

MIT/WHOI Joint Program in Oceanography and Applied Ocean Science and Engineering

The Joint Program of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology offers advanced degrees in oceanography and applied ocean science and engineering. Graduate study encompasses virtually all of the basic sciences as they apply to the marine environment: physics, chemistry, geology, geophysics, and biology. Students who choose applied ocean science and engineering may concentrate in the major fields (civil, environmental, mechanical, and electrical), or ocean engineering. More than 160 scientists/faculty from the two institutions participate in the program. There are currently 134 students enrolled in the five areas of study offered in the program: biological, chemical, and physical oceanography; marine geology and geophysics; and oceanographic engineering.

Since all the MIT faculty involved in the joint program are members of an academic department, their individual accomplishments and awards are reported through those departments. These include the departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering; Mechanical Engineering; Electrical Engineering and Computer Science; Biology; and Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences.

Merger of Ocean Engineering and Mechanical Engineering Departments

On December 2, 2004, the Executive Committee of the Corporation approved the merger of the departments of Ocean Engineering and Mechanical Engineering, effective January 1, 2005. The merger has been under study for more than two years.

The merged department will be called the Department of Mechanical Engineering; however, a Center for Ocean Engineering has been created within it, with Professor Michael Triantafyllou as director. The associate head of Mechanical Engineering, Professor Nicholas Patrikalakis, is also a member of the center.

The new merged department continues to maintain strong, visible programs in ocean engineering as well as an ongoing commitment to current and future students enrolled in the joint program.

External Review: Submission of Report and Response

The External Review Committee of the Joint Program met in June 2004 and was given the following mandate: to examine the content and quality of the educational and research programs; the opportunities for both disciplinary and interdisciplinary focus; optimal program size within the context of master's and doctoral degree offerings for the fields of oceanography and ocean engineering; student financial support; quality of teaching and advising; student life issues, including the climate for women and minorities; housing and transportation issues; and organization of the program, including institutional commitment, committee structure, and management by each institution and their interaction.

The Report of the External Review Committee of the Joint Program was submitted in November 2004 by Professor Ian Nicholas McCave, committee chair, to Professor Robert Brown and Dr. Robert Gagosian.

In May 2005, Professor Paola Rizzoli and Dr. John Farrington submitted the formal Response to the External Review Committee Report to Dr. Robert Gagosian and Professor Robert Brown. Copies of both reports are available upon request.

Paola Rizzoli, Director and Professor of Physical Oceanography

Ronni Schwartz, Administrator

More information about the Joint Program in Oceanography and Applied Ocean Science and Engineering can be found online at <http://web.mit.edu/mit-who/ww/>.