A Guide to Completing the Application for the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo
Master of Science in Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science

Program Purpose and Goals
The primary purpose of the MS in TCBES is to provide graduate training in conservation biology and environmental science to people with baccalaureate degrees and others currently working in the field. The program will utilize the extraordinary biological, physical and cultural complexity on the Island of Hawai‘i as a focus of investigation and study. The program will prepare students for technical positions and for entry into Ph.D. programs in related fields.

Program mission:
• Foster knowledge of theory and techniques in conservation biology and environmental sciences, including basic, applied, and socio-ecological research;
• Promote scholarly activities in marine and terrestrial environments that will enable participants to pursue careers in research and natural resource management.

The program has two tracks. In the Thesis Track, students conduct original research and write a research proposal and thesis. In the Internship Track, students pursue an array of courses and an internship that provides an immersion training experience. The intern will write a detailed proposal and work directly with agency personnel in a two-way obligation between TCBES and the organization.

Application Process
Applications will be examined beginning Dec. 1 for admission to the following Fall semester. After Dec. 1, applications will be accepted on a space available basis until May 1. Apply online at: http://hilo.hawaii.edu/admissions/Apply.php
The UH Hilo Graduate Division receives all supporting documents and maintains the applications through final notification. If you do not hear from us within 30 days of submission of your application, please contact the Graduate Division at 808-932-7926.
Applications that meet the admission criteria will be forwarded to the TCBES Admissions Committee for a comprehensive review and consideration for admission into the program. Admission decisions made by the committee will be forwarded to the Graduate Division which sends the final notification to the applicant.

Admission Status: The applicant’s admission status is valid only for the semester to which the applicant is accepted. Applications for students who do not register or who withdraw from the University are voided but retained for a period of two (2) years. Students may reapply for admission to the next year by submitting a new application and fee, and updated statement, resume and letters.

Criteria for Admission:
Acceptance is granted at the discretion of the Admissions Committee based on the six criteria listed below. An applicant must:
1) have earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution or from a nationally recognized foreign institution.
2) in her/his personal statement, state whether he/she is interested in Thesis Track or Internship Track. If Thesis Track, the applicant must list advisor(s) from the TCBES faculty who agrees to sponsor the application and to serve as primary advisor upon acceptance to the program. Internship Track students are not required to get sponsorship from an advisor.
3) have a minimum combined verbal and quantitative score of 290 on the General Graduate Record Exam (GRE).
4) have a grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 = A scale) or the equivalent in the last four semesters of approximately 60 semester credits of undergraduate and/or in all post-baccalaureate work.
5) submit three letters of recommendation from references who have observed or supervised the applicant’s performance and are able to comment on the quality of the applicant’s academic achievement, ability to pursue graduate study, and general character.
6) earn a score of 550 TOEFL (paper based), 213 (computer based) or 79 (internet based), or 6.0 IELTS (for students who have not attended an English language university, or for whom English is not the primary language).

Transfer of Credits: Requests for transfer of graduate credits must be made during the first semester in which the student is enrolled in the program. Only credit hours with a grade of B or better from accredited universities are transferable. Transfer credit hours must have been completed within five years preceding the date upon which the advanced degree is to be conferred by UH Hilo, and must not have been used to satisfy requirements for another degree. The TCBES program will decide which credits will be transferred.

MS TCBES Checklist
- UH Hilo Graduate application form
- Application fee, $50
- Personal statement of objectives
- Resume
- Three professional or academic letters of recommendation
- Official transcripts from all colleges or universities (must be received in a sealed envelope)
- Baccalaureate degree transcripts from international institutions must be submitted to a transcript evaluation service
- General Test, Graduate Record Exam (must be received directly from testing agency, or in a sealed envelope if submitted with your application); UH Hilo code: 4869
- Have received confirmation of TCBES faculty sponsorship if Thesis Track

For International applicants:
- Official TOEFL score report, if required
- International Graduate Student Supplemental Information Form

Priority deadline for receipt of all application materials in the Graduate Division:
December 1
Frequently Asked Questions

http://tcbes.uhh.hawaii.edu/

1. **Do I need to find a faculty sponsor?**
   If you are interested in **Thesis Track** then you are required to contact individual faculty members whose research interests are similar to your own and who agree to sponsor your application to the program. It is recommended that you begin faculty contact well before the application deadline. If you are interested in **Internship Track** then you are not required to have a sponsor.

2. **How do I find a faculty sponsor?**
   TCBES faculty information can be found within this application and on the TCBES Program website.

3. **How long does it take to complete the program?**
   The course work is designed to be completed in 3-4 semesters, with additional time needed for completing the thesis or internship.

4. **What are the entrance requirements?**
   See Checklist and Criteria for Admission.

5. **Do I have to take the GRE?**
   Yes, applicants are required to submit General GRE exam scores to UH-Hilo (UH Hilo code: 4869).

6. **Can I transfer credits?**
   Yes, up to 6 credits, subject to program approval.

7. **When will the program start?**
   Classes for new students begin in the fall of each year.

8. **How much will it cost to live in Hilo?**
   You should budget approximately $31,000 per year (residents of Hawai’i) and $38,500 (non-residents) for tuition, books, housing, food, and personal expenses.

9. **Is financial aid available?**
   Graduate assistantship positions may be available (contact Dr. Ostertag: ostertag@hawaii.edu). You may also contact faculty and participating agencies for financial assistance. Students interested in any type of financial aid should submitted the FAFSA; students who are residents may qualify for the $1,000 Graduate Opportunity Grant. Contact the UH-Hilo Financial Aid Office for more information (808-932-7449).

10. **Do I need to write a thesis?**
    Thesis Track requires course work and a thesis of original research. Internship Track requires course work, an internship, and research papers.

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**Total Credits Required:**

- (Thesis Track) = 30 credits (8 core + 16 electives + 6 thesis)
- (Internship Track) = 36 credits (14 core + 12 electives + 10 internship)

**Core Courses (8) credits required for all M.S. TCBES students:**
- CBES 600 Conservatn Biol & Environ Sci (3)
- CBES 601 CBES Field & Laboratory Method (3)
- CBES 602 Research Seminar in TCBES (1)
- CBES 603 Natural Resource Mgt Seminar (1)

**Core Courses required for Internship Track:**
- CBES 645 Social Science Research Methods for Environment and Conservation (3)
- CBES 689 Organizational Management and Logistics (3)
- CBES 690 Internship (10)

**Other Required Courses:**
- Thesis Track: CBES 700 (6)
- Internship Track: CBES 690 Internship (10)

**Elective Courses †:**
- Thesis Track: 16 elective credits of 600-level CBES courses.
- Internship Track: 12 elective credits of 600-level CBES courses.

† A maximum of 6 credits of 400-level courses may count toward these elective credits.

**Thesis and Internship Courses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>690</td>
<td>Internship (Plan B: 3 credits required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>700</td>
<td>1-6 Thesis Research (Plan A: 6 credits required)</td>
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Questions about the application process may be directed to hilograd@hawaii.edu, or call 808.932.7927
TCBES Faculty

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Revised 6/5/2018