

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

The Joint Program of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) 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/ocean, and electrical engineering). More than 160 scientists/faculty from the two institutions participate in the joint program. There are currently 120 students enrolled in the five areas of study offered: biological, chemical, or physical oceanography; marine geology and geophysics; and oceanographic engineering.

Since all 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.

Joint Program 40th Anniversary Celebration

On September 25–26, 2008, the joint program formally celebrated the 40th anniversary of the signing of the memorandum of agreement between MIT and WHOI approving the creation of a graduate program in oceanography. The events began on September 25 with a luncheon in the Ting Foyer, followed by a symposium and reception in the Wong Auditorium. The symposium was moderated by professor Paola Rizzoli, MIT director of the joint program, and opened with a joint address by Dr. Susan Avery, director of WHOI, and Dr. Howard Johnson, who was the president of MIT in 1968 and one of the original signers of the agreement.

These opening remarks were followed by talks given by distinguished alumni on each of the five major areas of study within the joint program. Closing remarks were made by the Honorable Jay M. Cohen, an alumnus of the program who currently serves as undersecretary for science and technology in the US Department of Homeland Security.

On September 26, 2008, WHOI hosted an all-day alumni career panel and discussion. More than 250 alumni, faculty, scientists, students, and guests attended part or all of the 40th anniversary events.

External Review

An external review of the program was conducted June 10–12, 2009. The members of the External Review Committee were asked to review the joint program in general and to address the following points in particular:

- Content, breadth and quality of the curriculum
- Quality of the student research program and its products
- Opportunity for student interdisciplinary research across the fields of ocean science
- Preparation of joint program students for post-graduation opportunities, including adequacy of student mentoring activities
- Size of the program in relation to other national and international master's and PhD programs in ocean science
- Quality of teaching and advising
- Adequacy of student financial support
- Quality of student life, including housing, logistical support, and the climate for women, international students, and minorities
- Health of the MIT and WHOI partnership, and opportunities for growth (e.g., the MIT Environment Initiative)
- Management of the program, including institutional commitments, committee structure, and contribution of each institution

The committee's report is due by the end of the summer and the findings will be discussed in next year's Report to the President.

Paola Rizzoli
Director
Professor of Physical Oceanography

Ronni Schwartz
Administrator

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