



**Press Release**

**Thursday, May 31, 2012**

## **UH Board of Regents approve Marine Biology graduate program**

Honolulu, HI – The University of Hawaii (UH) Board of Regents approved, at its meeting last week, the establishment of the first graduate degree program in Marine Biology in Hawai'i. The Marine Biology PhD and Master of Science Program will be jointly administered by the College of Natural Sciences (CNS) and the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology (SOEST) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Strongly supported by Deans Ditto and Taylor, the graduate program in Marine Biology will train future leaders in the marine biological sciences. These include fisheries, coral reef biology, marine ecology and evolutionary genetics, marine biosensory and physiological processes, and marine resources management as they relate to tropical marine life and systems.

The program addresses state and national workforce needs, anticipating the demand for scientifically trained leaders who can identify, investigate, and solve problems related to ocean and coastal resources. Specifically, the program will provide advanced professional training in Hawai'i and help to meet the need for technically trained scientists, policy-makers, and mid-level managers in both the public and private sectors. Additionally, the program will prepare future college-level faculty for entry into the rapidly expanding field of marine ecosystem research.

There has been a consistently high demand by incoming graduate students for training in marine biology. Fortunately, UHM is uniquely positioned to excel in offering a graduate program in Marine Biology. In addition to an abundance of research opportunities and infrastructure, UHM is situated in the Hawaiian Archipelago, which contains the largest coral reef habitats in the United States and one of the largest marine refuges in the world. The coastal and open waters surrounding the archipelago provide a natural laboratory for the study of marine ecosystems, marine geochemical processes, reef and oceanic fisheries, and human-marine interactions.

Previously, the only official academic opportunity in this field at UHM is a specialization in marine biology offered as a supplement to a graduate degree in Microbiology, Oceanography, Botany, or Zoology.



Two students from the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology at UH work on an ecological acoustic recorder that has been monitoring ocean sound. Image courtesy of SOEST/UHM.

The Marine Biology program will have provisional status until a required review is conducted during the 2017 - 2018 academic year.

**SOEST Media Contact:** Marcie Grabowski, (808) 956-3151, [mworkman@hawaii.edu](mailto:mworkman@hawaii.edu)

**CNS Media Contact:** Tim Tricas, Professor, (808) 956-8677 or (808) 236-7495, [tricas@hawaii.edu](mailto:tricas@hawaii.edu)

---

The School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa was established by the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i in 1988 in recognition of the need to realign and further strengthen the excellent education and research resources available within the University. SOEST brings together four academic departments, three research institutes, several federal cooperative programs, and support facilities of the highest quality in the nation to meet challenges in the ocean, earth and planetary sciences and technologies.

[www.soest.hawaii.edu](http://www.soest.hawaii.edu)