

# **Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Student Handbook**

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Department of Crop and Soil Sciences  
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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences (CSS) at Washington State University! We are proud to offer world-class MS and PhD degrees in both Crop Science and Soil Science, with the ability to conduct graduate research in a variety of specialized areas within each discipline.

The Department of Crop and Soil Sciences offers programs in the broad area of crop science, including plant breeding and genetics, crop and seed production, turf management, weed science, plant physiology, cereal chemistry, and plant biotechnology; and soil science, including soil fertility and plant nutrition, soil physics, soil chemistry, soil microbiology, soil genesis morphology and classification, organic and sustainable agriculture, and remote sensing technology including GIS, GPS, and soil mapping. Programs are designed to discover and develop principles of crop and soil sciences and to apply these principles to the development of new crop varieties and new crop, soil and water management practices in agricultural, urban, and natural environments.

Our goal is to train tomorrow's leaders, scientists and educators to make valuable and lasting contributions in their chosen field or endeavor. To achieve this goal, CSS provides students the opportunity to develop in-depth knowledge in their field, to develop critical thinking skills and to conduct original, creative, cutting-edge research. CSS students have opportunities to teach in the classroom and in outreach programs. Students also have the opportunity to develop a breadth of knowledge across the varied CSS disciplines and beyond by interacting with colleagues and faculty working in research areas outside of their own.

We have a long-standing commitment to financially supporting our CSS graduate students with a combination of funds from Washington State and from various private and governmental external grants. Since the availability of these funds fluctuates from year to year, we cannot guarantee support for all students throughout their entire programs. Nevertheless, we have an outstanding and consistent track-record of fully supporting our productive and progressive students from the day they start to the day they complete their degree. Graduate students on formal appointment and receiving a stipend are considered full-time graduate assistants in the department. These appointments represent an agreement between the student and the department with each party having defined responsibilities. Academic responsibilities are defined in this handbook. Your advisor and committee define your research responsibilities. Being a graduate student is more than a full time endeavor and requires your full attention and effort to succeed. Employment in addition to an assistantship is not permitted. Students generally devote half of their time to class studies and half to their research under the guidance of a major professor. Students are expected to complete their research project and thesis prior to graduation. Publication of the research is an expected outcome of graduate research.

Most agree that the time they spent in graduate school was some of the most challenging and rewarding in their life. Immerse yourself in the experience and take full advantage of the many social and professional opportunities coming your way. You will make many new and lasting friends from around the U.S. and world. Your time here will be filled with personal and professional growth, change, and accomplishment. At times you may want to give up. Don't. The CSS faculty and staff are dedicated to enriching your graduate experience and ensuring that it is World Class. We wish you every success in your program and your subsequent endeavors in crop and soil science-related professions.

Jim Harsh  
Chair, Department of Crop and Soil Sciences

## INTRODUCTION

Policies and procedures regarding graduate education are set at three levels--- the university, college, and department. The WSU Graduate Catalog and the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures contain most of the general policies on admissions and programs. Please refer to these websites for current information. This handbook addresses departmental policies and procedures in addition to the aforementioned. Failure to follow these policies and observe the degree requirements inevitably results in complications and could delay or jeopardize completion of your degree. Please read this handbook carefully and keep refer it throughout your program of study here.

The graduation requirements of the Graduate School, which must be met for completion of a graduate degree program, are those published in the Policies and Procedures of the Graduate School in effect at the time of the student's initial admission as a regular or provisional student. Departmental requirements are those in effect at the time the student files a program of study.

## STATEMENT OF ETHICS

The CSS faculty and staff are committed to the basic values of:

Accountability  
Integrity  
Positive Attitude  
Respect  
Honesty  
Passion  
Quality  
Work Ethic

By upholding these values we strive for our students to develop scientific and professional values of their own. We highly encourage our students to reflect on and consider the following guiding principles:

1. Uphold the highest standards of scientific investigation and professional comporment, and an uncompromising commitment to the advancement of knowledge.
2. Honor the rights and accomplishments of others and properly credit the work and ideas of others.
3. Strive to avoid conflicts of interest.
4. Demonstrate social responsibility in scientific and professional practice, by considering whom their scientific and professional activities benefit, and whom they neglect.
5. Provide honest and impartial advice on subjects about which they are informed and qualified.
6. As mentors of the next generation of scientific and professional leaders, strive to instill these ethical standards in students at all educational levels.

Adopted by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA

## **MISSION, OBJECTIVES, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Graduate Program in CSS is to provide fundamental training in basic and applied plant and soil sciences. Upon completion of their graduate program, students in CSS will be able to formulate, design, and implement research, evaluate and interpret data objectively, and communicate results of their work effectively in oral and written forms.

### **Objectives**

1. Develop effective programs for students that allow them to become well educated and highly skilled individuals with the potential to be national and international leaders;
2. Conduct scientific research on globally relevant problems in crop and soil sciences and contribute this knowledge to their discipline;
3. Enhance the visibility and impact of graduate programs in crop and soil sciences;
4. Place students in lead academic, research, and industry positions.

### **Learning Outcomes**

1. Knowledge of field. Understands the breadth and depth of knowledge associated with their discipline;
2. Scientific reasoning. Designs, conducts, analyzes, and interprets research effectively on important problems in their discipline;
3. Communication. Communicates effectively to a diverse group of people using appropriate traditional and emerging technological media;
4. Original contribution. Makes an original contribution to their discipline.

## **GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

### **Graduate Program Bylaws**

The Department of Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Programs are governed by official bylaws, approved by the Graduate Faculty in Crop and Soil Sciences, The Graduate School, and the WSU Faculty Senate. The Department of Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Program Bylaws define the qualifications for membership for the Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Faculty, administration of the Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Programs, composition of graduate student faculty advisory committees, and participation of Crop and Soil Science graduate students in the administration of the Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Programs.

The Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Programs are administered by the Graduate Program Director who is also the Department Chair. Duties of the Department Chair related to the Graduate Programs in CSS are to provide overall leadership, development and implement policies, represent the interests of the Graduate Program to the campus and University administrators, be responsible for coordinating all Graduate Program administrative matters within the Graduate School, manage the departmental resources for graduate student support in CSS, coordinate CSS graduate course teaching assignments, and appoint a CSS Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee coordinates and advises the Department Chair on the Crop and Soil Sciences Graduate Programs. Currently the committee is composed of the Crop Science and Soil Science Graduate Coordinators.

Areas in which the CSS Graduate Committee assists and advises the Chair include:

- Review, develop and update long-range goals for the CSS graduate programs and plans for their attainment. These ideas shall be presented at least once annually to a meeting of all faculty.
- Serve as a sounding board for new ideas, changes, etc., in academic or administrative issues.
- Provide guidance on administration of the CSS Graduate Programs.
- Lead the assessment process for the CSS graduate programs.
- Coordinate all activities related to recruitment of CSS graduate students.
- Develop and maintain recruiting materials, including web materials, as required.
- Review all student applications and, in conjunction with the Department Chair after consultation with appropriate CSS Graduate Faculty, determine the appropriate disposition of applications (acceptance or rejection) in a timely manner.
- Make recommendations regarding the use of departmental resources for providing financial support to graduate students, including assistantships, scholarships and awards.
- Regularly (at least annually) review the CSS graduate curriculum.
- Make recommendations to CSS Graduate Faculty regarding curricular revision. Such recommendations are forwarded to the Department Chair to be presented to the Graduate Faculty for approval by majority vote.
- Prepare drafts of course or curricular change forms for revision and submission by the CSS Department Chair.
- With approval by the CSS Department Chair, other ad hoc committees may be appointed as needed. Changes to the existing Graduate Committee responsibilities must be approved by amendment of bylaws.

#### **Department Chair**

Dr. Jim Harsh, [harsh@wsu.edu](mailto:harsh@wsu.edu)

#### **Graduate Coordinators**

##### ***Crop Science***

Dr. Kim Campbell, 379 Johnson Hall, 335-0582, [kgcamp@wsu.edu](mailto:kgcamp@wsu.edu)

Dr. Ian Burke, 171 Johnson Hall, 3352858, [icburke@wsu.edu](mailto:icburke@wsu.edu)

##### ***Soil Science***

Dr. Markus Flury, R&E Center Puyallup, 253-445-4522, [flury@wsu.edu](mailto:flury@wsu.edu)

##### ***Academic Coordinator / Johnson Hall Graduate Center (JHGC)***

Deb Marsh, 335-2615, [marshdj@wsu.edu](mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu)

Lisa Lujan, 335-9542, [llujan@wsu.edu](mailto:llujan@wsu.edu)

The academic coordinators are responsible for coordinating graduate admissions, student appointments, initial student orientation, graduate student records, forms processing, preliminary and final exam scheduling, as well as curriculum issues such as the catalog and time schedule. The JHGC is your first point of contact upon arrival, and should be your first point of contact thereafter regarding academic policies and procedures.

## ***Graduate Student Representatives***

In addition to the major advisor and the Graduate Coordinator, CSS students are represented by at least one, but no more than two, graduate students. The graduate student representative acts as a liaison with the faculty and attends all faculty meetings except those involving personal matters. He/she will communicate student's suggestions to the faculty and will serve as their advocate. These representatives are elected by the graduate students and are the representatives for one academic year.

## **CSS Statewide Resources**

Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, WSU-Pullman <http://css.wsu.edu>  
WSU Puyallup Research and Extension Center <http://www.puyallup.wsu.edu/>  
WSU Prosser Research and Extension Center <http://www.prosser.wsu.edu>  
WSU Mt. Vernon Research and Extension Center <http://mtvernon.wsu.edu/>  
WSU Wenatchee Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center <http://www.tfrec.wsu.edu/>

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Keys and Card Access**

To obtain keys for Johnson Hall, PBS I, your office, labs, greenhouses, etc., see the Office Staff in Johnson Hall 115. There is no initial charge for the keys, however, in the event that they are lost or the student leaves the University without returning them, the student will be billed a \$3.00 replacement fee per key. If the keys are not returned transcripts may be held by the Registrar's Office. Security is the responsibility of everyone, so please assume responsibility for locking your office and lab doors after regular hours. Access to Vogel and the Plant Growth Facility is made with your WSU Cougar Card. Coordinate this access with your thesis or dissertation advisor.

### **Offices and Desks**

The Department of Crop and Soil Sciences will provide office space and desks for students on regular appointments. Office space is limited and you may have to wait for an opening. Contact the Academic Coordinator for a desk and space assignment.

### **Telephone**

WSU telephones are available for local calls. Most graduate student offices have telephones or one can be found nearby. Students should consult their advisor or main office regarding authorization codes for long distance calls. In most cases, phones are restricted and an authorization code is required.

### **Email and List Serves**

Students must obtain a WSU [network ID](#) and email address. Students must regularly check their WSU email accounts which is the primary communication tool from all points at WSU. This address will also be included in the CSS graduate student list serve. [Additional list serves](#) are described on our website.

### **Mail**

Graduate students share mailboxes in Johnson Hall 115, marked A-Z. Please check this box regularly. Mail sent and received at the university should be official correspondence only. Personal mail should be sent to and from your private residence. Business correspondence can be left in the Main Office for



mailing. Letters and packages should not be stamped, and must have the correct departmental return address:

Department of Crop and Soil Sciences  
Washington State University  
PO Box 646420  
Pullman, WA 99164-6420

### **Photocopying**

The copy machine in the Main Office is to be used only for copying materials that are clearly related to a faculty research project, or to copy course materials for the course in which the student is a TA. Graduate students may not use the copy machine to copy any personal material such as classroom notes, term papers, books, theses, etc. When in doubt, consult your advisor. Copy machines available for personal use on campus are located at the at Cougar Copies in the CUB.

### **Purchasing**

No student purchases can be made without approval from their advisor. Most research supervisors maintain "blanket" purchase orders at WSU facilities (Central Stores, Chemical Stores, Surplus Stores, Technical Stores, etc.) and service centers (Physical Plant, Technical Services, etc.). To purchase supplies, a budget number must be obtained from your supervisor. If unforeseen needs arise in the field, contact your advisor and/or the main office for authorization of an emergency purchase order. Students will not receive reimbursement for items purchased from outside vendors without advance authorization.

### **Greenhouses and Growth Chambers**

The Agricultural Research Center operates the [Plant Growth Facility](#), a modern greenhouse for research on wheat and legumes, and other greenhouses along Grimes Way. Growth chambers are located in both sets of the greenhouses. To schedule greenhouse and growth chamber space, contact the greenhouse supervisor Dan Dreesmann [dreesmann@wsu.edu](mailto:dreesmann@wsu.edu), (509)-335-5824. Greenhouse policies and regulations can be found there, along with the space request form. Greenhouse and growth chamber space is subject to charge and must be coordinated with the thesis or dissertation advisor. All people who use the greenhouses must take a Worker Protection Training course (about 1 hour) that is offered periodically by the greenhouse crew.

### **Safety**

Safety at WSU is regulated by the [Washington State Department of Labor and Industries](#) and the US [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) (OSHA), through [WSU Occupational Health and Safety](#). A safe and healthy working environment at WSU is to be maintained at all times.

It is the responsibility of each graduate student to become familiar with safety policies and to follow safe procedures. Departmental policies and procedures regarding safety are detailed in the WSU Safety Policies and Procedures Manual (SPPM) available at the [Office of Procedures, Records and Forms](#), while policies and procedures specific to individual labs are detailed in the Laboratory Safety Manual located in each lab. Information regarding physical and health hazards, entry routes, permissible exposure limits and precautions or controls for safe use, including emergency first aid procedures, and the name, address and telephone number of the chemical manufacturer or supplier for all chemicals is available on [Material Safety Data Sheets](#) (MSDS) located in the individual labs in which the chemicals are used. [Environmental Health and Safety](#) (EH&S) is also responsible for laboratory and workplace safety, public health and environmental issues, hazardous materials and wastes (except radioactive materials), and training. All disposals of hazardous chemical wastes must be made through EH&S's [Environmental Services](#).

The [CSS Department Safety](#) Committee is a resource for all Pullman departmental safety-related issues, except for radioisotope use, which is handled by the WSU [Radiation Safety Office](#). Students using radioactive materials, must complete online [Radiation Safety Training](#) prior to their use. Greenhouse users on the Pullman campus must attend [Worker Protection Standard Training](#). This training is offered each semester by the CAHNRS Plant Growth Facility Manager, Dan Dreesmann, [dreesmann@wsu.edu](mailto:dreesmann@wsu.edu), 509- 335-5824. Students located at branch campuses or Research and Extension Centers should consult the safety committee and specific safety requirements at those locations. Many departmental employees have First Aid training. American Red Cross First Aid and CPR/AED classes are available to all graduate students through WSU University Recreation. Report all accidents and injuries, however minor, to the CSS administrative office (Johnson Hall 115 in Pullman) and complete an electronic [accident/illness Incident Report Form](#).

### **Staff Assistance**

The Main Office will not type personal letters, class reports or similar materials for students. Typing of your thesis or dissertation is considered personal work. All requests for staff assistance should be coordinated with your thesis/dissertation advisor.

### **Thesis Library**

CSS maintains a thesis/dissertation library for graduates in Crops, Soils, and the former Agronomy degree, and is currently located in Johnson Hall 202. Please be sure to use the checkout card provided in the volume and leave it with the CSS Main Office in Johnson Hall 115.

### **Travel**

For liability and reimbursement purposes, all students must complete a Travel Authority form for any trip they take that is outside of Pullman (or any other station for off-campus students). This and other forms are available in the Johnson Hall Business Center. The form must be submitted, signed by the department chair, and initialed by your advisor at least 21 days before a trip. In some circumstances, travel advances may be obtained by submitting a request at least four weeks before the trip. Reimbursement for travel expenses is made by completing and submitting a Travel Expense Voucher within one week upon return.

Students are strongly urged to attend professional meetings; however, the department often does not have funds to pay travel expenses of students on appointment. Advisors may use grant or project monies to pay partial travel expenses for graduate students attending meetings. The Graduate School does disburse some grant-in-aid travel funds, which can be used for travel to professional meetings. Application forms for student travel grants may be obtained from the [Graduate School](#). The Crop and Soil Sciences Department also has the O.A. Vogel Washington State Crop Improvement Association Travel and Education Grant, as well as the Harry E. Goldsworthy Fund that can be used for travel. Check with the Academic Coordinator about the availability of these departmental awards. It is advisable to apply for a travel grant if you are presenting a quality paper at a professional meeting. In addition, space may be available in University vehicles or some faculty members may share travel expenses.

The department owns several vehicles available for department business. They are intended only to provide low-cost transportation to local sites and businesses. Vehicles are checked out in the main office, and specific policies are available at the front desk.

### **Checkout/Exit**

Before departure from CSS, students must leave a forwarding address with the Academic Coordinator, schedule an exit interview with the Department Chair, return all keys to the main office, and consult with the advisor about cleaning up samples, chemicals, etc., from the student's research and office space.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **GRE Requirement for Students admitted to the Graduate Programs**

All applicants to the Soil Science graduate program need to submit GRE scores. The submitted scores need to be less than 5 years old. Any exception to this policy must be approved by a majority of the soils faculty. Submission of GRE scores is not required but is highly recommended for the Crops graduate program in order to qualify for competitive fellowships and scholarships.

### **Degree Options**

#### ***Master of Science (MS) Thesis Option***

Because research is an integral part of science, most students complete the thesis degree program. The thesis describes a research project conducted by the student. The thesis typically has three sections: a background or literature review that sets the stage for the research; a section with one or more chapters describing the actual research and containing data and analysis; and a general conclusion. The thesis should be formatted in a style that is consistent throughout. The final exam is in two parts. The first is a seminar presenting the results of research project. This is a public presentation. The second part is an oral exam that focuses on defense of the research project.

#### ***Master of Science (MS) Non-Thesis Option***

In a few instances, students may wish to obtain advanced knowledge but do not want to write a traditional research thesis. Such students may elect the non-thesis option. This option must be chosen within the first semester following enrollment. Students in this option are required to take considerably more coursework than is required of students in the thesis option. Students in the non-thesis option must complete a paper or project in lieu of the thesis. The final oral exam will focus more on broad knowledge and less on project defense than would an exam for the thesis option. More details are provided in the 'Final Exam' section of this handbook.

#### ***Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)***

The PhD degree is awarded in recognition of excellence in scholarship and for an original contribution to the advancement of science. The degree is awarded for originality and creative scholarship rather than for an accumulation of academic credits.

The PhD program is separated into the "initial" period preceding the preliminary examination and the "candidate" period following the preliminary examination. During the initial period, the student acquires knowledge and skills needed for his/her research program and most of the academic program is completed. The preliminary exam should be completed no later than the fifth semester into the PhD degree program. After passing the preliminary examination, the candidate concentrates on research and preparation of the dissertation. During the latter period the candidate demonstrates his/her ability to do original research. The final oral examination should reflect that students have developed into mature scientists, which includes the ability to conceive research projects, to critically evaluate the literature, to gain knowledge of acceptable scientific behavior, and to think and discern outside the area of the dissertation. More details are provided in the 'Major Examination' section of this handbook.

## **Graduate and Professional Student Association**

All graduate students in the university who are currently enrolled in 10 or more hours are members of the [Graduate and Professional Student Association](#) (GPSA). GPSA represents the concerns of graduate students within the university and nationally. The Crops graduate program and the Soils graduate program each have one representative to the GPSA Senate (the governing body for GPSA) who are elected each spring for the next year. Many of the important advisory committees within the university itself have voting positions for graduate students.

## **Cooperative Courses at the University of Idaho**

Students register for UI cooperative courses directly via a special non-degree cooperative course application to the University of Idaho. Students will enroll at the U of I, and a placeholder of '900' with associated credit will be applied in ZZUis for the term. After grades are issued, the WSU registrar will arrange the credit be transferred to WSU.

The WSU and UI Registrar's websites have links to the cooperative listings of both institutions for each term, as well as applications forms and cooperative course policy and procedures. The academic (and grading) policies of the teaching institution apply.

Tuition for UI cooperative courses will be covered by the student's WSU tuition if enrolled full-time. Students enrolling in UI courses that are not officially cooperative, will be responsible for any associated tuition and fees.

## **Grievances**

Differences of opinion between graduate students and their major advisors and/or committee members may arise in the course of a graduate degree. Students and their faculty mentors are encouraged to communicate regularly and directly to resolve such differences. In the event that such communication does not resolve a concern, graduate students can pursue a formal grievance process.

Should a concern not be resolved through informal communication, a student should submit a written grievance detailing their grievance to the following individuals in the order given:

1. The Major Advisor;
2. The Department Chair;
3. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

At each stage of the grievance process, the individual addressed will be given two weeks in which to respond to the grievance in writing (not counting annual leave.) Should the response be unsatisfactory, the student can then take the grievance and response(s) to the next individual on the list.

The Graduate School has provided a document to provide further guidance on [Grievance Procedures](#).

## **Annual Review and Evaluations**

The Graduate School requires an annual review of each graduate student. In CSS, this review includes academic performance, research accomplishments and presentations, TA performance when applicable and expectations for future performance. These reviews have to be completed and discussed by the student and the major advisor. It is recommended that the review is circulated to the student's faculty advisory committee. Teaching Assistants are also evaluated at the end of the semester by their students. If the student's progress is unsatisfactory, the faculty advisory committee will be consulted to determine if graduate student status should be continued. The Department Chair will notify the student in writing of

the faculty advisory committee's recommendation and forward a copy of the report to the Graduate School.

### **Continuous Enrollment Policy**

All full-time graduate students must register for a minimum of 10 credit hours each Fall and Spring semester, with at least one (1) research credit (CROPS or SOILS 700, 702, or 800) to track the contributions of your Major Advisor. Full-time students on assistantship should maintain 10-12 credits to maximize their tuition waivers by enrolling in additional research credit. Part-time graduate students must register for a minimum of 2 credit hours and a maximum of 9 credit hours each Fall and Spring semesters. International graduate students with F-1 or J-1 visa status should consult with the Office of International Students and Scholars for enrollment requirements, which in general requires the same enrollment level as full-time graduate students.

Apart from exceptions for graduate leave for personal reasons or internship leave, all MS and PhD students (prior to preliminary examination) are required by the Graduate School to be continuously enrolled in a minimum of 2 graduate credits each semester, excluding summer, until they have completed all of the degree requirements on their Program of Study. Doctoral Students who have taken their preliminary exams, have met all of their program requirements except completion of their dissertation, and do not have the funding to register for graduate credits may be placed into Continuous Doctoral Status for a limited number of semesters. Doctoral students in Continuous Doctoral Status will be charged a small administrative fee and will have limited access to University resources. Graduate students who are not enrolled for a semester (except doctoral candidates in Continuous Doctoral Status) and have not received approval from the Graduate School for graduate leave or internship leave are subject to the Graduate School's re-enrollment policy and will owe additional fees.

See [Chapter 5](#) of the *Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual* for details on enrollment and leave policies.

### Milestones to Meet for Successful Completion of the Graduate Degree

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>MS Degree</b>	<b>PhD Degree</b>
Committee identified and agrees to serve	End of first or second semester	End of first or second semester
Research Topic identified	End of first semester	End of first semester
Initial Committee Meeting, Program of Study approved by committee and submitted to Academic coordinator	Early in second semester (thesis) End of first semester (non-thesis)	Early in second semester
Proposal prepared (in the Crops degree this is part of the preliminary examination for PhD students, see below)		By the end of the fourth semester.
Course-work completed	End of 4 <sup>th</sup> Semester	End of 4 <sup>th</sup> Semester
Comprehensive Exam (Soils only)		By the end of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of study.
Oral Preliminary Exam completed (PhD students)	N/A	End of 4 <sup>th</sup> or beginning of 5 <sup>th</sup> Semester. Scheduling Form required; fully signed copy due 12 working days in advance of the exam to the Graduate School, via the Academic Coordinator
Crops 510/Soils 501 seminars completed	Once, usually as the final thesis seminar given during the semester in which the student plans to graduate.	Twice, the first is the proposal seminar given after proposal is written, during second year of study. The second seminar is the final dissertation seminar, given during the semester in which the student plans to graduate.
Statewide tour Special Topic completed	During first year	During first or second year
Thesis/Dissertation Research completed	One semester prior to expected graduation	One semester prior to expected graduation
First draft of Thesis/Dissertation submitted to advisor	At end of semester prior to expected graduation.	At end of semester prior to expected graduation.
Notice of Intent to Graduate submitted to advisor, committee, and academic coordinator	During first week of semester in which student expects to graduate.	During first week of semester in which student expects to graduate.
Application for Degree filed with the Graduate School	During first month of semester in which student expects to graduate.	During first month of semester in which student expects to graduate.
First draft of Thesis/Dissertation submitted to committee	During second month of last semester.	During second month of last semester.
Committee and Advisor revisions incorporated into Thesis/Dissertation	During third month of last semester.	During third month of last semester.
Final draft of Thesis/Dissertation submitted to Committee (final draft required for scheduling form signatures)	Minimum 10 work-days prior to exam.	Minimum 10 work-days prior to exam.
Final Examination scheduling form with committee signatures submitted to Academic Coordinator for Chair signature, simultaneous with electronic copy of thesis/dissertation (display copy); electronic copy must also be submitted to the Graduate School (or UMI for PhD)	Scheduling Form must be submitted 12 work-days prior to exam.	Scheduling Form must be submitted 12 work-days prior to exam.
Final Examination	See Graduate School Deadlines	See Graduate School Deadlines
Revisions to Thesis/Dissertation completed and submitted to graduate School	Five working days after examination.	Five working days after examination.
Graduation.	If on RA/TA, four to five semesters after beginning study.	If on RA/TA, 8 -10 semesters after beginning study (depending on whether student begins with BS or MS).

## PROGRAM OF STUDY REQUIREMENTS

### Program of Study

Graduate students are ultimately responsible for their own progress in the program and completion of the degree. Faculty shall provide mentoring, financial support (when available), facilities, and equipment. Additionally, faculty are responsible for regular communication with their graduate students and for evaluating students both annually and through required examinations. But it is critical that both MS and PhD graduate students are self-motivated and responsible in making sure that their research progresses and program requirements are met in a timely manner. General expectations for graduate students are listed in the [Good Practices](#) document made available by the Graduate School.

The *major advisor* is the thesis or dissertation advisor and is the graduate student's primary contact for all matters related to the program of study and thesis/dissertation research. The major advisor assists in selecting the student's faculty advisory committee, developing a program of study, and writing the thesis or dissertation research proposal. The major advisor monitors the student's academic and professional growth, reviews program changes, and is responsible for writing the annual student review of progress. While the major advisor generally supports their advisees financially in the program, such funding is provided at the discretion of the major advisor. In the event that the major advisor is unable to provide continued funding, the student shall be responsible for seeking funding from other sources. The major advisor serves as the committee chair. The major advisor must be a member of the faculty for that program.

If the major advisor is located at a Research Station, a *campus advisor* must be identified who will support the academic development of the student if/when that student resides on the Pullman campus. If the student is conducting their project at least partly on campus, then in an ideal situation the campus advisor will be a co-investigator on the student's research with the major advisor. Although the major advisor is responsible for advising the student on experimental design and manipulation and interpretation of data, and for reviewing initial drafts of theses/dissertations and papers, the student will be integrated into the campus advisor's research program. For those students whose research program focus is off-campus, the campus advisor will serve on the student's faculty advisory committee, answer day-to-day questions while the student is in Pullman and will invite the student to research group meetings, journal clubs, and similar activities. General expectations for advisors are also listed in the [Good Practices](#) document made available by the Graduate School.

All students have a thesis or dissertation faculty advisory committee. The roles of the Faculty Advisory Committee are listed below:

1. Meet at least once per academic year with the graduate student to assess performance and progress toward degree, and propose goals for the upcoming year. (Students are encouraged to meet with their advisory committee members more regularly either individually or in small groups.)
2. Provide guidance and approval for the program of study.
3. Provide general research guidance for the thesis or dissertation.
4. Administer the PhD preliminary exam.
5. Administer the final exam for MS and PhD students.
6. Review and approve the final thesis or dissertation.

### ***Forming the Committee***

The initial selection, or subsequent changes of a graduate student's faculty advisory committee shall be determined jointly by the student and the student's major advisor and approved by the Department Chair.

The graduate faculty advisory committee of each student shall have a minimum of three members for MS and three members for PhD. **At least one member of a MS and two members of a PhD committee must be both permanent WSU tenured/tenure-track faculty and graduate faculty in CSS.**

Crop and Soil Sciences allows non-tenure track professionals internal to WSU (i.e. research, clinical, adjunct, or affiliate such as USDA –ARS researchers) and appointed as adjunct faculty are entitled to act as chairs, co-chair, or serve as member of the faculty advisory committee. In these cases, at least one other member of a master's faculty advisory committee must be a permanent, WSU tenure-track faculty member and a member of the graduate faculty of the student's program. The third member must be a graduate faculty of the student's program but is not required to be a permanent WSU tenure-track faculty. Similarly, at last two other members of a doctoral faculty advisory committee must be permanent, WSU tenure-track faculty and members of the graduate faculty of the student's program.

Individuals not officially participating as Graduate Faculty within any graduate program at WSU (i.e. a faculty member from another university or entity) may be approved to serve as a faculty advisory committee member for an individual student on a case-by-case basis. The committee chair for that student should forward the name and curriculum vitae of the desired member along with the program of study for approval by the Chair, and final approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

External faculty members may serve as a committee member for a student

If a minor is declared, one member of the faculty advisory committee must be from the Graduate Faculty of the minor program. This person may fill the requirement of one of the WSU permanent tenure-track faculty members on that committee.

The faculty advisory committee chair ensures that the student is making satisfactory progress towards a degree. The faculty advisory committee aids in developing the course program and provides guidance and expertise for the student's research. To ensure guidance in all aspects of their research, many students, especially PhD students, elect to have four or five faculty on their faculty advisory committee. In addition to advising the student, each committee member must read the thesis or dissertation, attend, and vote at the preliminary and final exam. Faculty advisory committee members often participate in the annual student evaluation. The Department Chair must approve each faculty advisory committee.

### ***Preparing the Program of Study***

Policies and procedures, deadlines, guidelines for faculty advisory committee membership and program of study forms are found on the Graduate School [website](#).

Your faculty advisory committee chair and other members should aid you in developing your proposed [MS](#) or [PhD](#) Program of Study (POS). This is an official list of classes you have taken and/or will take, and research you have conducted or will conduct. All students should become familiar with the Graduate School program of study requirements as outlined on the Graduate School website.

The POS should be submitted early in your second semester. It is your responsibility to have appropriate forms typed, proofread, and presented to your committee.

After the POS is developed and each member has signed, submit the POS to the CSS Academic Coordinator for full faculty review. The general Crop or Science faculty, respectively, must approve your program and may require additional coursework. Once approved, the Academic Coordinator will forward the POS to the Graduate School. The Graduate School then reviews the POS and contacts the student and Academic Coordinator both regarding any problems. Once any problems are resolved, the Dean of the Graduate school will approve the POS and send electronic notification to both the student and Academic Coordinator.



Revisions to the POS are possible should the need arise. These changes are made on a 'Change of Program' form available on the Graduate School website. Do not refile a new POS. Your committee, the respective Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chair must approve all revisions for presentation to the Graduate School for final approval. Major revisions require a respective all-faculty review as well.

### ***Thesis Master's Degree Credit Requirements***

- 30 hours minimum total credit
- 21 hours minimum of graded course work, which consists of:
  - 15 hours minimum of graded course work at the 500-level
  - 4 hours minimum of 700-level credit in major
  - 6 hours maximum of non-graduate graded course work (300-400 level only)

### ***Non-Thesis Master's Degree Credit Requirements***

- 30 hours minimum total credit
- 26 hours minimum of graded course work, which consists of:
  - 17 hours minimum of graded course work at the 500-level
  - 4 hours minimum of 702 credit in major
  - 9 hours maximum of non-graduate graded course work credit (300-400 level only)

### ***Doctoral Degree Credit Requirements***

- 72 hours minimum total credits
- 15 hours minimum of graded graduate-level (500-level) coursework beyond the bachelors degree, *excluding the following departmental requirements:*
  - Seminar: Crops 510 or Soils 501
  - Special Topics--Statewide Tour: Crops 512 or Soils 502
- 20 hours minimum 800-level research credits
- 9 hours maximum of non-graduate courses
- Courses graded S/F may not be used in the core program even if required by a specific program (i.e. Crops/Soils 511 Writing Workshop or Soils 505 Teaching Practicum)

A flexible number of credits are allowed for research and thesis (700 or 800 level) each semester, and may be used to maintain your full-time enrollment of at least 10 credits, if required, beyond regular graded coursework. The average full-time enrollment is 10-12 cr hrs/semester.

Once the program has been approved by the Graduate School, the program becomes official and students are required to take all courses listed on the POS. **Any course included in the advanced degree program in which a grade of 'C-' or less has been earned must be repeated for credit.** Students may choose to take courses not on the POS as well.

### ***Required Departmental Coursework***

Seminar

**All graduate students and faculty are expected to attend and participate in the departmental seminars** regardless of enrollment, including those scheduled outside of the regular seminar series, whenever they have no class conflicts. Seminars are routinely made available via videoconferencing to the Research and Extension Centers at Puyallup, Prosser, and Mt Vernon. Students residing at off-campus locations are expected to participate via videoconferencing whenever possible. Arrangements for other locations can also be made.

All MS thesis and non-thesis students are required to take one credit of Crops 510/Soils 501, depending on degree program, during the semester they plan to graduate to give an exit seminar on their research.

PhD students are required to take two credits of Crops 510/Soils 501, depending on the degree program. The first seminar is the proposal seminar given after proposal is written, during second year of study. The second seminar is the final dissertation seminar, given during the semester in which the student plans to graduate.

It is highly recommended that students in other degree programs (such as Molecular Plant Sciences), who are advised by CSS faculty and are housed in the CSS department, take one credit of Crops 510 or Soils 501.

Faculty members will evaluate student seminars, research proposals, and like presentations using the 'Rubric for Assessing Graduate Student Work in Crop and Soil Sciences' provided in the appendix.

#### Special Topics, Washington State Tour

To provide graduate students with an overview of the breadth of our departmental resources and the diverse agricultural industries in the state and to acquaint students with our statewide WSU faculty, staff, and graduate students, all incoming graduate students are required to enroll in Crops 512 or Soils 502: Statewide Tour, at their earliest opportunity. The tour occurs sometime during the summer break, usually in May. Students should enroll for one credit of Crops 512/Soils 502 in the Fall semester following the summer in which they participate in the tour. Students who complete a master's degree in our department and enroll in our doctoral program, will be invited but are not required to attend the tour again. The instructor of the course rotates between Crops, Soils and Horticulture faculty. After the tour students must submit a group paper of their impression of Washington's agriculture, industry, and environment, followed by a group presentation during the Fall semester seminar series in which they give an overview of the trip.

#### Science Writing Workshop

Crops/Soils 511 (2 credits, spring semester, S/U) was developed so that students can 1) Learn how to research and identify grant funding and journal resources for submission of grants or manuscripts, 2) Learn about grant and manuscript structure and effective writing methods that help to "tell a story" to best convey research ideas and results, 3) Engage in peer mentored writing groups to outline, draft and review grant proposals/concept proposals, or manuscripts and 4) Produce a polished draft of either a concept proposal, graduate research proposal or manuscript for submission. The course is required for both Crops and Soils PhD candidates. Enrollment is open to students from other programs.

### Crop Science Requirements

#### ***Recommended Areas of Competency***

The advisor, thesis committee, and Graduate Coordinator will discuss course expectations of incoming students on an individual basis. Entering students should have a solid B.S. level background in mathematics, chemistry, and the biological sciences. If it is determined that an incoming student is deficient, they may be asked to make up those deficiencies by taking or auditing courses or by doing extra reading.

Recommended Areas of Competence (or equivalencies)	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
SOILS 201	Soil Science: A Living System	3	F	every year
CROPS 202	Crop Growth and Development	4	S	every year
STAT 212	Introductory Statistics	4	F, S	every year

CHEM 102	Chemistry Related to Life Sciences	4		
CHEM 345	Organic Chemistry I	4		
CHEM 346	Organic Chemistry II	3		
BIOL 320	Introductory Plant Physiology	3	F	every year
CROPS 411	Crop Environmental Interactions	3	S	every year
PI P 429	General Plant Pathology	3	F	every year
SOILS 441	Soil Fertility	3	S	every year
CROPS 445 Or M BIOS 301	Plant Breeding  General Genetics	4  3	S	every year

### ***Crop Science Master's Degree***

In addition to the Graduate School requirements degree requirements, Crop Science MS students must take the following courses:

MS Core Course Requirements	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
CROPS 510	Seminar	1	F, S	every year
CROPS 512	Special Topics, State Tour	1	F, S	every year
CROPS 700	Master's Research (Thesis)	4	F, S	every year
CROPS 702	Master's Special Problems (Non-Thesis)	4	F, S	every year

MS Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
M BIOS 303	Introductory Biochemistry	4	F, S	every year
STAT 412	Biometry	3	F, S	every year
CROPS 445	Plant Breeding	4	S	every year
CROPS 503	Advanced Cropping Systems	3	F	every year
STAT 512	Analysis of Variance of Designed Exp.	3	F, S	every year
STAT 53019	Applied Multivariate Analysis	3	S	every year

### ***Crop Science Doctoral Degree***

In addition to the Graduate School requirements degree requirements, Crop Science PhD candidates must take the following courses:

PhD Core Course Requirements	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
CROPS 510	Seminar	2	F, S	every year
CROPS/SOILS 511	Science Writing Workshop	2	S	every year
CROPS 512	Special Topics, State Tour	1	F, S	every year
CROPS 800	Doctoral Research	20	F, S	every year

### **Teaching Experience**

An educational delivery experience equal or equivalent to a semester teaching assistantship is required. A teaching assistantship is required of PhD students, regardless of funding. Equivalent experience can include lecturing in a course multiple times, extension program delivery, and assistance with education courses.

Breeding/Genetics Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BIOL 519	Introduction to Population Genetics	3	F	even years
BIOL 520	Conservation Genetics	2		
BIOL 521	Quantitative Genetics	2	S	even years

CROPS 505	Adv. Classical and Mol. Breeding	3	F	odd years
CROPS 512	Special Topics, History of Genetics	1-2	S	odd years
CROPS 535	Advanced Plant Breeding	3	F	even years
	Mathematical Genetics (UI)	2	S	even years
MBIOS 513	General Biochemistry	3	F	every year
MBIOS 525	Plant Molecular Genetics	3	F	every year
or 514	General Biochemistry	3	S	every year
PL P 525	Field Plant Pathology and Mycology	1	S	odd-alt yrs, summer
PL P 535	Mol. Genetics of Plant & Pathogen Inter.	2	S	even years
STAT 530	Applied Linear Models	3	S	even years

Physiology Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BIOL 513	Plant Metabolism	3		
BIOL 517	Stress Physiology of Plants	3		
MBIOS 513	General Biochemistry	3	F	every year
MBIOS 514	General Biochemistry	3	S	every year

Production/Management Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
CROPS 503	Advanced Cropping Systems	3	F	every year
CROPS 512 special topic	Herb. Fate Mode of Action	2		
CROPS 512 special topic	Herbicides, Tox. and Mode of Action	1		
CROPS 513	Biology of Weeds	3	F	even years
F S 583	Cereal Science and Technology	2	F	odd years
SOILS 413	Introduction to Soil Physics	3	F	every year

Turf Management Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BIOL 462	Community Ecology	3		
BIOL 517	Stress Physiology of Plants	3	S	even years
BIOL 548	Evolutionary Ecology of Populations	3		
CROPS 512 special topic	Herb. Fate Mode of Action	2		
CROPS 512 special topic	Herbicides, Tox. and Mode of Action	1		
ENT 558	Pesticide Topics	1		
IPM 452	Pesticides and the Environment	2		
PL P 521	General Mycology	4	F	every year
SOILS 547	Advance Soil Fertility Management	3	F	even years
STAT 412	Biometry	3	F, S	every year
STAT 512	Analysis of Var. of Designed Exp.	3	F, S	every year
STAT 519	Applied Multivariate Analysis	3		

## **Soil Science Degrees**

### ***Recommended Areas of Competency***

To the extent possible, Soils graduate students should be knowledgeable in all five sub-disciplinary areas of Soils (chemistry, fertility, morphology, biology, and physics). However, because many students entering graduate school have received their BS degrees from an area outside of Soils, it is sometimes impractical and often very time consuming to take a graded course in each of these areas for the MS degree. For this reason, the Soils Faculty require that a graded Soils course be taken in a minimum of three of the five sub-disciplinary areas in Soils. Additional Soils and other courses to make up deficiencies can be taken as S/F as determined by the MS thesis committee and Soil Faculty. (It is generally expected that all deficiencies will be taken for a letter grade, but recognize that in special cases, it may make sense to take one as S/F, if agreed to by the thesis committee and Soils Faculty.)

It is recommended that students enter the program with established competence in soil science and supporting subjects. Minimum degree of competence include introductory soil science (Soils 201), organic chemistry (Chem 345), statistics (Stat 412), soil analysis (Soils 442 or 503) and at least two courses in upper level soil science [Soils 414/415(WSU), 413(UI), 422(UI), 441(WSU), 451(UI)]. Deficiencies should be made up in the first one or two semesters following admission and should be done at the student's expense.

**Special Soils Course Descriptions**

**Soils 502 – Advanced Topics**

All graduate students in Soils are encouraged to enroll and to participate in this course. Sections of this course are designed to acquaint you with the literature in Soils. The course is organized on an informal basis by subject matter areas, with each area being the responsibility of a faculty member who specializes in that area. You may register and repeat this course for up to six credit hours, but not more than three credits per semester. One Soils 502 course is required of all soils graduates—the State Tour course.

**Soils 503 – Advanced Soil Analysis**

Courses ranging from one to three credits are offered on specialized topics relating to instrumentation and to soil analysis. Topics include site selection and characterization, flame emission and absorption, organic matter analysis, electronics, fluorescent antibody techniques, elemental analysis, microcomputer software, tracer techniques, N-15 mass spectrometry, and others. Students may develop an independent study course in consultation with their advisors and the graduate coordinator. The course should involve mastering the use of instruments or techniques or developing new methodologies applied to research in soil science.

**Soils 505 – Teaching Practicum**

All Soils PhD degree candidates are required by department policy to enroll in Teaching Practicum (Soils 505) prior to graduating. This course offers credit for experience in Teaching Assistant (TA) duties obtained in a soils course. Foreign TAs must pass an English Proficiency Exam, which tests communication skills in English prior to engaging in Practicum. The type of experience obtained depends upon several factors, including the nature of the course, the capabilities of the student, and the needs of the instructor. Experience could include lecturing in a discussion or laboratory section, preparing and grading exams or homework, or helping set-up laboratory or discussion sessions.

**Soil Science Master's Degree**

The MS in Soils is awarded to graduate students for substantial scholarly achievement beyond the baccalaureate. To earn this degree a student is expected to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of a basic subject matter area in Soil Science and research competence in the form of a thesis or competence in the application of soil science in the form of a special project. The MS degree in Soils at WSU includes both the thesis and non-thesis options. The students' advisory committee will develop an appropriate program of study that must be approved by the Soils Faculty. In addition to competence in selected areas of soil science, students may be required to obtain competencies in core technical areas including, but not limited to, mathematics, statistics, natural sciences, and computer sciences.

In addition to the Graduate School requirements degree requirements, Soil Science MS students must take the following courses:

MS Core Course Requirements	Credits	Sem	Offered	
SOILS 501	Seminar	1	F, S	every year

SOILS 502	Special Topics, State Tour	1	F, S	every year
SOILS 700	Master's Research (thesis)	4	F, S	every year
SOILS 702	Master's Research (non-thesis)	4	F, S	every year

MS Suggested Course Options	Credits	Sem	Offered	
CROPS 503	Advanced Cropping Systems	1	F	every year
STAT 512	Analysis of Variance of Designed Exp.	3	F, S	every year
SOILS 368	Intro to GIS	3	F	every year
SOILS 502	Advanced Topics in Soils	1-3	F, S	every year
SOILS 503	Advanced Soil Analysis	1-3	S	every year
SOILS 504	Research Presentation Techniques	1		
SOILS 505	Teaching Practicum	1	F, S	every year
SOILS 513	Environmental Soil Physics	3	F	odd year
SOILS 533	Vadose Zone Processes	2	F	even year
SOILS 514	Environmental Biophysics	2	S	every year
SOILS 515	Environmental Biophysics Laboratory	1	S	every year
UI SOILS 526	Soil Mineralogy	2	S	every year
SOILS 531	Soil Microbiology	3	S	even year
UI SOILS 537	Soil Biochemistry	3	F	every year
SOILS 541	Soil-Plant-Microbial Interactions	3	F	odd year
SOILS 547	Soil Fertility Management	3	F	even year
SOILS 557	Advanced Soil Genesis and Classification	3		
SOILS 568	ArcGIS and Spatial Analysis	4	S	every year

### ***Soil Science Non-thesis Master's Degree***

Within the Graduate School's minimum requirements, the non-thesis student's graded course work will include 6 credits in plant and soil biology (agronomy, horticulture, forestry, crop protection, plant ecology, biology, microbiology, plant physiology), 15 credits in soil science (soil chemistry, soil physics, soil biology, soil fertility, pedology, environmental biophysics), and 5 credits in other professional core courses (e.g., statistics, sustainable agriculture, colloid science, hydrology). The student must demonstrate skill in critical thinking, scholarship, and written and oral communication through course work, the seminar course, and the final report and examination. The non-thesis option requires the student to form a committee and develop the program of study during the first semester of enrollment. Students in this option will have lowest priority for state-funded assistantships and will generally be expected to be self-funding.

### ***Soil Science Doctoral Degree***

All students pursuing a PhD are required to have taken an undergraduate course (400 level) in each of the major areas: soil chemistry, soil physics, soil fertility-management, soil genesis, morphology-classification, and soil microbiology-biochemistry. In addition, a graduate (500 level) course must be taken in two of the five Soils areas.

An Interdisciplinary Soils PhD is defined as: expertise in Soils enhanced by another academic discipline (for example, plant physiology, agricultural economics, civil engineering or colloid chemistry). A representative from outside the discipline must serve on the Doctoral Committee. In the program of study the student may substitute one 400/500 level course in another academic discipline for a required 400/500 level course in Soils. The interdisciplinary program must be approved at the same time the program of study is approved. Also refer to Preliminary Doctoral Examination for guidelines specific to the Interdisciplinary Soils PhD.

In addition to the Graduate School requirements degree requirements, Soil Science PhD candidates must take the following courses:

PhD Core Course Requirement	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
SOILS 501	Seminar	2	F, S	every year
SOILS 502	Special Topics, State Tour	1	F, S	every year
SOILS 505	Teaching Practicum	1	F, S	every year
CROPS/SOILS 511	Science Writing Workshop	2	S	every year
SOILS 800	Doctoral Research	20	F, S	every year

Soil Classification & Genesis Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
SOILS 368	Intro to GIS	3	F	every year
SOILS 513	Environmental Soil Physics	3	F	odd year
SOILS 514	Environmental Biophysics	2	S	every year
SOILS 515	Environmental Biophysics Laboratory	1	S	every year
SOILS 526	Soil Mineralogy (UI SOILS 526)	2		
SOILS 531	Soil Microbiology	3	F	even year
Or				
SOILS 541	Soil-Plant-Microbial Interactions	3	F	odd year
SOILS 557	Advanced Soil Genesis & Classif. (UI SOILS 557)	3		
SOILS 568	ArcGIS and Spatial Analysis	4	S	every year

Soil Chemistry Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BSYSE 558	Groundwater Flow and Contaminant Transport	4		
CH E 585	Interfacial Phenomena	3	S	odd year
CHEM 501	Advanced Inorganic Chemistry	3	F	even year
E MIC 586	Special Projects in Electron Microscopy	3	F, S	every year
GEOL 579	Groundwater Geochemistry	3	S	odd year
SOILS 502	Advanced Topics	V	F, S	every year
SOILS 503	Advanced Soil Analysis	V	F, S	every year
SOILS 513	Environmental Soil Physics	3	F	odd year
SOILS 521	Environmental Soil Chemistry	3	S	even year
SOILS 526	Soil Mineralogy (UI SoilS 526)	2		
SOILS 531	Soil Microbiology	3	F	even year
SOILS 533	Vadose Zone Processes	2	F	even year
SOILS 541	Soil-Plant-Microbial Interactions	3	F	odd year

Soil Fertility Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BIOL 513	Plant Metabolism	3		
BIOL 517	Stress Physiology of Plants	3	S	even years
BSYSE 558	Groundwater Flow and Contaminant Transport	4		
CROPS 503	Advanced Cropping Systems	3	F	every year
SOILS 468	ArcGIS and Geospatial Analysis	4	F	every year
SOILS 513	Environmental Soil Physics	3	F	odd year
SOILS 514	Environmental Biophysics	2	S	every year
SOILS 515	Environmental Biophysics Laboratory	1	S	every year
SOILS 531	Soil Microbiology	3	F	even year
SOILS 541	Soil-Plant-Microbial Interactions	3	F	odd year
SOILS 547	Advance Soil Fertility Management	3	F	even year
STAT 512	Analysis of Variance of Designed Exp.	3	F, S	every year

Soil Physics Suggested Course Options	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BSYSE 558	Groundwater Flow and Contaminant Transport	4		
C E 550	Advanced Hydrology	3		
CE 315	Fluid Mechanics	3	F, S	every year
CH E 585	Interfacial Phenomena	3	S	odd year
E MIC 586	Special Projects in Electron Microscopy	3	F, S	every year

MATH 548	Numerical Analysis	3	F, S	every year
SOILS 442	Soil Analytical Methods	3	F	every year
SOILS 513	Environmental Soil Physics	3	Fall	odd year
SOILS 514	Environmental Biophysics	2	S	every year
SOILS 515	Environmental Biophysics Laboratory	1	S	every year
SOILS 521	Environmental Soil Chemistry	3	S	even year
SOILS 531	Soil Microbiology	3	F	even year
SOILS 533	Vadose Zone Processes	3	Fall	even year

Soil Microbiology & Biochemistry Suggested Courses	Title	Cr	Sem	Offered
BIOL (Bot) 563	Field Ecology	2	S	every year
BIOL 548	Evolutionary Ecology of Populations	3	S	every year
BIOL 564	Molecular Ecology and Phylogeography	3		
CHEM 332	Physical Chemistry	3	S	every year
CHEM 340	Organic Chemistry I	3	S	every year
E MIC 587	Special Problems Electronic Microscopy	1	S	every year
MBIOS 301	General Genetics	4	S	every year
MBIOS 303	Introductory Biochemistry	4	S	every year
MBIOS 426	Microbial Genetics	3	F	every year
MBIOS 442	General Virology	3	S	every year
MBIOS 506	Cell Biology of Disease	3	S	every year
MBIOS 513	General Biochemistry	3	F	every year
MBIOS 514	General Biochemistry	3	S	every year
MBIOS 550	Basic & Applied Microbial Physiology	3	S	every year
MBIOS 578	Molecular Biology Computer Techniques	1-4		
SOILS 513	Environmental Soil Physics	3	F	odd year
SOILS 514	Environmental Biophysics	2	S	every year
SOILS 515	Environmental Biophysics Laboratory	1	S	every year
SOILS 521	Environmental Soil Chemistry	3	S	even year
SOILS 531	Soil Microbiology	3	F	even year
SOILS 541	Soil-Plant-Microbial Interactions	3	F	odd year
STAT 512	Analysis of Variance of Designed Exp.	3	F, S	every year

### Preparing to Graduate

Note: See also 'Thesis/Dissertation Guidelines' later in this handbook

Students should consult the Graduate School's website early in the semester they expect to graduate to obtain information regarding policies and procedures, and deadlines for thesis defense and graduation. Failure to meet the deadlines could require enrollment for an additional semester.

Additionally, CSS requires students to submit an email 'Notice of Intent to Graduate' to their advisor and committee, and cc the Academic Coordinator ([marshdj@wsu.edu](mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu)). **The notice is due the first week of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.** The notice shall include a timeline consistent with the deadlines in this handbook and the Graduate School, to illustrate how chapter and draft submissions, and final scheduling, will be carried out in a timely and fair manner.

The final draft of the thesis or dissertation should be presented to the faculty advisory committee members for review 10 working days prior to requesting their signature on a final defense scheduling form.

The scheduling form should be submitted to the Academic Coordinator for Chair signature. In addition, a 'display' copy of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation must be provided by email to the Academic Coordinator ([marshdj@wsu.edu](mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu)) simultaneous with presenting the scheduling form for Chair signature. The 'display' copy will be posted on a secure Sharepoint site for faculty review. This process does not override in any way the responsibility of the faculty advisory committee. Rather, it is meant to offer one



more step of preparation by and for the student. Any faculty advisory committee member may deem that the thesis is not ready to be defended at any of the normal steps in the process.

### ***Check List for Graduation***

- Review in advance the Graduate School's deadlines and procedures for graduation ([MS](#)) ([PhD](#)).
- Submit Notice of Intent to Graduate the first week of the final term to your advisor and committee members, and cc the Academic Coordinator ([marshdj@wsu.edu](mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu)).
- Enroll in Soils 501 or Crops 510 to give exit seminar.
- Set tentative defense date with faculty committee members and contact office for room scheduling.
- Ensure all deadlines on timeline are met throughout final semester:
- Submit Application for Degree to the Graduate School by the deadline (very early in the final term)
- Finish thesis or dissertation final draft; email to committee members.
- Obtain committee approval of thesis or dissertation final draft, approval of defense date and time and committee signatures on final exam scheduling form.
- Route scheduling form through Academic Coordinator for Chair signature, and who will confirm rooms for the defense and assist with AMS arrangements.
- A 'display' copy of the thesis/dissertation must also be submitted electronically to the Academic Coordinator ([marshdj@wsu.edu](mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu)) to load on the faculty Sharepoint site before the Department Chair will sign the final exam scheduling form.
- Conduct final exam, and turn in final copy of thesis/dissertation to Graduate School within 5 working days of defense, and also two hard copies to the CSS Academic Coordinator.

Note: It is the sole responsibility of the student to ensure that all deadlines set forth by the Graduate School are met. Failure to follow the CSS Policies and Procedures or to meet the deadlines set forth by the Graduate School will result in a delayed graduation date.

### ***Thesis/Dissertation Binding***

The student is also responsible for providing two copies of the thesis/dissertation to the Academic Coordinator simultaneous with turning it into the Graduate School. The Department will pay to hard-bind these two copies. One is for the Department's thesis and dissertation library, the other is for Committee Chair. Additional bound copies can be arranged for \$20/ea, either at the expense of the student, or funding provided by the major professor. Personal checks should be made payable to J&S Bindery.

### ***Exit***

Before departure from CSS, students must leave a forwarding address with the Academic Programs Coordinator, schedule an exit interview with the Department Chair, return all keys to the main office, and consult with the advisor about cleaning up samples, chemicals, etc., from the student's research and office space.

### **Continuation for Another Degree**

To continue for another degree you should contact the Academic Coordinator. A form must be filed for any of the following situations:

- Completed MS and continuing for a PhD in the same department.
- Not completing a PhD and continuing for a MS in the same department.
- Not completing a graduate degree and continuing as an undergraduate.
- New Application: Continuing a graduate degree program in a different department.

## **THESIS/DISSERTATION GUIDELINES**

### **Thesis/Dissertation Proposal**

All students should develop a thesis or dissertation proposal after consultation with their major advisor and faculty advisory committee. See appendix for proposal format guidelines. This proposal forms the basis for the thesis/dissertation research. All students are expected to develop and carry out original, creative research projects. While the advisor and committee members serve as mentors, the student is expected to develop and demonstrate the ability to work independently; to design, conduct, and analyze experiments; and to prepare the work for publication in scientific journals.

Thesis or dissertation preparation involves synthesizing concepts by interpreting experimental and analytical data that are gathered for that purpose. It constitutes a major part of the creative scholarship in a master's or doctoral program. Experience in preparing and writing a research publication, as well as the peer-review process, are important goals of graduate programs.

### **General Thesis/Dissertation Format**

The general thesis or dissertation format required by the department is one with three sections: a literature review, several chapters describing methodology, research results, and a chapter with the overall conclusion. The chapters describing research results should be written as papers for publication. For the thesis or dissertation, the papers should be modified to clearly reflect the work of the student. This is especially necessary when Thesis/Dissertation chapters will be submitted for publication with multiple authors. If student is not first author, the paper cannot be used or must be revised. They must also be paginated and formatted to give uniformity to the thesis or dissertation. Thesis or dissertation formatting requirements are posted on the [Graduate School's](#) website.

Students are expected to publish thesis or dissertation research in an appropriate scientific journal. If the student has not submitted thesis or dissertation results for publication within a reasonable amount of time after passing the final exam, the thesis/dissertation advisor will have the option of publishing the student's thesis or dissertation results.

### **How to Proceed**

Formal guidelines for preparation of the thesis or dissertation are available from the Graduate School. However, the following steps and schedule are recommended:

1. Select a problem and review background literature – prepare and defend research proposal, preferably by the end of the second semester after beginning work for a graduate degree.
2. Complete and summarize literature review in written form and develop theories, conduct experimental work, and collect data -- begin this phase as quickly as practical, and complete at least one semester ahead of the completion date for the degree.
3. Summarize and tabulate data, analyze data, apply theories, and develop a written presentation - begin as early as possible on a tentative basis and follow up by preparing a complete, typed draft for submission to the thesis/dissertation advisor at end of semester prior to graduation. Select a style from a scientific journal you wish to follow. Research papers prepared by professionals may be rewritten as many as a dozen times before submission to a journal for editorial review. Graduate students should plan to rewrite several drafts before the manuscript is given to the thesis/dissertation advisor.
4. Comments from the thesis/dissertation advisor should be carefully considered and addressed while preparing the revised draft that is submitted to the graduate committee. This step in preparation of a thesis corresponds to the process involved in preparing a paper for a journal.

The graduate committee should be allowed several weeks for the review process. See above for a suggested timeline. If problems surface involving interpretation or meaning of data, the committee may have to meet to resolve issues. Therefore it is important to allow enough time for a thoughtful and thorough study of dissertation material. The revised draft of this document becomes the “final draft” as outlined in the following section on activity and comments.

Students on research appointments may continue to collect and analyze data, write, etc., during the final semester or summer session. Research results generated after submission of the thesis or dissertation to the committee will not automatically be accepted as essential material. If the advisor(s) consider it appropriate, the data collected during the final semester or summer session may be used in the final draft.

The Faculty recommends that the student be in residence (i.e., on-campus or at an off-campus station) during the semester that the thesis or dissertation is prepared so that the full benefit of consultation with the thesis committee can be realized.

The following schedule allows a reasonable amount of time for completion of each step and for details of post-thesis approval and for the preparation of a manuscript for publication. Since faculty members are usually involved with other reviews, as well as regular duties, the following guidelines are suggested. You will notice that a minimum of 14 to 20 weeks is required from the time you submit your initial draft of your thesis or dissertation to your advisor to the time of your final oral exam.

7-12 weeks	Submit multiple drafts to major thesis/dissertation advisor, and campus advisor if appropriate, and allow time for incorporation of the appropriate number of corrections and revisions. Allow 7 to 10 days for each revision by advisor(s) and allow sufficient time for discussion with them.
2 weeks	Submit a revised draft for review by members of your graduate advisory committee. Because of the greater number of reviewers, allow <i>at least</i> two weeks for return of this draft.
2 to 4 weeks	Revise and correct draft.
2 weeks	Submit a “final” draft to each committee member and electronically to the department chair (c/o <a href="mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu">marshdj@wsu.edu</a> ) <i>at least</i> 12 days prior to scheduling your final exam (~7 weeks prior to graduation). Refer to the earlier ‘Preparing to Graduate’ section of this handbook for scheduling deadlines.

### **Standards of Conduct**

**Plagiarism and misconduct in research will NOT be tolerated.** Students failing to follow standards of conduct dictated by the [Office of Student Conduct](#) may face dismissal from Washington State University. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, consult the [WSU Plagiarism Information site](#). If you are unsure what constitutes academic integrity, please review the information presented on the [WSU Academic Integrity site](#).

## **MAJOR EXAMINATIONS**

### **Crop Science Preliminary Doctoral Examination**

The preliminary exam is an exam to determine if a student is qualified to be admitted into candidacy for the PhD degree. The exam assesses knowledge of crop science, ability to think critically and independently, and ability to conduct independent research (form hypotheses, design experiments, collect and analyze data, put the research in context of the current state of knowledge, draw conclusions).

PhD preliminary examinations in Crops consist of three parts as described below: 1. a written proposal on the dissertation research; 2. defense of that proposal to the faculty advisory committee and 3. an oral preliminary exam.

1. The PhD student must write a proposal on his or her research project. The proposal should evidence the student's understanding and critical evaluation of the research topic. The proposal must be an original document written by the student, but with input from the advisory committee, and cannot be taken from a previously written proposal. The research proposal should be initiated no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester into the PhD program and presented to the student's faculty advisory committee no later than the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. The proposal should follow the Dissertation proposal guidelines (see appendix), using a format similar to that of a major funding agency such as USDA-AFRI or NSF. Crops/Soils 511, offered in spring semester, is a support course for proposal development and other scientific writing. Specific details of the format should be discussed with the major advisor and the faculty advisory committee.
2. Before the end of the third non-summer semester of enrollment, the student will participate in a 2-hour (approx.) oral defense of the proposal with faculty advisory committee members. This proposal defense includes a 20-minute presentation of the proposal. This presentation is separate from the longer proposal presentation that the student prepares for their first Crops 510 seminar. This defense does not have to be scheduled through the graduate school. Documentation of completion of this requirement will be through the Crops/Soils graduate program assessment Rubric and should be turned into the academic coordinator by the major advisor. When a student satisfactorily passes the proposal defense he/she will be qualified to take the oral preliminary examination.
3. The oral preliminary examination must be scheduled with the Graduate School [Preliminary Exam Scheduling Form](#). The oral examination should be scheduled in the fourth or fifth non-summer semester of enrollment. The purpose of the oral preliminary exam is to allow faculty to have the opportunity to probe the depth of a student's knowledge of the whole field of Crop Science and the ability of the student to think critically and independently. The doctoral major advisor and faculty advisory committee will administer the preliminary doctoral exam.

All members of the student's faculty advisory committee must participate in all three parts of the Crop Science Preliminary Doctoral exam, complete the assessment rubrics and vote (for the oral proposal defense and exam). Any other members of the CSS graduate faculty may be present and may vote. Any faculty who votes has to remain present for the entire duration of the exam. The examiners may pause the exam at any time to give a member time to leave the room and return. To pass the oral defense and the oral exam, the student has to receive a minimum of three-fourth passing votes from the voting faculty.

A student who fails the any component of the preliminary exam will be given the opportunity to retake that part within three months. See the graduate school website for policies. A student who fails any component of the prelim exam the second time is terminated from the graduate program.

### **Soil Science Comprehensive Doctoral Written Qualifying Exam**

The comprehensive written qualifying exam evaluates the student's basic knowledge in soil science. Students are expected to be familiar with disciplinary soil science knowledge at least at the 400-course level. The students will be tested in four of the five sub-discipline areas in Soil Science (chemistry, fertility, morphology, biology, and physics). Students should prepare themselves with appropriate course work and study in the selected sub-disciplines. The exam will be offered twice annually by the soil science faculty: (1) in the middle of spring semester and (2) in the middle of the fall semester. Exceptions to this timeline should be discussed with the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator. Students should take the qualifying exam immediately following completion of core courses in the four sub-disciplines selected for examination, no later than in the fourth non-summer semesters at WSU. The exam consists of questions to a specific problem or issue in soil science. Students will be asked to answer and respond to

the exam, which integrates the different soil science disciplines selected by the student. The exam is open book and the student has 5 days to complete the exam, the exam is a take-home exam.

The Graduate Coordinator will coordinate the exam. The major advisor should inform the Graduate Coordinator and Academic Coordinator in the first week of the semester the exam is taken if they have a student taking the exam. A passing grade for the exam must be a "B" or higher. If the student does not pass the exam, the exam must be retaken within 4 weeks. If the student also fails the second exam, the student will be dismissed from the soils doctorate graduate program, but there may be the possibility of switching to an MS program. If the advisory committee is supportive, the committee chair should seek approval from the chair of the program, who may submit a request to the Dean of the Graduate School for a change of degree/program to the MS program. A switch to an MS program requires approval of the advisory committee, the program chair, and the Graduate School.

Note that the comprehensive written qualifying exam is not scheduled via the Graduate School.

### **Soil Science Written Research Proposal**

The PhD student must write a proposal on his or her research project. The proposal should evidence the student's understanding and critical evaluation of the research topic. The proposal must be an original document written by the student, but with input from the advisory committee, and cannot be taken from a previously written proposal. The research proposal should be initiated no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester into the PhD program and presented to the student's faculty advisory committee no later than the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. The proposal should follow the Dissertation proposal guidelines (see appendix), using a format similar to that of a major funding agency such as USDA-AFRI or NSF. Crops/Soils 511 is a support course for proposal development and other scientific writing. Specific details of the format should be discussed with the major advisor and the faculty advisory committee. The proposal will not be graded. The PhD student has to present the proposal in the form of a seminar in Soils 501 no later than in the fourth non-summer semester of enrollment.

### **Soil Science Preliminary Doctoral Oral Examination**

The preliminary examination is designed to evaluate the suitability of the student to become a candidate for the PhD in Soil Science. The exam evaluates the candidate's disciplinary knowledge as well as his/her ability to think creatively, analyze, synthesize, evaluate knowledge and information, and apply that information to establishing new hypotheses for creative research and problem solving. The doctoral major advisor and faculty advisory committee will administer the preliminary doctoral exam.

The student shall schedule and pass their preliminary exam by the end of their 5<sup>th</sup> non-summer semester in the PhD program at WSU. Students are required to pass the qualifying exam prior to scheduling the Preliminary Doctoral Oral Exam, and need to have completed the Soils 501 proposal seminar prior to the oral exam.

The oral preliminary examination must be scheduled with the Graduate School [Preliminary Exam Scheduling Form](#). The preliminary oral exam is intended to evaluate the student's ability to make an original research contribution to the field. The preliminary oral exam will focus on (a) the thoroughness with which the student understands their dissertation research proposal; (b) the ability of the student to discuss and critically engage literature from their major, minor and related scientific disciplines, and (c) mastery of the sub-disciplines of soil science as defended in the qualifying exam.

The major advisor will organize and preside over the exam. While there is no strict time limit for the questioning, in most cases the exam will not exceed two hours in length.

All members of the student's faculty advisory committee must be present during the oral exam and all must vote. Any other members of the CSS graduate faculty may be present and may vote. Any faculty

who votes has to remain present for the entire duration of the exam. The examiners may pause the exam at any time to give a member time to leave the room and return. To pass the oral exam, the student has to receive a minimum of three-fourth passing votes from the voting faculty. A failed oral exam can usually be repeated. The second and final attempt of the oral exam cannot be scheduled earlier than 3 months after the failed first oral exam. A representative from the graduate school will be present at the second exam. If the second oral exam also fails, the student will be terminated from the graduate program.

### **Crop Science and Soil Science Final Oral Exam**

Note: It is also the student's responsibility to comply with the CSS Department policies and procedures found in 'Graduation' section of this handbook.

The final exam has two parts: a seminar and a defense.

The seminar is presented before the defense and is a public presentation highlighting the research results and major accomplishments, as previously described. Please refer 'Seminar' in the Departmental Requirements section of this handbook for more information. Non-thesis MS students do not present a final seminar as part of their final exam.

After preliminary approval of the thesis/dissertation by the faculty advisory committee and department chair, and approval of the schedule by the faculty advisory committee, the final exam can be scheduled through the Graduate School. The student is responsible for obtaining signatures on the necessary forms and for securing the required number of copies of the thesis or dissertation.

The thesis/dissertation defense is an oral exam at which the student defends the approach, methods, conclusions, background, etc., of the research. The non-thesis defense will focus more on broad knowledge and less on project defense than would an exam for the thesis option. Faculty are encouraged to attend the exam and ask questions, but only members of the thesis or dissertation committee and the graduate faculty may vote. Questions asked during the final exam do not have to relate to the thesis or dissertation research.

Members of the faculty advisory committee are responsible for checking the thesis or dissertation for style and format. They certify their approval when they sign the "final oral scheduling form". Faculty advisory committee members cannot sign off on a final exam schedule form if they have not had ample time to review the final draft of the thesis/dissertation. A 'display' copy of the thesis/dissertation must also be submitted electronically to the Academic Coordinator ([marshdj@wsu.edu](mailto:marshdj@wsu.edu)) to load on the faculty Sharepoint site before the Department Chair will sign the scheduling form.

The completed [Dissertation Acceptance/Final Examination Scheduling](#) form must be submitted to the Graduate School at least 10 (ten) working days in advance of the examination date. It is necessary to present an electronic or paper draft copy of the dissertation that is complete in format at the time of scheduling. The examination must be scheduled at least four months, but less than three years, after satisfactory completion of the preliminary examination.

The Graduate School requirements for the dissertation are as follows:

After passing the final examination, an electronic copy of the corrected dissertation/thesis must be submitted following the Graduate School's guidelines for digital submission within five working days of the final oral examination. Students should use the [Final Dissertation/Thesis Acceptance Checklist](#) when preparing the electronic copy for submission.

In addition, the following must be submitted to the Dissertation/Thesis Acceptance clerk in the Graduate School within five working days of the final oral dissertation:

1. Doctoral candidates will submit their digital/PDF and optional copyright and publication fees (dependent on options chosen) directly to the UMI/ProQuest.
2. The candidates must submit a paper copy of the title page, abstract, and an original signature page (signatures should be in black ink) all on 100% cotton paper to the Graduate School within 5 working days following a successful final examination.
3. Copyright releases from publishers for any copyrighted material in any part of the document must be prepared and submitted in duplicate (one copy will be uploaded to UMI/ProQuest, the other will be submitted to the Graduate School with the final 100% cotton pages).
4. Hold Harmless Agreement Form (whether you are copyrighting or not) must be submitted to the Graduate School.
5. Doctoral students must also submit the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#).

## GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

### Preparation for Employment Upon Arrival

Upon arrival in Pullman, students appointed to assistantships (TA or RA) should contact the Academic Coordinator on or before the first date of employment to complete required forms such as an [I-9](#) for employment eligibility and W-4 for withholding taxes. **Section 1 of the I-9 must be completed on or before the date of employment.** Section 2 must be completed by WSU staff within the first 72 hours of employment. We prefer to take care of both sections prior to employment. WSU subscribes to the electronic submission process; paper copies are not accepted. Contact the Johnson Hall Business Center staff for assistance.

A variety of documents can be presented to show employment eligibility and are described in the I-9 link above, but most often we see drivers license and social security cards or state-issued birth certificates for domestic students, and passports and visa documents for international students.

Assistantships are considered to be taxable income in the state of Washington and Federal tax will be deducted from your paycheck. There is no Washington State income tax.

Withholding guidelines for the W-4 are available on the [Payroll](#) website, for both domestic and international hires. The W-4 requires a [Social Security](#) card. If you do not have a social security card, you need to obtain one as soon as possible

For ease, international students can apply for a social security card during the required International Student Orientation. A letter is required from the department in order to apply. This receipt given to the student needs to be presented to our department personnel staff as soon as possible to complete the appointment and assure a timely paycheck.

Alternatively, students can obtain a social security card at a local office (Lewiston), but it is preferable to take advantage of the orientation session as these offices keep limited hours and contact by phone is difficult. Information and forms are available [here](#).

### Payroll

Fall assistantships begin August 16, and end December 31<sup>st</sup>. Spring assistantships begin January 1<sup>st</sup> and end May 15<sup>th</sup>. Payroll checks for the last half of the month are issued 10 days later (your first check will be September 10 or January 25). Payroll checks for the first half of the month are issued 10 days later, generally on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. Direct deposit arrangements with the [Payroll](#) office are encouraged.

### **Residency Requirement and Tuition Waiver**

The assistantship appointment will exempt the student from paying in-state tuition **if living in Washington State** during enrollment at WSU. WSU will provide out-of-state tuition waivers for the first year of studies if you are not a resident of Washington State; however, out-of-state tuition waiver cannot be guaranteed beyond one year. If you are not a resident of Washington State, you should begin the process immediately upon entrance to establish residency. Most required documents need to be in place for one year. Please review the [requirements](#) upon arrival to ensure a successful application. Students who have not established Washington State residency by the one-year limit will be required to pay out-of-state tuition, even if they have an assistantship.

Residency waivers are not up to departmental discretion, and the Graduate School will only grant out of state tuition waivers to domestic students for two semesters.

International students are not eligible to become residents. For international students, the assistantship appointment will exempt them from paying the out-of-state and in-state tuition if living in Washington State during enrollment at WSU.

### **No Tuition Allowed**

There are some instances where tuition is not allowed on grants; the student is instead appointed as a Project Assistant at an inflated salary which covers the resident tuition normally charged to the grant and the student is advised to register for payroll deduction of the tuition.

### **Residual and Mandatory Fees**

All students on an assistantship are required to pay residual and mandatory fees (i.e., fees not covered by the tuition waiver) each semester of approximately \$1,100. The residual fee pays for Health and Wellness Services, Pullman Transit, the Student Recreation Center, and a small portion of tuition not covered by the assistantship. Graduate assistants may choose to enroll in the university's payroll deduction plan to have these fees automatically deducted from their paycheck over the period of 8 pay cycles. Students may check with their department for more information when they arrive. Waiver of the mandatory fees will be requested by the Academic Coordinator for those students not residing in Pullman to take advantage of the service.

### **Responsible Conduct of Research Training**

The Graduate School requires all graduate students on an assistantship to complete the web-based [Responsible Conduct of Research Training](#). The paperwork for your assistantship cannot be processed until the training has been completed, so please notify our office of the date you completed it.

### **Health Insurance**

Students on a graduate student assistantship are provided health insurance at no charge. Dependent/spouse coverage is not automatically provided, but is available for a fee.

Representatives are available at [Health and Wellness Services](#) to answer your questions about WSU Student Medical Insurance, [studentinsurance@wsu.edu](mailto:studentinsurance@wsu.edu) or 509-335-3575. For more information about the Graduate Student Medical and Dental Insurance Plan, and to download health cards, please visit [here](#).

Students on appointment for the spring semester will be automatically covered throughout the summer.



### Assistantship Reappointments

Students must maintain a 3.0 Grade point average to be eligible for assistantships and be making satisfactory progress. Reappointment is also contingent upon the availability of funds.

### English Proficiency Exam for International TA's

The University requires that TA's (whose native language is not English) pass an [International Teaching Assistant](#) prior to beginning their TA duties. International Students must attend New International Student Orientation through the Office of International Students and Scholars.

### International Students and Scholars

International students should remain in contact with the International Programs Office, Global Services office both prior to starting their studies at Washington State University and throughout the duration of their studies. This will help to ensure that all deadlines, procedures, and policies with regard to international student status are met. Contact information follows.

International Programs  
Bryan Hall 108; Phone: 509-335-4508; Fax 509-335-2373

### Terms and Expectations

Graduate students on appointments enter into an agreement with the University that both parties are expected to honor. Graduate assistants must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA in all coursework subsequent to admission, and maintain full-time enrollment (10-18 credit hours) for an entire semester.

A half-time appointment requires graduate appointees to work 20 hours per week in addition to their coursework and to be at work each workday, including periods when the University is not in session (e.g., Spring and Thanksgiving Break), with the exception of legal holidays. Graduate students do not earn sick leave or annual leave. Therefore, all leave and absences during normal work hours must also be arranged with a student's major advisor and, if applicable, campus advisor.

It is important to note that any change to the duration of the appointment that causes it to be for a period less than a full semester or any change in the percent of appointment may cause an immediate termination of the Qualified Tuition Reduction (QTR), Operating Fee Waiver (OFW) and/or non-resident waiver (NR). If a student decides to terminate employment mid-semester, or if the FTE percentage is changed, **the waivers may be removed and the student may be responsible for paying the full tuition charges.** If a student's employment is terminated for academic performance and/or enrollment is cancelled, the student retains the OFW and non-resident tuition waivers, with the QTR ending when the employment is terminated.

Since dropping below 20 hours per week can jeopardize non-resident tuition waivers, department policy permits exceptions for students to work less than half-time while taking heavy course loads, but full-time during summers and other periods with light academic responsibilities. Research Assistant responsibilities may include research assigned by the student's advisor as well as thesis or dissertation research. Most Teaching Assistants should expect to spend up to 20 hours per week on TA duties. Work schedules must be arranged with the thesis or dissertation advisor and/or TA supervisors.

Students making satisfactory progress can expect funding for 2 to 2.5 years for a MS degree. Students working towards a PhD can expect funding for 2 to 3 years beyond the MS or 4 years beyond the B.S.

Students who want to withdraw from the appointment should always submit a letter of resignation to the Department Chair. For details on resignation, contact the Academic Coordinator, Johnson Hall Room 205.

### **Hourly Appointments (Timeslip)**

Summer hourly appointments are for one to three months normally provide a stipend at least equal to the student's monthly assistantship stipend. Summer timeslip appointments are coordinated by the Academic Coordinator, as directed by the advisors.

## APPENDICES

**Annual Review Form**

**Graduate Student Annual Review for 2014-2015**

*Crop and Soil Sciences, Horticulture, Plant Pathology*

The evaluation period for the annual review is May (or starting date) to May. Each student is responsible for completing Sections A and B, and then forwarding it **electronically** with a [curriculum vita \(CV\)](#) to their advisor in advance of the review meeting. **The student is responsible for arranging the annual review meeting.** The student's advisor will complete Sections C and D and review them with the student at the annual review meeting. Both parties will complete Section E (if applicable). Annual reviews must be completed and submitted (including CV) to Debra Marsh, Academic Coordinator, by **Friday, May 15, 2015**.

*This form must be typed*

**Section A**

Name:	
Year Entered:	
Degree Objective (MS or PhD):	
Degree Program:	
Advisor:	
Co-Advisor:	
Campus Advisor (if applicable):	
Other Committee Members:	
Number of committee meetings since last review:	
Date of most recent committee meeting:	
Program of Study approval date:	<i>Or anticipated filing date:</i>
Thesis/Dissertation subject title:	
Cumulative GPA:	
Seminar Date(s):	
Thesis/Dissertation proposal approval date:	<i>Or anticipated filing date:</i>
PhD Preliminary exam completion date:	<i>Or anticipated prelim date:</i>
What term do you anticipate finishing your degree requirements:	

**Section B. Self-Evaluation**

**Summarize your academic and research progress and plans.** Please address the following items:

1. What academic/research goals did you propose to accomplish in your last review (*not applicable for first year students*)?
2. What have you accomplished since your last review?
  - a. Discuss your academic and research progress
  - b. Describe your publications to date. Please list published manuscripts and book chapters, manuscripts in preparation (and expected date of submission), abstracts (professional papers and posters presented).
  - c. List professional activities such as awards/scholarships, meetings attended, abstracts/papers published, presentations given, and teaching experience.
  - d. Discuss your departmental and professional stewardship.
3. What are your greatest challenges and how will you overcome them?

**Discuss your future directions and goals as follows:**

1. Overall.
2. For the next review period.

**Section C. Advisor Assessment**

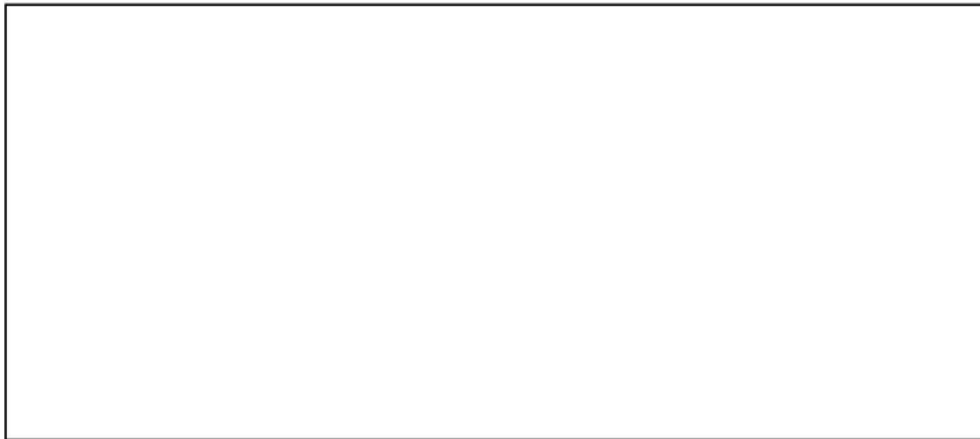
*Note to Advisor—be sure to also review the CV your student is required to prepare and provide with this review.*

Performance, Skill Ratings	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor	NA
Academic Performance						
Research Performance						
Work Habits						
Technical Skills						
Rate of Progress						
Communication Skills						
Teaching Performance						
Overall Rating						

**Please provide an assessment** of your student's research progress and accomplishments for the current review period (or research potential for a first year student). Comment on the student's strengths and weaknesses and provide specific recommendations or requirements on areas that need improvement. Consider the student's understanding of the scientific literature, recent proposal defense (PhD), seminar performance, and other research benchmarks.



**Outline specific conditions or expectations** that must be fulfilled prior to the next review and discuss the student's probable success in completing their degree requirements in a timely manner. If the probability is not good, please indicate why.



**Section D. Recommendations**

Overall Evaluation is \_\_\_ satisfactory or \_\_\_ unsatisfactory\*

*\*If the evaluation is **unsatisfactory**, enrollment should be \_\_\_ continued or \_\_\_ discontinued  
Conditions or recommendations for continued enrollment if evaluation is **unsatisfactory**:*

Signature of Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*My handwritten signature above acknowledges this evaluation has been discussed with me.*

**Section E. Certification of Assistantship Duties (if applicable):**

**Student:** The graduate assistantship position that you have held during this past year and the related tuition waivers were contingent upon factors as outlined in your offer letter. By signing below you certify you have met the following contingent factors for the preceding semester(s) during which you held an assistantship

(check all that apply: \_\_\_ Summer 2014 / \_\_\_ Fall 2014 / \_\_\_ Spring 2015)

- I remained enrolled full time (at least 10 [3 cr in summer] credits as defined in Graduate School policy manual, chapter 9) during the period of the appointment.
- I maintained a 3.0 cumulative GPA during the period of the appointment (or approved exception to policy)
- I met the service requirement of an average of 20 hours per week for 0.5 FTE as scheduled by my department/supervisor (or based on hours required for partial FTE appointment).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Sign Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Advisor/Supervisor Sign Date

**Each of you should retain a fully signed copy of the annual review prior to submitting the signed originals and CV to Deb Marsh by the May 15, 2015 deadline.**

Comments on review by student (optional):



## Guidelines for Authorship on Manuscripts

### Guidelines for Authorship on Manuscripts Summarized February, 2010

From the Harvard Medical School Guidelines (referenced by the VP for Research/Graduate School; <http://www.hms.harvard.edu/integrity/authorship.html>):

- Everyone who is listed as an author should have made a substantial, direct, intellectual contribution to the work. For example (in the case of a research report) they should have contributed to the conception, design, analysis and/or interpretation of data. Honorary or guest authorship is not acceptable. Acquisition of funding and provision of technical services, patients, or materials, while they may be essential to the work, are not in themselves sufficient contributions to justify authorship.
- Everyone who has made substantial intellectual contributions to the work should be an author. Everyone who has made other substantial contributions should be acknowledged.
- When research is done by teams whose members are highly specialized, individual's contributions and responsibility may be limited to specific aspects of the work.
- All authors should participate in writing the manuscript by reviewing drafts and approving the final version.
- One author should take primary responsibility for the work as a whole even if he or she does not have an in-depth understanding of every part of the work.
- The main/first author should define authorship based on the above criteria.

From Michigan State University (<http://rio.msu.edu/authorshipguidelines.htm>):

**Authorship** - A person claiming authorship of a scholarly publication must have met the following criteria:

- Substantial participation in conception and design of the study, or in analysis and interpretation of data;
- Substantial participation in the drafting of the manuscript or in the substantive editing of the manuscript;
- Final approval of the version of the manuscript to be published;
- Ability to explain and defend the study in public or scholarly settings.

(Note: these criteria follow closely those recommended by several professional associations. See especially the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 1988; 108: 258-65.)

**Acknowledgment** - Contributions that do not justify authorship should be acknowledged separately in the notes to the manuscript. These may include general supervision of a research group, assistance in obtaining funding, or technical support.

**"Honorary Authorship"** - A claim of authorship by, or assignment of authorship to, persons who may have been associated in some way with a study but do not meet the four criteria in item 1 may constitute an unethical research practice.

**Graduate Student Authorship** - "Faculty should be especially aware of their responsibility to safeguard the rights of graduate students to publish the results of their research." (*MSU Research Handbook*, 1985, p. 16, section 4.3.1.)

**Senior Author and Order of Authorship** - The senior author is generally defined as the person who leads a study and makes a major contribution to the work. All the authors at the outset of a project should establish senior authorship, preferably in a written memorandum of understanding. This memorandum of understanding should reference the authors' agreement to abide by their departments' policy on authorship or this University default policy on authorship. At the outset of the study the Senior Author should discuss the outline of work and a tentative Order of Authorship with the study participants. As projects proceed, agreements regarding authorship may need to be changed. It is the responsibility of the senior author to assure that the contributions of study participants are properly recognized.

**Disputes Over Authorship** - Disagreements over authorship, e.g. who has a right to be an author or the order of authorship, should be resolved by the Senior Author in collegial consultation with the other authors. When this process cannot reach resolution, the Senior Author should arrange with his or her chairperson for arbitration by a knowledgeable and disinterested third party acceptable to all the authors. If the authors cannot agree on a mutually acceptable arbitrator, then the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies shall appoint an arbitrator. During the arbitration process all the authors are expected to refrain from unilateral actions that may damage the authorship interests and rights of the other authors.

**Accountability** - Every author listed on a publication is presumed to have approved the final version of the manuscript. Each author is responsible for the integrity of the research being reported.

**Plagiarism** -The word *plagiarism* is derived from the Latin *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. The expropriation of another author's text, and the presentation of it as one's own, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism, in turn, constitutes misconduct in scholarship under University policies and procedures. Plagiarism in scholarly projects should be reported to one's chairperson, dean, or the University Intellectual Integrity Officer. (American Historical Association, *Statements on Standards*, 1993, p. 13)

**Distribution** -This policy should be widely distributed, especially to each new faculty, graduate student and research staff member in academic units.

## Rubric for Assessing Graduate Work in Crop and Soil Sciences

### Rubric for Assessing Graduate Student Work in Crop and Soil Sciences

PROGRAM-LEVEL COMPETENCY TARGETS = 4.0 FOR M.S. STUDENTS AND 5.0 FOR PH.D. STUDENTS

**1. KNOWLEDGE OF FIELD.** Understands the breadth and depth of knowledge associated with their discipline.

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
Clearly understands most or all of the concepts associated with the discipline as well as the challenges and embedded issues.		Understands some of the key concepts associated with the discipline. May or may not describe embedded issues.		Does not understand the key concepts, challenges, or embedded issues associated with the discipline; or does so minimally.		Unable to rate based on this work
Demonstrates accurate and nuanced use of disciplinary language, definitions, and terms appropriate to the audience the work is intended for.		Use of technical language, definitions and terms is generally accurate and appropriate for the audience the work is intended for.		Often misuses technical terms and concepts, and/or relies on overly general layperson's language.		
Demonstrates appropriate breadth AND depth of knowledge associated with the discipline.		Demonstrates appropriate breadth of knowledge associated with the discipline but lacks depth (or visa versa).		Demonstrates limited breadth and depth of knowledge associated with the discipline.		
Comments:						

**2. SCIENTIFIC REASONING.** Designs, conducts, analyzes and interprets research important to their discipline.

**2a. Literature: Search, Selection, & Review.**

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
Uses appropriate, relevant, and high quality info sources to create a presentation that is current, well balanced and richly supported by the cited sources.		Uses a moderate number of respectable sources that, for the most part, cover the needed info. Some sources may be irrelevant or out of date, and/or key area(s) of the issue may not be addressed.		Minimal or no evidence of search, selection, or source evaluation skills.		Unable to rate based on this work
Evaluates most or all sources for quality, perspectives, relevance, and currency.		Only minimally evaluates sources for quality, relevance and currency		No evaluation of info sources is present.		
Identifies gaps in the literature and/or relevant gaps in their own knowledge or skills. Good knowledge of previous and current research in their discipline.		Shows some signs of evaluating info gaps in the literature or in their own knowledge or skills. Gaps in knowledge of previous and current research in their discipline.		Does not identify the info gaps or what they still need to know. Limited knowledge of previous or current research in their discipline.		
Comments:						

**2b. Defining the Problem.**

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
Identifies a focused, unique, original problem that is challenging and well defined.		Identifies a somewhat focused problem that is interesting but not particularly challenging or is simplistic. OR the problem is unsatisfactorily defined and characterized, with important omissions of key considerations.		The problem, if identified, is confused or simplistic.		Unable to rate based on this work
Potential for significant contribution of the research to their discipline		Limited potential for contribution of the research to their discipline or with more focus could prove to contribute significantly.		Contribution of the research to their discipline is not clear.		
Comments:						

*College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences, Office of Assessment and Innovation, and the Sustainable Food & Agricultural Systems Education Project*

**2c. Methodology & Data Presentation.**

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
<p>Approach and methodology are complete, appropriate and correct for the problem. Has knowledge of emerging methodologies in their discipline.</p> <p>Data collected and presented demonstrates a clear understanding of the info and its relationship with the problem.</p> <p>Data presented appropriately - graphs and/or tables are complete, accurate, relevant, and contain appropriate headings, descriptors, significant figures, etc. Use of statistics is appropriate and presented clearly and completely. Interpretations drawn from statistical presentations are accurate.</p>	<p>Approach and methodology are related to the problem but do not fully address the problems due to flaws or inappropriate approach. Has limited knowledge of emerging methodologies in their discipline.</p> <p>Data collected and presented adequately. Relationship of the data to the problem are not entirely clear.</p> <p>Data presented are generally appropriately - graphs and/or tables contain relevant headings, but some details may be missing or unclear, such as units, significant figures, etc. Statistical information is generally understood and interpreted correctly.</p>	<p>Poor/inappropriate methodology approaches demonstrated, or approach and methodology are unrelated to the problem. Has no knowledge of emerging methodologies in their discipline.</p> <p>Limited data collected or data/approach demonstrates little attention to or understanding of the problem</p> <p>Data presentation are incomplete, poorly labeled, confusing, or missing all together.</p>	<p>Unable to rate based on this work</p>			
<p>Comments:</p>						

**2d. Data Analysis and Interpretation.**

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
<p>Use and interpretation of info are accurate and thorough, including interpretation of data given in graphs and tables, as well as the overall results and conclusions given by each source.</p> <p>Logical and highly insightful inferences from the info presented. Excellent job in integrating literature and data in appropriate and creative ways. Analysis demonstrates firm understanding of data. Alternate interpretations of, or inferences from, data are discussed appropriately and in detail.</p>	<p>Accurately uses and correctly interprets most of the info obtained from sources, including data given in graphs and tables, as well as the overall results and conclusions given by each source. One or more minor points may be overlooked or misinterpreted.</p> <p>Generally makes logical inferences from the info presented, with only few or minor mistakes. Demonstrates a basic understanding of the data and some ability to connect literature and data to analyze evidence, but analysis is confusing in some spots or contains inaccuracies. Analysis generally reflects evidence reviewed, collected and presented. May provide brief, appropriate mention of alternative interpretations.</p>	<p>Little or no interpretation of data, instead is simply a restatement of facts and ideas found elsewhere. Misunderstands or misrepresents info given in their sources.</p> <p>Limited or no logical inferences from the info presented. Does not appear to understand the info.</p>	<p>Unable to rate based on this work</p>			
<p>Comments:</p>						

**2e. Conclusions and Recommendations.**

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
<p>Conclusions are accurate, appropriate, and clearly linked to problem and data presented.</p> <p>Conclusions and recommendations are balanced and qualified to account for uncertainties in the data or unpredictability of the system, and student's own biases.</p>	<p>Conclusions are reasonable but may not take into account all critical factors.</p> <p>In a limited way, students consider uncertainties or other limitations of the conclusions or evidence.</p>	<p>Conclusions are inaccurate and/or unreasonable, do not reflect the research and data presented, or are merely a simplistic summary not tied to the original problem.</p> <p>Conclusions and recommendations are biased and do not reflect the research and data, suggesting views were established before or in spite of the evidence.</p>	<p>Unable to rate based on this work</p>			
<p>Comments:</p>						

3. **COMMUNICATION.** Communicates effectively to a diverse group of people using appropriate traditional and emerging technological media.

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
Captures and communicates the intended idea(s) accurately and clearly.		Captures and communicates the intended idea(s) accurately but parts are not clear.		Inadequately/inaccurately captures and communicates the intended idea(s) due to gaps and digressions. Little attention is paid to accuracy.		Unable to rate based on this work
Main points connect with the audience and are smoothly tied together.		Generally easy to identify main points and transitions are usually smooth.		Difficult to identify main points. Transitions may be rough.		
Compellingly conveys why the issue matters.		Background and context sufficient to indicate the issue is important.		Limited background info and context so not at all clear why issue matters.		
Visuals (graphs, tables, diagrams, etc) are clear, concise, and relevant.		Visuals (graphs, tables, diagrams, etc) generally support the written component, but some may be overly complex, simplistic, or redundant.		Not clear how the visuals (graphs, tables, diagrams, etc) add credibility to the topic.		
Polished, error-free, and engaging. Professional.		Contains errors, but errors do not distract from or misrepresent content and ideas.		Multiple errors in grammar, syntax, punctuation, etc., that obscure and/or misrepresents the content.		
Comments:						

4. **ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION.** Demonstrates potential for original contribution to their discipline.

6 - Mastering	5 - Effective	4 - Competent	3 - Developing	2 - Emerging	1 - Minimal	N/A
Research demonstrates excellent potential for original contribution to their discipline. Research is unique, well organized, complete, and statistically sound.		Research demonstrates some potential for original contribution to their discipline. Research is unique but contains flaws in interpretation, organization, completeness and/or statistics.		Research contains serious flaws that would make it unpublishable. Not unique.		Unable to rate based on this work
Research prepares student for further productive research beyond graduate school.		Research prepares student for limited research beyond graduate school		Limited or no potential for student to do further research in this area.		
Comments:						

**Rubric for Assessing Graduate Work in the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences**

**August 2011**

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_; Date: \_\_\_\_\_; MS or PhD: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check one:** Proposal seminar \_\_\_\_\_; Prelim exam: \_\_\_\_\_; Final Seminar \_\_\_\_\_; Defense \_\_\_\_\_

**Check one:** Faculty \_\_\_\_\_; Graduate student: \_\_\_\_\_; Staff: \_\_\_\_\_; Professional in the field: \_\_\_\_\_

For each of the learning outcomes below, please choose the score which best corresponds to the overall level demonstrated in the student work using the attached rubric for guidance. (6/5 = *Mastering*; 4/3 = *Developing*; 2/1 = *Minimal*; N/A = *Unable to rate*). Please use whole numbers or increments of 0.5.

Learning Outcome	Score
<b>1. Knowledge of Field.</b> Demonstrates adequate breadth and depth of knowledge of the field in their area of research.	
<b>2. Scientific Reasoning.</b> Appropriately designs, conducts, analyzes, and interprets research effectively on important problems in their discipline.	
<b>a. Literature: Search, Selection, and Review.</b> Reviews the literature in a manner that demonstrates comprehensive knowledge of previous and current research in the field of study.	
<b>b. Defining the Problem.</b> Identifies a viable question within the field of study and effectively documents the contribution of the research to the area of study.	
<b>c. Methodology and Data Collection.</b> Designs and implements appropriate research experiments to test the hypothesis or the solve problem.	
<b>d. Data Analysis and Interpretation.</b> Analyzes and interprets research data appropriately. Demonstrates sufficient knowledge of appropriate concepts, theories, and emerging methodologies in their area of research.	
<b>e. Conclusions and Recommendations.</b> Presents conclusions and recommendations that are accurate, clearly linked to data presented, and take into account all critical factors.	
<b>3. Communication.</b> Communicates effectively to a diverse group of people using appropriate traditional and emerging technological media.	
<b>4. Original Contribution.</b> Demonstrates potential for original contribution to their discipline.	

**Comments:**

## Research Proposal Guidelines

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR GRADUATE PROGRAM STUDENT DISSERTATION PROPOSALS

*These guidelines were compiled at the request of and as an aid for Ph.D. graduate students to develop their dissertation proposal, as a component of their preliminary exam.*

#### **PURPOSE**

The full dissertation proposal should present:

- The long term goals, objectives and scientific, significance of the proposed work; The suitability of the methods to be employed;
- The rationale for the research and benefits to society.
- The merits of the proposed project must be clearly stated.

#### **PROPOSAL PAGE FORMATTING**

- Number of pages: 8 - 15 not including references cited, timeline, and facilities (items E, F and G below). Individual Graduate Programs have different page requirements but most have a maximum of 15 pages. Students should check with Graduate Coordinators in their program area for specifics.
- Visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are encouraged and should be included in the 15-page limitation.
- Font: Cambria, Courier New,, Times New Roman or similar fonts: 11 points or larger.
- 10 point fonts are acceptable for figure captions, mathematical formulas and equations, table and diagram captions.
- Tables and figures can be embedded in text or listed at the end of the proposal at the discretion of the student's advisor
- No more than six lines of text within a vertical space of one inch.
- Margins in all directions must be at least an inch.
- Single column format.
- The proposal major sections and sub-sections should be delineated with headings and sub-headings.

#### **PROPOSAL ELEMENTS AND ORGANIZATION**

##### **A. Cover Sheet**

- 1) Student name
- 2) Committee members
- 3) Type of proposal (Dissertation, Second Non-Thesis)

**B. Project Summary** (Maximum 300 words, written in the third person, understandable by technically literate non-scientists)

- 1) Overview - need for research
- 2) Description of methods and expected results including experimental resources, design, and data analysis
- 3) Statement of intellectual merit, - potential of proposed research to advance knowledge 4. Statement of broader impacts of proposed activity- potential of the proposed research to benefit society.

##### **C. Project Description**

- 1) Introduction. The research problem and major objectives of the proposed project should be stated. The need for research should be supported with a description of the present state of knowledge in the field, work in progress in the laboratory in which the student is working, and work in progress elsewhere.
- 2) Specific Objectives. Include a bullet list or outline of major and specific objectives.

- 3) Preliminary work by objective:
  - a. Ongoing or recently completed activities and pilot studies significant to the project. Concentrate on reporting results in this section.
  - b. If the same experiments are to be repeated in the proposed work, it is ok to describe those details in the experimental plan section and refer the reader to those descriptions.
- 4) Experimental plan by objective. For each objective, the experimental plan should include:
  - a. Re-statement of the objective,
  - b. A hypothesis for the proposed experiments within that objective. The hypothesis must be testable, falsifiable, parsimonious, precise, useful, and relevant
  - c. A rationale for this hypothesis.
  - d. Experimental methods to be used. The project activities may be based on previously established and/or innovative methods and approaches, and must be well justified. For each objective:
    - i. Address what will be done
    - ii. Why this method was chosen
    - iii. How the experiment will be conducted
    - iv. Feasibility of achieving results with this method/experiment
    - v. How the data will be collected and stored
    - vi. How the data will be analyzed and interpreted including statistical methods
  - e. Expected results by objective
  - f. Potential limitations and problems. Include alternative methods to complete the objective.

**D. The broader impacts of the proposed research.** What are the benefits that will accrue if the project is successful?

**E. Timeline for achieving research goals.** Include in this timeline the milestones for completing course requirements and preliminary exams.

**F. References cited.** Each reference must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal title, book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. If the document is available electronically, the website address also should be identified and verified. The use of bibliographic software is encouraged. Please double check to make sure that this software has accurately formatted references in the same style for all references cited.

**G. Facilities, equipment and other resources.** This section of the proposal is used to assess the adequacy of the resources available to perform the effort proposed. List applicable equipment, laboratory space, greenhouse and field space, available to complete the work proposed.

#### **FINAL COMMENTS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The dissertation proposal should be initiated during the second semester of the Ph.D. program. In addition to the graduate advisor, committee members and other students, grant writing support is available through

- The WSU Graduate and Professional Writing Center (Smith CUE 414, gpwc@wsu.edu, <http://universitycollege.wsu.edu/units/writingprogram/units/writingcenter/grad&prof/>),
- Crops/Soils 511: Science Writing Workshop. (2 credits, graded S/F, offered spring semester).