

ENVIRONMENTAL CHEMISTRY

College of Natural Science and Mathematics
Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
907-474-5510
www.uaf.edu/chem/

MS, PhD Degrees

Minimum Requirements for Degrees: MS: 30 credits;
PhD: 32 credits

Environmental chemistry focuses on the chemical processes influencing the composition and chemical speciation of natural systems (air, water and soils), the chemical fate and mobility of contaminants in the environment, chemical processes that affect the toxicity and bioavailability of contaminants, and chemical aspects of contaminant remediation and pollution prevention. The common link is a focus on the underlying chemical structure, reactivity and mechanisms that dictate the extent and rates of environmentally important chemical reactions. Environmental chemistry is a challenging field, requiring core training in physical, analytical, organic and inorganic chemistry, and an understanding of how these disciplines can be applied to complex environmental systems. It also provides a quantitative and fundamental approach to understanding the processes that influence the quality of the environment.

The UAF Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry offers BS, MS and PhD degrees in environmental chemistry. The program provides education and research opportunities focused on the molecular scale aspects of environmental science. The program defines three tracks to meet a wide range of student interest: (i) atmospheric chemistry, (ii) aqueous/environmental geochemistry, and (iii) environmental toxicology and contaminant fate. Students may also design a custom focus area, subject to approval by their advisory committee.

The MS degree prepares students for careers in the environmental science and technology sector as specialists in the analysis and interpretation of environmental chemical data, and serves as preparation for more advanced studies in environmental chemistry or related disciplines. The master's thesis provides an opportunity to gain expertise in a particular sub-discipline and, more importantly, gain experience in research methods, presentation skills and critical thinking. The PhD provides advanced training with the expectation that PhD recipients will be acknowledged as experts in their particular topic of study. This is accomplished primarily through the PhD thesis, which is a body of independent research presenting new findings related to molecular processes in the environment. The PhD in environmental chemistry prepares students for careers in academia or the public and private research sectors. Graduate students in the environmental chemistry program are typically supported through teaching and research assistantships or fellowships.

MS Degree

1. Complete the following admission requirements
 - a. Submit GRE General Test scores
 - b. If English is not your native language, submit scores from both the Test of Spoken English and the Test of Written English, as well as TOEFL scores. Requests, including justification, for exceptions to this requirement should be made to the chair of the department.
2. Complete the general university requirements (page 202).
3. Complete the master's degree requirements (page 206).
4. Complete two of the following:

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|--|---|
| CHEM F605—Aquatic Chemistry | 3 |
| CHEM F606—Atmospheric Chemistry | 3 |
| CHEM F631—Environmental Fate and Transport | 3 |
| CHEM F655—Environmental Toxicology | 3 |
5. Complete two seminar courses

| | |
|--|---|
| CHEM F691—Research Presentation Techniques | 1 |
| CHEM F692—Seminar | 1 |
6. Complete approved electives*
7. Complete a thesis
8. Minimum credits required

PhD Degree

1. Complete the following admission requirements
 - a. Submit GRE General Test scores
 - b. If English is not your native language, submit scores from both the Test of Spoken English and the Test of Written English, as well as TOEFL scores. Requests, including justification, for exceptions to this requirement should be made to the chair of the department.
2. Complete the general university requirements (page 202).
3. Complete the PhD degree requirements (page 207).
4. Complete three of the following:

| | |
|--|---|
| CHEM F605—Aquatic Chemistry | 3 |
| CHEM F606—Atmospheric Chemistry | 3 |
| CHEM F631—Environmental Fate and Transport | 3 |
| CHEM F655—Environmental Toxicology | 3 |
5. Complete two seminar courses

| | |
|--|---|
| CHEM F691—Research Presentation Techniques | 1 |
| CHEM F692—Seminar | 1 |
6. Complete approved electives*
7. Complete a thesis
8. Minimum credits required

* *Approved electives (both MS and PhD) are specified by the student's committee. The following tracks are defined as a guide. Within these tracks students will be expected to complete as part of the core and electives:*

- i. *Atmospheric Chemistry: CHEM F601, CHEM F605, CHEM F606 and CHEM F631*
- ii. *Aqueous/Environmental Geochemistry: CHEM F605, CHEM F606 or CHEM F631, GEOS F618 and CHEM F609/GEOS F633.*
- iii. *Environmental Toxicology and Contaminant Fate: CHEM F605 or CHEM F606, CHEM F631 and CHEM F655*

A customized focus area may be developed based on an appropriate sequence of core and elective courses, subject to approval by the student's advisory committee.

See Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.
See Chemistry.