Hydrologic Science and Engineering

Degrees Offered

- Master of Science (Hydrology), non-thesis
- Master of Science (Hydrology), thesis
- Doctor of Philosophy (Hydrology)

Program Description

Hydrologic Science and Engineering (HSE) is comprised of faculty from several different Mines departments and offers interdisciplinary graduate degrees in hydrology.

The program offers programs of study in fundamental hydrologic science and applied hydrology with engineering applications. Our program encompasses groundwater hydrology, surface-water hydrology, vadose-zone hydrology, watershed hydrology, contaminant transport and fate, contaminant remediation, hydrogeophysics, and water policy/law.

HSE requires a core study of formal graduate courses for all degrees. Programs of study are interdisciplinary in nature, and coursework is obtained from multiple departments at Mines and is approved for each student by the student’s advisor and thesis committee.

To achieve the Master of Science (MS) degree, students may elect the non-thesis option based exclusively upon coursework and an independent study project or a designated design course, or the Thesis option. The thesis option is comprised of coursework in combination with individual laboratory, modeling, and/or field research performed under the guidance of a faculty advisor and presented in a written thesis approved by the student’s committee.

To achieve the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree, students are expected to complete a combination of coursework and novel, original research, under the guidance of a faculty advisor and doctoral committee, which culminates in a significant scholarly contribution to a specialized field in hydrologic sciences or engineering. Full-time enrollment is expected and leads to the greatest success, although part-time enrollment may be allowed under special circumstances. All doctoral students must complete the full-time, on-campus residency requirements.

Currently, students will apply to the Hydrology program through the Graduate School and be assigned to the HSE participating department of the student's HSE advisor. Participating units include: Chemistry and Geochemistry, Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), Geology and Geological Engineering (GE), Geophysical Engineering, Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS), Mechanical Engineering (ME), Mining Engineering (MN), and Petroleum Engineering (PE).

For more information on program curriculum please refer to the HSE website at hydrology.mines.edu.

Program Requirements

**MS non-thesis**: 30 credits total, including a design course or independent study. (See a list of design courses below)

**MS thesis**: 30 credits total, consisting of 24 credits of coursework and 6 credits of thesis credit. Students must also write and orally defend a research thesis.

**PhD**: 72 total credits, consisting of coursework (at least 36 hours), and research (at least 24 hours). Students must also successfully complete qualifying examinations, write and defend a dissertation proposal, write and defend a doctoral dissertation, and are expected to submit the dissertation work for publication in scholarly journals.

Thesis and Dissertation Committee Requirements

Students must meet the general requirements listed in the graduate bulletin section *Graduate Degrees and Requirements*. In addition, the student’s advisor or co-advisor must be an HSE faculty member. For MS thesis students, at least two committee members must be members of the HSE faculty. For doctoral students, at least two faculty on the committee must be a member of the HSE faculty. For PhD committee the required at-large member must be from a Mines department outside the student’s home department, and where applicable, outside the students minor department.

Prerequisites

- Baccalaureate degree in a science or engineering discipline
- College calculus: two semesters required
- Differential equations: one semester required
- College physics: one semester required
- College chemistry: two semesters required
- College statistics: one semester required
- Fluid mechanics

Note that some prerequisites may be completed in the first few semesters of the graduate program if approved by the HSE director/program manager. Contact Rachel McDonald for questions at rmcdonald@mines.edu.

Mines’ Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Program

Students enrolled in Mines’ combined undergraduate/graduate program may double count up to 6 credits of graduate coursework to fulfill requirements of both their undergraduate and graduate degree programs. These courses must have been passed with B- or better, not be substitutes for required coursework, and meet all other university, department, and program requirements for graduate credit.

Students are advised to consult with their undergraduate and graduate advisors for appropriate courses to double count upon admission to the combined program.

Required Curriculum

Students will work with their academic advisors and graduate thesis committees to establish plans of study that best fit their individual interests and goals. Each student will develop and submit a plan of study to their advisor during the first semester of enrollment. Doctoral students may transfer in credits from an earned MS graduate program according to requirements listed in the Graduate Degrees and Requirements section of the graduate bulletin, and after approval by the student’s thesis committee.

Core Curriculum

Curriculum areas of emphasis consist of core courses, and electives. Core courses cover four areas of knowledge: Groundwater, Surface Water, Chemistry, and Contaminant Fate and Transport. Students can
elected to take 9 or 12 credits of core curriculum depending on selected option below. Courses that meet core requirements include the following:

**Option #1 (9 credit hrs.)**

- **GEGN566** GROUNDWATER ENGINEERING 3.0
- **GEGN582** INTEGRATED SURFACE WATER HYDROLOGY 3.0
- **CEEN/GEGN587** HYDROCHEMICAL AND TRANSPORT PROCESSES 3.0

**Option #2 (12 credit hrs.)**

- **GEGN566** GROUNDWATER ENGINEERING 3.0
- **GEGN582** INTEGRATED SURFACE WATER HYDROLOGY 3.0
- **CEEN550** PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHEMISTRY 3.0

AND Choose one of the following:

- **CEEN584** SUBSURFACE CONTAMINANT TRANSPORT 3.0
- **CEEN580** CHEMICAL FATE AND TRANSPORT IN THE ENVIRONMENT 3.0

Students who have completed coursework for a previous degree that satisfies one of these requirements can get core curriculum requirements waived with the appropriate Waiver form and approval of advisor.

In addition, a fluid mechanics class is required for students to complete the HSE degree programs. If a student has previously taken a fluid mechanics course (for example as part of an undergraduate degree) then this requirement is met; if a student has not previously taken a fluid mechanics course this requirement can be satisfied by taking: GEGN/CEEN 585 – Fluid Mechanics for Hydrology.

**Areas of Specialization**

Students may choose to complete an area of specialization within the MS in Hydrology degrees by taking additional defined courses. These areas of specialization are: Hydrogeophysics, Hydrobiogeochemistry, and Hydrology, Policy, and Management. The area of specialization will appear on the transcripts of students who register for and complete the required coursework. Courses required for these areas of specialization are:

**1. Hydrogeophysics:**

- **GPGN574** ADVANCED HYDROGEOPHYSICS 3.0
- **GPGN533** GEOPHYSICAL DATA INTEGRATION & GEOSTATISTICS 3.0
- **GPGN570** APPLICATIONS OF SATELLITE REMOTE SENSING 3.0
- or **GPGN520** ELECTRICAL AND ELECTROMAGNETIC EXPLORATION 3.0

**2. Hydrobiogeochemistry**

Students choose three of the following courses with at least one from each of microbiology-focused and geochemistry focused courses.

Students with a Hydrobiogeochemistry area of specialization are encouraged to enroll in CEEN550 and a separate Contaminant Fate and Transport course (CEEN580 or CEEN584) to satisfy the HSE core, leaving GEGN586 and CEEN551 as the geochemistry focused courses.

**Microbiology Focus:**

- **CEEN562** ENVIRONMENTAL GEOMICROBIOLOGY 3.0
- **CEEN560** MOLECULAR MICROBIAL ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT 3.0

**Geochemistry Focus:**

- **CEEN550** PRINCIPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHEMISTRY 3.0
- **GEGN586** NUMERICAL MODELING OF GEOCHEMICAL SYSTEMS 3.0
- **CEEN551** ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIC CHEMISTRY 3.0

**3. Hydrology, Policy, and Management**

Students pursuing the Hydrology, Policy, and Management specialty track will choose two of the following three courses focused on water policy and management.

- **EBGN537** ECONOMICS OF WATER 3.0
- **HASS588** GLOBAL WATER POLITICS AND POLICY 3.0
- **HASS584** US WATER POLITICS AND POLICY 3.0

In addition, students will choose a third course from a broader list that also includes courses in complementary areas of communication, economics, law, philosophy, and policy. Current course options are listed below. Because course options are continually expanding, additional complementary courses (beyond those listed here) may be approved on an ad hoc basis by the coordinator of the Hydrology, Policy, and Management track and the HSE program director in response to individual student requests.

- **EBGN537** ECONOMICS OF WATER 3.0
- **EBGN570** ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS 3.0
- **HASS521** ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY 3.0
- **HASS523** ADVANCED SCIENCE COMMUNICATION 3.0
- **HASS525** ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION 3.0
- **HASS560** GEOPOLITICS OF NATURAL RESOURCES 3.0
- **HASS565** SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY 3.0
- **HASS568** ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE 3.0
- **HASS588** GLOBAL WATER POLITICS AND POLICY 3.0
- **HASS584** US WATER POLITICS AND POLICY 3.0
- **HASS593** NATURAL RESOURCES & ENERGY POLICY: THEORIES AND PRACTICE 3.0
- **MNGN571** ENERGY, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND SOCIETY 3.0
- **PEGN530** ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND SUSTAINABILITY 3.0

A grade of B- or better is required in all core classes for graduation.

**Design Courses**

For non-thesis MS students, the following is a list of Design Courses that may be completed in lieu of an Independent Study:

- **CEEN515** HILLSLOPE HYDROLOGY AND STABILITY 3.0
- **CEEN581** WATERSHED SYSTEMS MODELING 3.0
- **CEEN575** HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE REMEDIATION 3.0
- **CEEN584** SUBSURFACE CONTAMINANT TRANSPORT 3.0
- **GEGN532** GEOLOGICAL DATA ANALYSIS 3.0
- **GEGN575** APPLICATIONS OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS 3.0
- **GEGN583** MATHEMATICAL MODELING OF GROUNDWATER SYSTEMS 3.0
- **GEGN584** FIELD METHODS IN HYDROLOGY 3.0
### Elective courses

Elective courses may be chosen from the approved list below or as approved by your advisor or thesis committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEGN586</td>
<td>NUMERICAL MODELING OF GEOCHEMICAL SYSTEMS</td>
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<td>CEEN511</td>
<td>UNSATURATED SOIL MECHANICS</td>
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<td>CEEN512</td>
<td>SOIL BEHAVIOR</td>
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<td>MOLECULAR MICROBIAL ECOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT</td>
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<td>GEOL540</td>
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<td>MATH530</td>
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<td>EBGN510</td>
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### Directors

Jonathan (Josh) Sharp, HSE Director, Professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering

David Benson, HSE Associate Director, Professor, Geology & Geological Engineering

### Department of Chemistry

James Ranville, Professor

Bettina Voelker, Professor

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Kamini Singha, Professor

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Wendy Zhou, Professor

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