Professional Master’s Degree in Wetlands Conservation

This program is designed for students who want professional training in the multidisciplinary field of wetlands science and management. The primary focus of the program is on wetlands ecology and conservation in combination with training in public policy and program administration. Students will gain an understanding of wetlands ecology, including hydrology, soils, plants and wildlife; techniques for wetland field assessments; public policy relating to state and federal wetlands regulatory programs; and public administration analyses. The academic requirements of this concentration in combination with an internship experience provide students the necessary training for employment with state, federal, and NGO wetlands programs, and private consulting firms. (Concentration Advisor: Dr. Griffin)

A. Prerequisites
Candidates for this program will be admitted on the basis of their academic training and professional experience. At a minimum, candidates will be expected to possess:

1) Bachelor’s degree in
   a natural resources field or environmental sciences, or
   the biological sciences with an emphasis in ecology, or
   in any field with strong background in mathematics and the biological and physical sciences, and professional experience working as a natural resources professional.

Prerequisites exist for many of the required courses. Students are expected to have satisfied these prerequisites prior to commencing the program or in addition to the curriculum requirements outlined below.

B. Requirements

1) A minimum of 38 credits is required, 12 of which must be at the 600 level or above,
2) A six-credit degree internship/project approved by the student’s graduate advisor and other committee members (see below)
3) A publishable-quality professional paper presenting the results of the degree project,
4) Two semester's registration in WFCON graduate seminars on Research Methods and Communicating Science, including a presentation in Communicating Science related to the student’s degree project/internship.
5) Knowledge in a least one area of each “core” subject area required for completion of a masters degree in WFCON and
6) A general Master’s examination by a committee composed of three persons, including your major advisor; two of these persons must have WFCON graduate faculty status (one of which must be a university employee).
C. Curriculum

1) Wetlands Science (21-22 credits)
   - WFCON 563 Wetlands Wildlife Ecology & Management
   - WFCON 768 Wetland Ecology
   - PLSOIL 565 Soil Formation, Classification, & Land Use
   - BIOL 485 Aquatic Vascular Plants
   - One of the following courses:
     - GEOG 488 Applied Environmental Geology
     - GEOG 575 Hydrogeology
     - PLSOIL 597 Groundwater Science and Technology
   - One of the following courses:
     - WFCON 597A Wetlands Assessment and Field Techniques
     - PLSOIL 597L Wetlands Delineation for Environmental Testing
   - One of the following courses:
     - FOR 531 Aerial Photogrammetry
     - BIOL 524 Coastal Plant Ecology
     - ENVSCI 576 Aquatic Invertebrates
     - WFCON 697A Fishery Conservation in the Coastal Zone
     - BIOL 534 Biological Limnology
     - WFCON 697B International Conservation
     - PLSOIL 597W Constructed Wetlands for Wastewater Treatment

2) Policy and Program Administration (9 credits)
   - One of the following courses:
     - GEOG 666 The Water's Edge
     - REGPL 653 Resource Policy & Planning
     - WFCON 710 Environmental Impact Assessment
     - REGPL 641 Water Resources Planning
   - One of the following courses:
     - REGPL 575 Planning Law & Resource Management
     - POLSCI 786 Policy Evaluation
     - POLSCI 784 Environmental Policy
     - POLSCI 787 Policy Analysis & Choice
   - One of the following courses:
     - WFCON 697A Social Conflict & Natural Resources Policy
     - REGPL 658 Issues in Environmental Management
     - POLSCI 524 Administrative Law
     - POLSCI 620 Public Administration
     - POLSCI 733 Public Administration: Organizing Theory & Political Science
     - POLSCI 734 Public Administration: Responsibility
3) Internship/Project (6 Credits)
WFCON 698 Practicum

4) Seminars (2 Credits)
WFCON 600- or 700-level graduate seminars on Research Methods and Communicating Science.

D. Internship/Project

Each student in the program not already professionally employed in a wetlands position is required to complete at least a 3-month long professional internship. There are numerous internship opportunities with wetlands programs and a variety of state and federal agencies in the Northeast, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Biological Survey, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state wetlands agencies, with a variety of NGOs in New England and Washington, D.C., and private consulting firms.

E. Matriculation and Financial Aid

This program should take a full-time student three to four (3-4) semesters. Some exceptionally well prepared students may be able to transfer in up to 6 credits of previous course work, and finish the program in three semesters, including a summer internship. Part-time students may take up to 3 years or more to complete the program. Funding opportunities are limited, and most students should be financially able to complete the program without relying on research or teaching assistantships.