

East Carolina University  
Tomorrow starts here.

P H D P R O G R A M I N

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*Coastal Resources  
Management*



Sea-level rise and erosion. Vulnerability to earthquakes, storms, and hurricanes. Wetlands and habitat loss. Plummeting fish stocks and shrinking biodiversity. Depleted aquifers. Degraded water quality. Deterioration of maritime cultural resources. Demographic changes. More people, more roads, more buildings.

Challenges to our coastal resources are formidable. No single discipline can prepare resource managers to grapple with the complex natural, physical, and social systems in the coastal margin.

To help meet the need for scientifically trained specialists able to move effectively between the worlds of coastal research, policy, and management, East Carolina University offers the PhD program in coastal resources management.

This multidisciplinary program builds on a strong tradition of coastal research at ECU, proximity to the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system and the Outer Banks, and the expertise of faculty from some sixteen different academic departments.

We invite highly motivated individuals with a commitment to sustaining our coastal resources to explore the many opportunities available through this unique program.



## EXCAVATING THE POSSIBILITIES

Mark Wilde-Ramsing, a state archaeologist since 1978 and director of the *Queen Anne's Revenge* shipwreck project, enrolled in the PhD program in coastal resources management in 2002. The shipwreck project, conducted under the auspices of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, is examining what may be the remains of the infamous pirate Blackbeard's ship, which sank off the North Carolina coast in the early 1700s.

"The program has enhanced my ability to manage my specific area by seeing the broader problems and issues that everyone is faced with," says Wilde-Ramsing. He was drawn to the program's unique quality, he says, and has found that applying in the field what he has learned about anthropology, biology, geology, history, and other related areas has enriched his career. "It's a very strong program, and it has a lot that students like myself can really immerse themselves in and go in any direction they want, using that expertise."

Directing a project like a high-profile shipwreck excavation has been even more valuable to Wilde-Ramsing because of expert help he has received in "all the different areas I'm working with. This program gives me the ability to step back, appreciate all the different points of view that come with coastal resources management, and find the most appropriate way to manage public resources."





## SHARING AN APPRECIATION

Dr. Lisa Clough, Department of Biology, shares with students her fascination for creatures that dwell in the mud on the ocean floor. She is affectionately known as the “mud lady” by faculty, students, and colleagues who study benthic ecology. She has found her own experience enriched by working with doctoral students in a new breed of program. “It’s very unusual to have social scientists and natural scientists talking to one another across those boundaries,” she says. Clough serves as advisor to Melinda Reynolds (above right), who is conducting field work on traditional ecological knowledge in coastal Alaska for her dissertation.

“The program is truly interdisciplinary,” Clough says. “It’s very important to coastal resources managers to see the relevance across disciplines.” Helping engage students to see that relevance has helped broaden her own perspective as a scientist. “I might not have had as much of an appreciation of the social sciences,” she says. As a result, she is gaining new respect for other scientists and watching as the program goes hand in hand with ECU’s mission to boost the quality of life in eastern North Carolina and beyond. She explains that her excitement for the world of possibilities open to both students and professors in coastal resources management continues to grow as she discovers new perspectives.

Working with doctoral students is a new experience for Clough. “They really take you as a faculty member in a new direction,” she says. She believes it takes a special kind of student to be a part of the program. “We’re looking for those students who want to be problem-solvers in the coastal region.” Those who will excel are students interested in thinking outside the box and eager to take on challenges.



## LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE

When Dr. Rebecca Cooper earned her PhD in coastal resources management at ECU in the spring of 2005, she decided to stay close to the heart of the program. Cooper is the manager of the central environmental lab in East Carolina's Department of Biology. She is well equipped to handle real-world problems thanks to her training. The multifaceted education she received in the program coupled with an internship with the National Marine Fisheries Service dealing with wetlands issues gave her the confidence she needed to succeed. "It was incredibly rewarding to see how useful such training is in the realm of resource management," she says.

Drawing on the wealth of resources available to students in the program, Cooper learned to take the approach open to all the varied interests in coastal resources management. She was able to find solutions to problems using information from many backgrounds and viewpoints. "From my experience, this ability is greatly appreciated by those who have been in the field," Cooper says. "Also, as with most academic training, the program has given us a wealth of resources that graduates can and will continually build upon and have as a reference."

Cooper was a member of the inaugural class of East Carolina's PhD program in coastal resources management in 1999. She concentrated in the coastal and estuarine ecology track and is preparing reports on her research for publication. In the meantime, she knows her degree will serve her well in her position with East Carolina. "Because this laboratory works with students and faculty from a variety of disciplines," she says, "I imagine that my coastal resources management studies will prove useful in understanding and contributing to their research."





## CREATING A MOLD

Dr. Reide Corbett spent much of his childhood discovering the wonders of the ocean. Years later, he is still searching for new ways to sustain the environment that he loves. Corbett holds a joint appointment in East Carolina's coastal resources management program and the Department of Geology and is helping students in the program develop ways to apply different aspects of their research to management. "My draw to the ocean is that I have been there since I was a kid," Corbett says. "My draw to this program is that it's fairly unique."

The program, which has essentially shaped Corbett's teaching style, provides a broad education that students can lean on when faced with environmental questions as managers. "This program is creating a new type of scientist," he says, "one that will hopefully fill a niche that isn't currently there." His focus is on nutrient and sediment dynamics and how they affect coastal systems, just one of the areas in which Corbett and other professors in the program are building the link between scientists and managers. "Students can take their research and apply it to do the environment justice," he says.

The depth students bring to the coastal resources management classrooms comes from their own experiences in some of the same environments the program trains managers to preserve. Bringing those disciplines together is helping students, faculty, and ECU take steps toward being interdisciplinary, and not just multidisciplinary, Corbett says. With such a background, students are prepared to offer solutions from a variety of perspectives that could have far-reaching effects on coastal resources everywhere, an idea that excites Corbett. "I'm trying to help something that I love," he says.





### *The Program*

- Provides a unique, integrated, interdisciplinary approach to coastal studies that emphasizes science and public policy
- Nurtures skills in the acquisition, interpretation, and synthesis of scientific information on coastal environments and populations
- Fosters pursuit of individual interest in the context of a structured but flexible program of classroom instruction, field research, work experience, and a doctoral dissertation
- Draws on a supportive, collaborative faculty from some sixteen academic departments, plus close ties to marine science faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, North Carolina State University, and Duke University
- Provides the academic basis for students seeking resource management careers in government agencies, private firms, nonprofit organizations, and interdisciplinary educational programs

### *Areas of Study*

Students concentrate in one of four areas, with complementary work in two others.

#### **Ecology**

The ecology concentration focuses on near-shore and estuarine processes important for living marine resources and environmental quality.

#### **Geoscience**

The geoscience concentration emphasizes coastal process, geomorphology, and hydrology as they affect use and development of the coastal margin.

#### **Social Science**

The social science concentration focuses on natural resource economics, politics and public policy, demographic trends, and social behavior as they relate to coastal management.

#### **Maritime Studies**

The maritime studies concentration focuses on cultural and historical dimensions of coastal resources with a focus on maritime history, nautical archaeology, and the role of maritime heritage in coastal use and development.



### *Application and Admission*

Detailed information on application and admission is available on the program Web site at [www.ecu.edu/crm](http://www.ecu.edu/crm).

### *Financial Support*

Graduate assistantships and out-of-state tuition remissions are available to highly qualified applicants during their first year. Students may also receive support as research assistants for faculty supported by grants and contracts or by seeking competitive fellowship support from agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Limited funds are available to support students' professional development, including workshop participation and travel to professional conferences.

### *Campus Visits and Interviews*

Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to visit the East Carolina University campus, meet faculty members and students in the coastal resources management program, and explore broad areas of mutual interest in the likely field of concentration prior to formal application. The CRM office will be pleased to schedule and host these visits.

### *Deadline*

January 15 is the deadline for application. New students are admitted only in the fall of each academic year.

### *Location of the University*

East Carolina University, a member of the sixteen-campus University of North Carolina system, enrolls nearly 23,000 students in a wide range of academic and professional degree programs. East Carolina is located in Greenville, the business, medical, and educational hub of eastern North Carolina. Greenville, a small city of about 60,000, is located ninety miles east of Raleigh, the state capital. It is within easy driving distance of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system, the state's extensive barrier island system (including the Outer Banks), and the full spectrum of pristine to highly developed coastal environments.

### *More Information*

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