BIOLOGICAL OCEANOGRAPHY
GRADUATE PROGRAM
PRE-ADMISSION INFORMATION SESSION
November 15, 2023
By the Numbers

350
Graduate students

800
Undergraduates enrolled in Scripps majors

4,700
Undergraduate students enrolled in Scripps courses
### Education Organization: 1 Department, 3 Programs, 8 Curricular Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Curricular Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scripps Institution of Oceanography</td>
<td>Ocean Biosciences (OBP)</td>
<td>Marine Biology (MB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Biological Oceanography (BO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geosciences of the Earth, Oceans, &amp; Planets</td>
<td>Marine Chemistry &amp; Geochemistry (MCG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(GEO)</td>
<td>Geoscience (GS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geophysics (GP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Climate-Ocean-Atmosphere (COAP)</td>
<td>Climate Science (CS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Oceanography (PO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Applied Ocean Science (AOS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOBAL REACH

Investigations and impact on every continent and in every ocean.

Scripps research vessel tracklines, 1952-2016.
DIVERSE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS FOR ANSWERING THEM

- Primary and secondary productivity and nutrient regeneration
- Community ecology of benthic and pelagic organisms
- Food web structure and trophic ecology
- Population dynamics, habitat changes and disruptions
- Microbial ecology and biogeochemical cycling
- Fishery biology and management
- Marine mammal ecology and communication
- Biogeography
- Deep sea biology
- Behavior
- Climate change impacts
APPLYING TO THE BO PROGRAM – APPLICATION

APPLICATION DEADLINE DEC 6
Requirements listed on website
• Letters of Rec
• Statement of Purpose
• Unofficial Academic Transcripts

Highly recommended !
• Additional experiences

Not required
• GRE
APPLYING TO THE BO PROGRAM – EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Preparation relative to opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly potential relative to opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential relative to opportunities; &quot;Distance Traveled&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment with Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic Self-Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference for long-term goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*weighting is subject to change*
Personal Statement & Additional Experiences

Evaluation Criteria
• Potential relative to opportunities
• Academic Preparation
• Scholarly Potential
• Contributions to DEI
• Alignment with Program
• Realistic Self-Appraisal
• Long-term Goals

Other
• Leadership
• Research
• Community Involvement
• Personal/Professional Ethics
• Social Justice
• Overcoming Adversity
Faculty have differing priorities

- Some prioritize scholarly potential
  - Research experience
  - Papers and presentations
- Others care about transcripts
  - Grades in STEM classes
  - Courses taken
- If you are weak in one area, emphasize the strong areas
Faculty have differing priorities

### ALL WANT A GOOD STUDENT

- Give examples of how/why you would be a successful graduate student
  - Ambition
  - Creativity
  - Goal-oriented
  - Independence
  - Overcome obstacles
  - Persistence
  - Time management skills

Credit: Erik Jepsen
ADMISSION TO THE BO PROGRAM – DIRECT ADMIT

- BO operates on a “Direct Admit” process
  - Exceptional applications are promoted for admission with competitive fellowships and TA support

- The Admissions Committee evaluates ALL applications with the rubric

- Faculty select students they want to admit
  - Guidance from the admissions committee
  - Faculty or the student required to have funding at time of admission
  - Once admitted, guaranteed 5 yr of funding, though source will vary (fellowship, GSR, TAship)

- Not a “Cluster Admission” process where a group of students are admitted en masse based on evaluation criteria
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS!

- Reach out to prospective faculty to introduce yourself ASAP
- Ask faculty if they are taking students next year
  - Lack of funding often prevents accepting students
- Mention your specific interests and experience
- Read the lab’s papers and mention what draws you to that lab
- Ask if you can set up a one-on-one meeting via Zoom or in-person for local applicants
ADMISSION TO THE BO PROGRAM – DIRECT ADMIT

APPLY FOR FELLOWSHIPS!

Examples

- NSF GRFP
- California Sea Grant
- Davidson Fellowship
- Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship
- Ford Foundation Diversity Scholarship
- NASA FINESST
- National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowship

Exhaustive list at:
https://scripps.ucsd.edu/doctrinal/cost-funding
ADMISSION TO THE BO PROGRAM – TIMELINE

• Dec: Applications are reviewed by curricular group faculty
• Late Jan/Early Feb: Admission offers start to be sent
• Mid/Late Feb: SIO Open House
  • travel to SIO
  • PhD students only
• Some applicants will be put on “hold list”
  • Not accepted, not denied
• April 15, 2024: Student decision deadline

Credit: Erik Jepsen
Ways to beef up your application

• Gain more research experience
• Take more STEM classes
• Apply for fellowships
• Ask to join the lab meetings of a prospective faculty advisor
Ways to beef up your application

- Use the SIO Graduate Application Assistance Program
- All students are welcome to apply
- Student strongly encouraged:
  - Historically or currently underrepresented or underserved in ocean sciences
  - Attend minority-serving institutions (HBCUs, TCUs, and/or HSIs)

https://scripps.ucsd.edu/diversity/access-success/graduate-application-assistance-programs
QUESTIONS FROM THE ONLINE FORM - FACULTY

• How do I get into contact with professors?
  - Go to their pages on the SIO website and find their email

• How do I know which advisors are accepting PhD students?
  - Ask them

• Do I need to have support from a faculty advisor to be successful in my application? & Do I need to have an advisor agree to work with me before applying?
  - Theoretically, no
  - Most cases, yes
  - Need a faculty advocate
    • Helps to be in contact with faculty before applying
    • Helps to have a strong application and to apply for external funding
QUESTIONS FROM THE ONLINE FORM - COURSES

• For the required courses list, are all the courses required or is the sheet simply a space to list the courses taken during undergraduate years and the grades received?
  • No, they are not all required. Fill out what you have taken

• Is it possible to do undergraduate classes alongside the PhD program to meet the prerequisites? Is there a post-baccalaureate program?
  • No, there is no post-baccalaureate program through SIO
    • There is one through UCSD’s Extended Studies; you will not be enrolled as an SIO grad student
  • It is possible to take undergraduate courses, but don’t plan on it for meeting the requirements

• Do I need to have a marine science degree?
  • No, we want students with a scientific and quantitative background
  • We will train you to be biological oceanographers
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

OTHER QUESTIONS?