

2023 Coastal Science & Policy Program Applicant Instructions

[Contact the program](#)

About the Program: For detailed information about the Coastal Science & Policy program, see <https://csp.ucsc.edu/program> and <https://csp.ucsc.edu/prospective-students/>

Required Application Materials Include

- Résumé
- 2 Writing Samples or Excerpts (between 1-5 pages in length)
- Statement of Purpose
- Personal History Statement
- College Transcripts
- Letters of Recommendation

General test GRE scores are NOT required

Statement of Purpose Instructions (Max 2 Pages)

Page 1:

- What coastal science and policy issue do you most want to be addressing in five years and why does it need to be addressed? (We want to read about the issue -- challenge or opportunity -- of greatest interest to you, e.g., Coastal Resilience and Climate Change; Conservation; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; Innovation for Coastal Solutions, etc.)
- Explain how you could contribute to addressing this need or furthering a solution through your capstone project. If you have a specific project idea for your capstone, please describe the idea and potential practitioner partners you could collaborate with to execute the project. Note: students use a summer placement at the start of year 2 to begin their capstone project or enhance specific skills that they will apply in the capstone project; and focus the entire second academic year on the capstone project working closely with the practitioner partner outside of academia.

Page 2:

- How do you plan to use your education and capstone experience in the Coastal Science and Policy program to become a leader in advancing real-world solutions in coastal sustainability after graduation, particularly for the issue that you identified for a capstone project? We wish to understand your vision for your leadership role, the type of impact you hope to have, and the type of professional position you might pursue.

- Why are you specifically interested in this Program and how will it help you further your career goals for leadership in your issue area of interest?
- Why do you feel you are an excellent candidate for one of 10-12 individuals accepted to the program each year? What might you contribute to the growing network of program alums and participants?

Personal History Statement Instructions (Max 2 Pages)

The Coastal Science and Policy program values diversity and inclusion of diverse perspectives in each of our cohorts. Use the personal history statement to describe why the capstone focal issue(s) described in your statement of purpose matters to you personally, to whom your work is important, and how your background and personal experiences, combined with the coastal science and policy curriculum, will position you to be an effective leader on feasible solutions for coastal science and policy issues. In your Personal History Statement please:

- Summarize your current academic and non-academic experience as it pertains to coastal science and policy.
- In what ways have you taken a leadership role in addressing a challenge or opportunity in coastal science and policy? Applicants should include specific examples of how you have been a leader or specifically contributed to solving (or starting to solve) an environmental problem or pursuing a positive environmental opportunity. If you have limited leadership experience, you may describe the impact you hope to have. You may also describe any personal and professional challenges you have overcome to achieve your goals.
- How has your background, personal experience and combined work experience informed your decision to pursue a graduate degree in coastal science and policy?
- In responding, please include any educational, familial, cultural, economic, or social experiences, challenges, or opportunities relevant to how you might contribute to social or cultural diversity within the field of coastal science and policy (from watersheds to the open ocean); and/or how you might serve underrepresented segments of society with your degree.

(Optional) Statement of Financial Need Instructions:

- This optional Statement of Financial Need will help the Coastal Science and Policy Program determine your eligibility for fellowship support and allocation, if any, that can be provided to you for your graduate education at UC Santa Cruz.
- The Statement of Financial Need should not exceed one page and should fully explain, in your own words, your need for financial assistance.
- Please also address personal resources and other fellowships or grant opportunities that you will pursue to help cover your graduate education expenses.

- The CSP program assists each student to seek external support for part or all of their program. If you are accepted into the program, we will work with you to identify potential funding opportunities. We expect each student to actively seek external support for their degree or capstone work.

Letters of Reference Instructions:

The Coastal Science & Policy Program is interested in the referee's professional assessment of the candidate.

Referees should submit their letter in advance of the application deadline to ensure that the prospective student's application can be evaluated in full. Please review the program website [here](#) to gain a stronger understanding about the program.

Recommendation letters should be limited to no more than two pages and should address the following questions:

1. How long, and in what capacity, have you known the candidate?
2. What is the candidate's capacity for leadership, in terms of their ability to influence and organize others, achieve positive outcomes, and commitment to their self-development as a leader?
3. How will the candidate's proficiency from their prior education and/or work experience position them to succeed in the Coastal Science and Policy program and to contribute to solving real-world coastal sustainability problems (from land to the sea), especially in the near-term?
4. What have you observed about the candidate's collaboration, engagement and/or communication skills?
5. What other characteristics make this candidate stand out for you in terms of their leadership, scientific or policy ability or prior experience?

Where possible, referees should cite specific examples to highlight their personal experience with the candidate. The letter will help the program better understand the prospective student's strengths and areas of growth.

If a referee is having trouble submitting their recommendation or will not be able to submit by the application deadline, please contact us by email:

- For program-specific questions contact csp@ucsc.edu for help.
- For technical assistance with the online application portal email gradapphelp@ucsc.edu or call: (831) 459-2281