work be infringed. Students interested in pursuing a career in commercial research or publishing may find this service beneficial.

When submitting the final manuscript to ProQuest/UMI, students may opt to publish Open Access for \$95. Traditional (non-Open Access) will typically meet all student's needs as all UND theses are made freely and openly available via UND Scholarly Commons regardless of the ProQuest/UMI publishing choice. Therefore, paying the additional fee is generally unnecessary to ensure your research is accessible to the global scientific community.

Professional Expectation and Deadlines

The doctoral process requires a high degree of self-management and professional accountability. While the Department of Atmospheric Sciences provides the framework for degree requirements, the Research Advisor maintains the authority to establish research timelines, project milestones, and professional expectations for students under their supervision.

Students are expected to adhere to the project timelines and deadlines established by their Research Advisor. Because doctoral research is often supported by external grant funding, the failure to meet these milestones can have direct consequences for the student's academic progress and financial support.

Professional disagreements regarding research timelines should be resolved through open, documented communication with the Research Advisor. If a student feels that a

deadline is unreasonable and/or communication has broken down, they may request a meeting with the Graduate Program Director and/or Graduate Program Committee to mediate the discussion and ensure the student's research trajectory remains on track.

Timeline & Checklist

FIRST YEAR

- Finalize Committee by Submitting Program of Study by End of Year
- Hold a Committee Meeting

SECOND YEAR

- Submit Intent to Take the Written Comprehensive Exam by the End of the Fourth Week of the Semester of the Exam
- Hold a Committee Meeting

THIRD YEAR

- Submit Written Prospectus to Committee for Approval
- Submit Topic Proposal
- Hold Prospectus Defense
- Submit Comprehensive Examination Form

FOURTH YEAR

- Apply for Graduation (At Beginning of Final Semester)
- Hold Public Defense
- Submit Dissertation Approval/Signature Page
- Submit Final Dissertation & Purchase Copies for UND and Department Library
- Remind Advisor to Submit Final Report on Candidate
- Complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates (Ph.D. only, not Ed.D. or D.A.) at <https://sed-ncses.org/GradDateRouter.aspx>

CONTINUING ENROLLMENT, LEAVES, AND TIME LIMITS

Continuing Enrollment (996)

When you complete the coursework on your Program of Study but are not prepared to graduate in the same semester, you must enroll in Continuing Enrollment (996) to maintain student status. Continuing Enrollment is \$150 per credit hour and must be paid out-of-pocket. There are no associated student fees, which affects access to on-campus resources (e.g., Wellness Center, Counseling Center require payment or separate fees). Note that students who have completed their Program of Study should have completed their thesis/dissertation/non-thesis project. Students should not expect to take Continuing Enrollment in perpetuity.

Do NOT enroll in Continuing Enrollment if you still have courses to take on your Program of Study.

Leave of Absence

Students who need to take a leave of absence from their program for illness, military service, or other extenuating circumstances must notify the Graduate Program Director and the School of Graduate Studies by submitting the [Readmission or Leave of Absence form](#) in advance. To completely withdraw from the program, submit the Withdraw from Graduate Program form. Extended off-campus research does not typically qualify for a leave; you are expected to be enrolled while conducting research.

Time Limits and Obsolete Courses

Graduate courses more than seven years old are considered obsolete and may not be counted toward degree requirements. Programs of Study more than seven years old are also obsolete. Obsolete UND graduate courses may be revalidated with approval of your faculty advisory committee and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Graduate work from another institution that is over-age cannot be revalidated and will

not count toward a UND degree. Ph.D. students do not need to revalidate courses taken at the M.S. level.

Consult the [Graduate School policies](#) and your advisor for revalidation procedures.

POLICIES OVERVIEW

Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct

All graduate students must adhere to the [UND Code of Student Life](#) and the School of Graduate Studies Standards and Professional Conduct Policy. These define scholastic dishonesty, including:

- **Cheating on exams:** Copying from another student, possessing unauthorized material, collaborating without permission, buying/selling/stealing test contents, substituting for another student, bribing, or using AI without instructor knowledge.
- **Plagiarism:** Appropriation of another person's work without acknowledgment, including Internet sources, government reports, and other materials. Always cite sources.
- **Collusion:** Unauthorized collaboration on academic work.

The Atmospheric Sciences department treats scholastic dishonesty very seriously. Consequences may include zero credit for the assignment or course, referral to the Associate Dean of Student Life and the Student Relations Committee, a disciplinary letter in your permanent file, and expulsion from the program for a second offense.

When writing papers, use your own words the majority of the time. When you use another person's words, use quotation marks and cite the source. Document information and ideas that are new to you, even if you are not directly quoting. If unsure, add the citation.

Department-Specific Policies

Identification Card: All students must obtain and maintain a University ID card (U Card) from One-Stop Student Services. U Cards cost \$20 for new students and \$20 for replacements. The U Card is used for building access after-hours, the Wellness Center, library, campus shuttles, and student sections at athletic events.

Parking: Students who intend to park on campus must purchase a parking permit to park in any lot, including the Clifford Hall lot. Several permit types are available (Student, Student Reserved, Parking Ramp, Overnight 24/7, Economy Lot), with varying

costs and zone restrictions. Permits are annual (valid August 16–August 15) and are vehicle-specific (license plate or VIN acts as the pass). Purchase permits through the [Parking Portal](#). Consult the [UND Parking website](#) for current pricing and zoning maps.

Office and Computer Lab Use: Graduate students are assigned office space and computer access. Follow departmental policies for computer use, software installation, and help desk ticketing. For IT help, [Aerospace Help Desk | UND Aerospace | University of North Dakota](#)

Wet Lab Use: Students may use the wet lab space and equipment with permission from their major professor. Keep facilities neat and clean, follow laboratory safety standards, and lock the door when unattended. Not following these rules may result in a ban on laboratory use.

Research Compliance: If your research involves human subjects, animals, recombinant DNA, radiation, or biohazardous agents, you must obtain approval from the appropriate institutional oversight committee (IRB, IACUC, IBC) before beginning research. Contact the [Office of Research Compliance & Ethics](#) at 701.777.4279.

RESOURCES AND STUDENT LIFE

On-Campus Resources

Wellness Center – 801 Princeton Street, 701-777-WELL

<https://und.edu/student-life/wellness-center/>

Free for students paying student fees; \$95 per semester for Continuing Enrollment students. Offers a full gym, indoor and outdoor sports, cooking classes, personal trainers, e-gaming facility, and the Outpost for outdoor gear rental.

Student Health Services – McCannel Hall 100, 701-777-4500

<https://und.edu/student-life/student-health/>

Full-service on-campus clinic for physicals, general medical care, immunizations, lab and radiology testing, COVID and flu treatment, minor surgical procedures, sexual health, skin care, pre-travel consultation, and more. Services are NOT free; check with your insurance company to ensure coverage before scheduling.

University Counseling Center – McCannel Hall 200, 701-777-2127

<https://und.edu/student-life/counseling-center/>

On-campus center for in-person and tele-health mental health services. Offers individual and group counseling, crisis counseling, workshops, personal evaluations, and substance abuse services. Most services are free for students paying student fees; \$95 per semester for Continuing Enrollment students. To make your first appointment, call or log in to the [UND Health Portal](#) using your UND credentials. Tele-health is NOT available from UND to Alaska, California, Hawaii, Iowa, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, New York, South Dakota, or Vermont.

One-Stop Student Services – Memorial Union 302, 701-777-1234

<https://und.edu/one-stop/>

One-stop shop for educational financial services, including federal financial aid, private loan options, billing statements, payment options, and U-Card services.

School of Graduate Studies – Twamley Hall 103, 701-777-2784

<https://und.edu/academics/graduate-school/>

Offers thesis and dissertation support, writing help, career services, professional development workshops, Graduate Research Appreciation Day, Gershman Graduate Center, 3-Minute Thesis, Accelerate to Industry (A2i), and grad student-exclusive events throughout the academic year.

Community and Belonging Centers

<https://und.edu/student-life/community-belonging/>

Support services and centers for international students, veterans, students with disabilities, indigenous students, students of all religious and spiritual backgrounds, LGBTQ+ students, and more.

GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PATHWAY

This section consolidates grievance steps for academic, workload, or interpersonal concerns.

Principles

- Resolve issues at the lowest appropriate level when possible.
- Document your concerns and attempts at resolution.
- Students should not fear retaliation for bringing forward good-faith concerns.
- Maintain professionalism in all communications.

Stepwise Pathway

Step 1: Discuss with the Person Involved (When Safe and Feasible)

For course issues, speak with the course instructor. For assistantship workload or supervision, speak with your advisor or supervising faculty member. Prepare specific examples and desired outcomes.

Step 2: Seek Peer and ASGSA Support

If you are reluctant to speak alone, contact an ASGSA officer (President, MS Representative, PhD Representative, GTA Representative) to help prepare or to attend a meeting with you. ASGSA officers can provide informal support and advocacy.

Step 3: Graduate Program Director and/or Department Chair

If the issue is not resolved, or if it involves your advisor/supervisor directly, bring the concern to the Co-Graduate Program Director(s) and/or Department Chair. Most department-level issues (e.g., chronic workload problems, miscommunication, expectations) should be addressed at this level. The Graduate Program Director and Department Chair can mediate disputes, clarify policies, and recommend solutions.

Step 4: Aerospace Human Resources / College Leadership

Only after the Graduate Program Director or Department Chair has been involved may students raise concerns. For unresolved assistantship/workplace issues, including potential violations of employment expectations or harassment, contact Aerospace

Human Resources and/or the Dean of the Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences. These offices handle employment-related grievances and can initiate formal review processes.

Step 5: School of Graduate Studies, Student Rights and Responsibilities, and University Processes

For programmatic concerns (e.g., candidacy decisions, comprehensive exam procedures, grade appeals), you may petition or consult the [School of Graduate Studies](#). Alleged violations of the Code of Student Life (e.g., discrimination, harassment, serious misconduct) may be directed to [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) or other designated UND offices. The Graduate School and Student Rights and Responsibilities can provide guidance on formal complaint and appeal procedures.

Students are encouraged to consult with ASGSA, the Graduate Program Director, or the School of Graduate Studies for guidance on which route is most appropriate for a given concern.

CLOSING REMARKS

This handbook is a living document and will be updated as necessary by the Graduate Program Direction, Graduate Program Committee, ASGSA, and faculty to reflect current policies and practices. If you have questions not covered here, please reach out to your advisor, the Graduate Program Director, ASGSA officers, or the School of Graduate Studies.

Welcome again to the University of North Dakota Department of Atmospheric Sciences! We wish you success and fulfillment in your graduate studies.

Document last updated: May 2026

REFERENCES

This handbook consolidates information from the following sources:

- [1] University of North Dakota Department of Atmospheric Sciences Graduate Student Handbook 2025-2026 (ASGSA).
- [2] University of North Dakota School of Graduate Studies Guide to Graduation, Academic Year 2024-2025.
- [3] University of North Dakota Earth System Science & Policy Department Graduate Student Handbook, Updated February 2025.
- [4] UND Academic Catalog (Graduate), <https://und-public.courseleaf.com/graduate/>.
- [5] UND Code of Student Life, <https://und.edu/student-life/code-of-student-life.html>.
- [6] School of Graduate Studies Resources, <https://und.edu/academics/graduate-school/current-students/resources.html>.