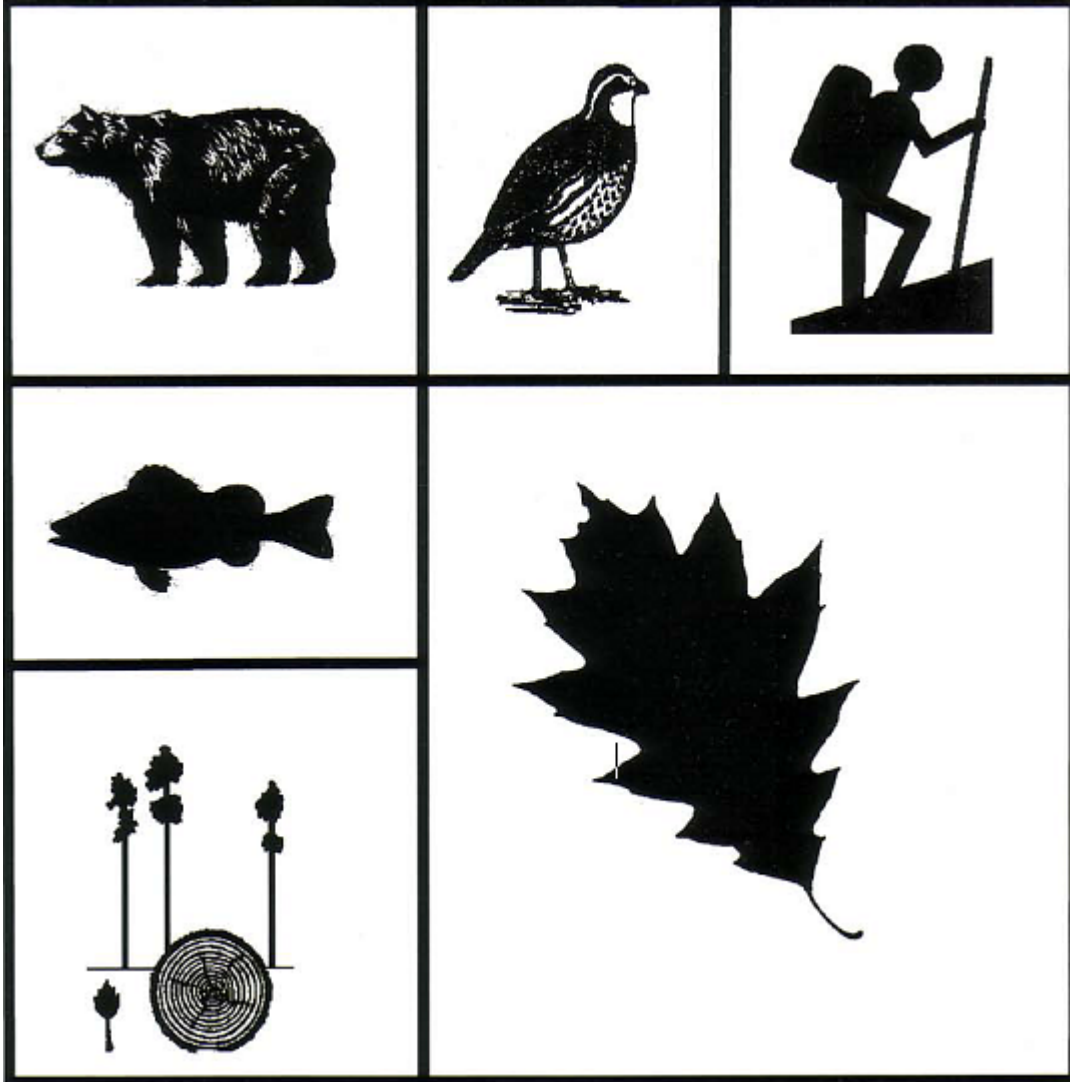


Graduate Student Handbook



School of Natural Resources

Herbert College of Agriculture
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Ph.D. Natural Resources
M.S. Forestry
M.S. Wildlife and Fisheries Science

snrgradbook

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INTRODUCTION

In order to serve the mission and vision of the Graduate School and preserve the integrity of Graduate Programs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, information related to the process of graduate education in each School is provided for all graduate students.

Based on Best Practices offered by the Council of Graduate Schools, this handbook provides a detailed articulation of the information specific to the graduate degrees offered in the School of Natural Resources. The School Graduate Handbook does not deviate from established Graduate School Policies noted in the Graduate Catalog <https://catalog.utk.edu/index.php>, but rather provides the specific ways in which those policies are carried out.

Graduate students are expected to be aware of and satisfy all regulations governing their work and study at the university. Students should refer to the Graduate Catalog, to *Hilltopics*, and to the publications on the Appeals Procedure and the Graduate Assistant Handbook available on the Graduate School website (<https://gradschool.utk.edu/graduate-student-life/understanding-your-rights-and-obligations/>).

The policies and procedures of the Graduate Program in the School of Natural Resources are developed and implemented by consensus of the School faculty. Dr. Neelam Poudyal is Graduate Program Coordinator who helps administer the program.

GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

Pursuit of a graduate degree is a partnership between the graduate student, the faculty advisor, and the graduate student's committee. The graduate degree is a research-driven experience (with the exception of the M.S. Forestry - non-thesis option), with graduate coursework designed to enhance the overall background of the student. In general, the graduate student develops the thesis/dissertation research in consultation with the graduate advisor and with input from the graduate committee.

The graduate student is responsible for designing and conducting the research, analyzing the resulting data, and writing the thesis or dissertation. In addition, the student is expected to develop several manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals during or after completing the degree requirements. The graduate student must meet the degree requirements relative to successful completion of their program of study. The student is also expected to contribute to the teaching program of the advisor and the School in general and assist with other duties associated with the advisor's program and other School activities.

The advisor is responsible for providing critical input in designing the research, providing technical and logistical support during research implementation, assisting with conducting and interpreting analyses, and providing critical review during the writing phase. When available, the advisor will also provide financial support in the form of a Graduate Research Assistantship or a Graduate Teaching Assistantship. The advisor also should provide input on the student's program of study and encourage other professional development activities for the student, such as attending and presenting at professional meetings, and attaining other skills to enhance the student's overall portfolio.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Admission to the Graduate School

Application for admission to graduate study must be made through Graduate Admissions <http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/>. The completed graduate application for admission includes one official transcript from each institution previously attended and an application fee payable to The University of Tennessee. An undergraduate Grade-Point Average (GPA) of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale, or 3.0 during the senior year, is required. This is the minimum requirement for admission to The Graduate School. In addition, three online letters of recommendation must be completed by former professors in the major field(s) or employers and submitted to Graduate Admissions. If the student's native language is not English, scores from Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) must be sent to Graduate Admissions. See The University of Tennessee Graduate Catalog for more information on the regulations of The Graduate School.

Admission to the School Master of Science Program

Admission to the Master of Science degree programs in the School of Natural Resources is determined by a School Review Committee after the student has met the requirements for admission to the Graduate School. The Graduate School requires that the applicant have a Bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting agency or foreign equivalent. Students applying for admission are expected to have at least a 3.0 grade point average (4.0 scale) on undergraduate coursework. While the SNR recommends prospective students take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), it is not required for admission to the program. Since different faculty members use the scores

from GRE test with different weights in their evaluation of prospective students, it is recommended that the applicants consult with the faculty member with whom they intend to work with to find out the importance of it. All application forms are available on UT's Graduate Admissions web site <http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/> . All application forms are processed within the School by the Graduate Program Coordinator. A School Review Committee composed of three potential major professors in the field of study reviews each application. A recommendation is made to The Graduate School by the Graduate Coordinator in counsel with the School Review Committee.

After review of an application by the School Graduate Committee, some applicants may be required to enroll in supplemental undergraduate courses to address deficiencies. If the undergraduate degree is different from the graduate degree, prerequisites often are added in consultation with the advisor and the student's committee. For example, if the first forestry degree to be earned is the Master's degree, certain prerequisites must be met to fulfill Society of American Foresters accreditation requirements. Such prerequisites may be required in addition to the regular requirements for the degree and must be met before entering the program or as soon as possible after entrance. The student must earn a grade of C or better (or S, for S/NC grading) in each prerequisite course.

Admission to the Natural Resources Ph.D. Program

Admission to the Natural Resources Ph.D. program is determined by a School Review Committee after the student has met the requirements for admission to the Graduate School. Most applicants will have earned a masters degree before applying to the doctoral program. In exceptional cases, students with an undergraduate degree only will be admitted to the Ph.D. program. All students applying for admission are expected to have at least a B average

(3.0 on 4.0 scale) on undergraduate and previous graduate coursework. While the SNR recommends prospective students to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), it is not required for admission to the program. Since different faculty members use the scores from GRE test with different weights in their evaluation of prospective students, it is recommended that the applicants consult with the faculty member with whom they intend to work with to find out the importance of it. All application forms are located on UT's Graduate Admissions web site <http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/>.

All application forms are processed within the School by the Graduate Program Coordinator. A Review Committee composed of three potential major professors in the field of study review each application. A recommendation is made to the Graduate School by the Graduate Coordinator in counsel with the School Review Committee.

Other Types of Admission

Students not admitted to a degree program may be admitted under non-degree or provisional status. Non-degree is for applicants who wish to take graduate classes, but do not wish to pursue a degree program. A student may be admitted under the provisional status for one semester or for one course in each of two semesters. To remain on provisional status, a student must receive permission from the Graduate School to register for a second or succeeding semester. Admission to the non-degree or degree status requires a minimum of a 3.00 GPA in all course work taken while in provisional status, including at least 6 hours of graduate work.

Under non-degree admission, there is no specific limit on the number of courses taken, but before accumulating 15 hours of graduate course work in this status, a non-degree student must apply for and be admitted to a specific program or file a Plan of Study form with the

Associate Dean of the Graduate School for approval to continue taking courses. The form must include educational objectives and a list of proposed courses. A maximum of 15 hours taken before acceptance into a degree program may be applied toward a graduate degree, if approved by the student's graduate committee. Courses must be taken within the 6-year time limit specified for the degree. Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. International students on a non-immigrant visa may not enroll under provisional or non-degree status. Only in exceptional situations, with prior approval from the School, are students admitted to the School of Natural Resources under provisional status. Admission as non-degree is more common, but not routine.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Assistantships

A limited number of graduate research assistantships (GRAs) and graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs) are available in the School. These assistantships provide a basic stipend, plus waiver of maintenance fee and out-of-state tuition. However, the student may be responsible for paying some activity and technology fees. Stipends are subject to federal taxation. Federal income taxes are withheld on the total amount. Tennessee state income tax is not levied on payrolls or stipends. Assistantships are administered by a policy statement of the Graduate School.

Graduate Research Assistantships

GRAs have the objectives of supporting faculty research and providing assistance to qualified and deserving graduate students. Some GRAs are funded by AgResearch and are allocated to individual faculty for approved research projects by the School Director. Additional GRAs are obtained via grants obtained by individual faculty. Graduate students supported by GRAs are expected to assist their major professors with research and are expected to assist in teaching where possible.

Master's degree appointments are for two (2) years and Ph.D. degree appointments are for three (3) years. Appointments can exceed these time periods based on availability of external funding obtained by individual faculty. Students who begin an assistantship after the start of a term or who terminate an assistantship before the end of a term are financially responsible for a portion of their tuition and fees for that particular semester. For example, a student may be appointed to a GRA on 1 July, but be enrolled for the whole summer term, or a student on an assistantship may terminate before the end of the semester to take employment elsewhere.

The student's portion of the tuition is prorated on the basis of the term that he or she is not on assistantship.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

GTAs are available in the School to support classroom instruction. GTAs are 9-month appointments. A quarter-time GTA is expected to devote at least 10 hours per week to helping faculty members with classes. Classes are assigned to GTAs at the start of each semester. GTAs may be assigned classes other than those taught by their major professor.

Other Financial Support

Biweekly Payroll

Some faculty have limited funding to pay graduate students an hourly wage for research work. Interested students should check with their major professor about this employment.

Cooperative Agreements

Financial support of graduate students is sometimes available in cooperative agreements between the School of Natural Resources and private industry, state or federal agencies as temporary or permanent employment or contract work. Such funding can be secured through individual student efforts, but more often through faculty efforts. Students interested in this financial support should speak with their advisor.

Scholarships

There are a variety of scholarships available for students **NOT** on assistantships. Scholarships available to graduate students in the School of Natural Resources through the Herbert College of Agriculture include:

- Carl I. Peterson Scholarship Endowment Fund
Eligible: Undergraduate and graduate student in forestry

- Guy Coheleach Conservation Endowment Scholarships

Eligible: Undergraduate and graduate students in the School of Natural Resources.

- John Richard Fain Student Aid Fund

Eligible: Undergraduate and graduate students from Jefferson County, Tennessee, enrolled in the Herbert College of Agriculture.

- Jimmy Jackson Conservation Award Fund

Eligible: Students from Dickson and surrounding counties, Tennessee, enrolled in the Herbert College of Agriculture who have shown an outstanding interest or aptitude in the study of conservation.

- George T. Weaver Scholarship Endowment Fund

Eligible: Undergraduate and graduate students in the School of Natural Resources.

- Rehabilitation Corporation of Tennessee Scholarships

Eligible: Graduate students enrolled in the Herbert College of Agriculture.

- Gary and Joretta Schneider Scholarships

Eligible: Graduate students enrolled in the School of Natural Resources.

Applications can be obtained from the Office of the Dean of the College. Applications for a given academic year are due early in the spring semester just prior to that academic year.

Students should also check with The Graduate School, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, and the Veterans Affairs Office about other funding opportunities.

REGISTRATION AND ADVISING

Registration is required of all graduate students when using university facilities and/or faculty time. The minimum number of hours for registration is one. Registration allows use of services such as library checkout, laboratories, and recreation facilities not open to the public. The maximum load for a graduate student is 15 hours and 9 to 12 hours are considered a full load. For the summer term, graduate students may register for a maximum of 12 hours in an entire summer term or for a maximum of 6 hours in a five-week summer session. Students may enroll in only one course during a mini-term session. Students holding a one-half time assistantship normally should enroll for 6-11 hours. A one-fourth time graduate assistant normally should take 9-13 hours. A student on a one-half time assistantship who takes 6 hours will be considered full time. Students receiving financial aid should consult with the School/program director concerning appropriate course loads. Courses audited do not count toward minimum graduate hours required for financial assistance.

Graduate students are advised on their program of study by their advisor. The program of study is then reviewed and approved by the graduate committee. Admission to Candidacy indicates agreement that the student has demonstrated ability to do acceptable graduate work and that satisfactory progress has been made toward a degree. This action usually connotes that all prerequisites to admission have been completed and a program of study has been approved. The Admission to Candidacy form must be signed by the student's committee and all courses to be used for the degree must be listed, including transfer course work.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The School offers two Master of Science degree programs: a program leading to the Master of Science in Forestry (https://catalog.utk.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=35&poid=17749) and a program leading to the Master of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Science (https://catalog.utk.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=35&poid=17853).

Both thesis and non-thesis options are available for the major in Forestry. The forestry thesis option also is available with a concentration in Bio-Based Products and Wood Science and Technology and Forest Business. A thesis is required in Wildlife and Fisheries Science and there is the option to have a concentration in Wildlife Health. The School also offers a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Natural Resources (https://catalog.utk.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=35&poid=17796).

Master of Science - Thesis Option

Course Work

A candidate for a Master's degree in Forestry or Wildlife and Fisheries Science must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit courses. Only courses listed in the Graduate Catalog are offered for graduate credit. The 30 hours must include: 1) 6 hours of Thesis (Forestry 500 or Wildlife and Fisheries 500); 2) 18 hours in the major (major course may be from any academic School but must be approved by the student's committee as contributing the student's major focus area) including the thesis hours, and 3) 20 hours of 500-level courses, including the thesis hours. All students are required to include a 1-hour credit Seminar (Forestry 512 or Wildlife and Fisheries Science 512) in their programs twice

while they are in residence. Graduate students must register for 6 hours of graduate course work to be considered a full-time student. Beyond these requirements, a student's committee determines the distribution of the 30 hours. The wildlife health concentration requires 9 credit hours from wildlife health-related courses.

Forestry 593 and Wildlife and Fisheries Science 593 are Independent Study courses which offer graduate students the opportunity to pursue individualized study of a topic of interest to them under the direction of a faculty member. These two courses may be taken for a maximum of 6 credit hours each. They are not to be used to complete part of a student's thesis research.

The School participates in a program designed to give graduate students an opportunity to develop an interdisciplinary specialization, examples include environmental policy and statistics. For details, consult the Graduate Catalog.

Thesis

All Master's candidates in the thesis option are required to complete a thesis to the satisfaction of their graduate committee. The thesis represents the culmination of an original research project completed by the student under supervision of a major professor. Prior to initiating thesis research, the student must find a faculty member (including adjunct faculty) in the School willing to serve as Major Professor. The Major Professor will advise the student about courses, supervise the student's research and facilitate communication within the School, with other Schools, and with The Graduate School. With few exceptions, students will have been selected by a Major Professor for a particular research project before beginning their Master's program. In the event a student has no Major Professor, the student

should consult with the School Director and secure a Major Professor and research project during the first semester of attendance at The University of Tennessee.

The student must prepare a proposed outline of course work and a research plan. The plan should include the proposed research title, objectives, justification, procedures, and tentative timetable. These documents must be presented to the committee for approval within the first two semesters of residence. Subsequent changes in course work or departures from the original research plan must be approved by the Major Professor prior to such actions. Research involving human subjects or live vertebrate animals must receive prior approval by the appropriate university committee.

Prior to graduation, students must present a School seminar regarding their research results. Presentation of the findings at a professional, technical meeting is encouraged as well. The required FOR/WFS 512 seminar presentation is considered preparatory to this professional seminar and not a substitute.

Before beginning to write the thesis, a graduate student is strongly encouraged to participate in a Thesis Workshop offered each semester by The Graduate School. The UT Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations provides the correct format for theses (<https://gradschool.utk.edu/academics/graduation/theses-and-dissertations/>).

Exit Requirements

Before leaving The University of Tennessee, it is the responsibility of each graduate student to clean and organize all equipment and laboratories used during their research. Upon completion of their research, graduate students are strongly encouraged to work with their Major Professor to produce one or more technical publications. If the student does not follow through on publication, the use of these data is at the discretion of the Major Professor

after a reasonable period of time. Students should realize that the research they conduct is part of approved research of the University of Tennessee. Unless other arrangements are specifically arranged in writing with research supervisors, original data sets must be deposited with research supervisors before leaving the University. Early discussions regarding authorship with all research collaborators (including peers and faculty other than the Advisor) and procedures for publication are encouraged. All sources of funds and any direct assistance with the research should be appropriately acknowledged in the thesis and publications.

Master of Science - Non-Thesis Option

Course Work

A Master of Science degree with a major in Forestry is available under the non-thesis option. Course requirements include: (1) 32 hours of course work with no more than 9 credit hours of the minimum can be below the 500 level, (2) Forestry 511: Problem Analysis in Forest Resources.

Common MS Requirements- Both Options

Graduate Committees

A Graduate Committee is required for both the Thesis and Non-Thesis MS options. Within the first two semesters in residence, the graduate student and Major Professor must form a graduate committee. The committee must be composed of the Major Professor and at least two other members of the graduate faculty. One member of the graduate faculty must be from a School other than Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries. A fourth member of the committee may be from outside the University. If the student intends to minor in a discipline

outside the School of Natural Resources, that discipline must be represented on the committee by a faculty member.

Residency

No minimum residency exists for the Master's Program, however there is an overall time limit of six (6) years for the completion of all requirements for the degree from the date of matriculation. Course work taken more than six years prior to the date of graduation must be re-validated if it is to be used in meeting program requirements.

Time Schedule for Master's Degree Requirements

| | |
|--|--|
| Secure Major Professor | During first semester |
| Form committee, prepare outline of proposed course work and research work plan | Within first two semesters |
| Apply for admission to candidacy for Master's degree | No later than commencement day of the semester preceding the semester of graduation |
| Diploma application deadline | Deadline date will be available at registration |
| Deadline for submission of thesis final draft to committee | 2 weeks before oral exam |
| Deadline for scheduling oral exam | Not later than 1 week prior to the oral exam |
| Formal written announcement of oral exam distributed to FWF faculty | At least 3 days in advance of oral exam |
| Deadline for taking oral exam | At least 3 weeks before the final date for approval and acceptance of thesis by The Graduate School. Deadline for non-thesis students is 2 weeks later |
| Presentation of School or professional seminar | Prior to last day of semester of graduation |

Deadline for final approval
of thesis by Graduate School thesis
consultant

Not later than 2 weeks prior to
commencement

Specific dates for a given academic year are available from The Graduate School

(<https://gradschool.utk.edu/graduation/graduation-deadlines/>).

Natural Resources Ph.D.

Course Work

A candidate for the Natural Resource Ph.D. must complete 72 hours of coursework beyond the bachelor's degree. Forty-eight hours must be in graduate coursework approved by the student's doctoral committee. Up to 24 hours of master's-level coursework may be applied to the 48-hour requirement. In addition, 24 hours of FWF 600 – Doctoral Research and Dissertation – are required. A minimum of 6 semester hours must be taken in UT Knoxville courses at the 600-level, exclusive of dissertation hours.

Program of Study

All students in the program will be expected to complete the minimum number of credits within each of the numbered areas listed below. Specific courses to meet these requirements will be determined by the student's graduate committee.

1. Research Methods and Analysis - 9 credits in at least two of the following subject areas:
 - A. Research/Experimental Design
 - B. Statistics/Econometrics/Biometrics
 - C. GIS/Remote Sensing
2. Core Subject Areas - 33 credits to be determined by Doctoral Committee
3. Professional Development - 5 credits
 - A. Teaching - all students are expected to complete FWF 601 and assist in teaching a course during their tenure in the program. (3 credits)
 - B. Professional Communications – all students will be required to

complete FWF 612 twice as part of their program of study. Part of the seminar requirement will consist of assisting in the development and conduct of FWF 512. (1 credit/semester x 2 semesters = 2 credits total)

4. FWF 600 (24 credits)

Doctoral Committee

The doctoral committee is identified by the student and Major Professor and consists of at least four faculty members. At least two of the committee members must be from the School of Natural Resources and one member must be from an academic unit other than SNR.

Three of the committee members, including the Major Professor, must have been approved by the Graduate School to direct doctoral research. The committee should be formed during the first year of the student's program.

Dissertation

During the first year, the student should develop a research prospectus that outlines the research problem to be addressed as part of their doctoral research. The prospectus will be presented to the student's committee and the committee will approve the research topic and approach. All students will be required to complete, present, and defend a dissertation. The student should provide each member of the committee a copy of the dissertation at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense. All students will be required to present a seminar on their dissertation as part of the degree requirements. The seminar can be part of the dissertation defense or presented before the formal defense.

Time Schedule for Ph.D. Degree Requirements

| | |
|---|--|
| Secure Major Professor | During first semester |
| Complete qualifying examination, if required | During first semester |
| Form committee, prepare proposed outline of course work and research work plan | Within first two semesters |
| Complete written and oral comprehensive examinations | Upon completion of program of study |
| Apply for admission to candidacy for Ph.D. degree | No later than commencement day of the semester preceding the final semester |
| Diploma application deadline | Deadline available at time of registration |
| Deadline for submission of dissertation final draft to committee | 2 weeks before oral exam |
| Deadline for scheduling oral exam | No later than 1 week prior to oral exam |
| Formal written announcement of oral exam distributed to FWF faculty | At least 3 days in advance of oral exam |
| Deadline for taking oral exam | At least 3 weeks before the final date for approval and acceptance of thesis by The Graduate School, deadline for non-thesis students is 2 weeks later |
| Presentation of School seminar | Prior to last day of semester of graduation |
| Deadline for final approval of 2 copies of dissertation by Thesis Consultant at The Graduate School | Not later than 2 weeks prior to commencement |

Specific dates for a given academic year are available from The Graduate School

(<https://gradschool.utk.edu/graduation/graduation-deadlines/>).

EXAMINATIONS

M.S. (thesis option) Final Examination

A final oral exam is required prior to acceptance of the thesis. The oral exam is broad in nature, covering relevant coursework and contemporary topics and not simply an opportunity to edit and revise the thesis. The student must present a copy of the final draft of the thesis (which the major professor feels represents the best effort of the student) to each committee member at least two weeks before the oral exam. A formal written announcement regarding a student's oral exam must be distributed to School faculty by the Major Professor at least three days in advance of the exam. Students must be enrolled for at least three hours of credit the semester they take the final exam. The oral exam will be evaluated by the graduate committee and the student will be passed if a majority of committee members believe the student displayed sufficient technical competency and critical thinking skills to be well prepared as a professional in their chosen field of study. If the student fails to meet this standard, they can retake the oral exam once after spending at least two weeks of additional time in preparation.

M.S. (non-thesis option) Final Comprehensive Examination

Upon completion of at least 28 credit hours of approved study the student is required to take and pass final comprehensive written and oral examinations. The comprehensive exams will be evaluated by the graduate committee. The exam will be evaluated by the graduate committee and the student will be passed if a majority of committee members believe the student displayed sufficient technical competency and critical thinking skills to be well prepared as a professional in their chosen field of study. If the student fails to meet this standard, they can retake the exam once after spending at least two weeks of additional time

in preparation. Oral and written examination deadlines for non-thesis students are given by The Graduate School each semester. Students who complete all degree requirements except their final examinations must enroll in Forestry 502: Registration for Use of Facilities (3-15) each semester they plan to use University facilities or faculty time before their degree is completed.

Ph.D. Examinations

Qualifying Examinations

Students may be required to complete a written qualifying exam during their first year in the program. The need for the qualifying examination is left to the discretion of the student's committee. The qualifying exam is intended to identify any deficiencies that doctoral students may have early in their program of study and, therefore, should be administered as early in the student's tenure as possible.

Comprehensive Examinations

All doctoral students are required to successfully complete oral and written comprehensive examinations on all coursework completed as part of the Ph.D. requirements. The exam is scheduled by the Major Professor when the student has completed all or nearly all the coursework. The student's Ph.D. committee will determine the content, nature, and schedule of the comprehensive exam and certify the results. The Major Professor is responsible for securing exam materials from committee members and administering the written and oral components of the exam. If a student fails to successfully complete the comprehensive examinations initially, the exams may be administered once more, no sooner than the following semester.

STANDARDS, PROBLEMS AND APPEALS

Academic Standards

Graduate education requires continuous evaluation of the student. This includes not only periodic objective evaluation, such as the cumulative grade point average, performance on comprehensive examinations, and acceptance of the thesis or dissertation, but also judgments by the faculty of the student's progress and potential. Continuation in a program is determined by consideration of all these elements by the faculty and the Director of the academic unit. The academic records of all graduate students are reviewed at the end of each semester, including the summer term. Graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 on all graduate courses taken for a letter grade of A-F. Grades of S/NC, P/NP, and I, which have no numerical equivalent, are excluded from this computation.

Academic Probation

Once at least 9 hours of graduate course work has been completed, a graduate student will be placed on academic probation if his/her cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. A student will be allowed to continue graduate study in subsequent semesters provided each semester's grade point average is 3.0 or greater. Upon achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.0, the student will be removed from probationary status.

Dismissal

If a student is on academic probation, the degree or non-degree status will be terminated by the Dean of the Graduate School if the student's semester GPA falls below 3.0 in a subsequent semester. When the particular circumstances are deemed to justify continuation,

and upon recommendation of the appropriate academic unit and approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, a student on probation whose semester GPA is below 3.0 may be allowed to continue on a semester-by-semester basis.

Dismissal of a graduate student by the School is accomplished by written notice to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School. Registration for courses in the School from which a student has been dismissed will not be permitted, except by written authorization from that School.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all members of the academic community. An honor statement is included on the application for admission and readmission. The applicant's signature acknowledges that adherence is confirmed. The honor statement declares

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

Grievances

In the unhappy event that a graduate student becomes involved in a conflict with another individual at UT that cannot be resolved between them, the student should take orderly, dispassionate steps to solve the problem. The student should first seek help from his/her

Major Professor, unless of course, that is where the problem lies. The next level of appeal is the School Director.

Procedures within the School should ensure that: (1) actions taken within the School abide by the general framework of university regulations; (2) the student be informed of the reasons of the School decision; (3) the student be notified promptly in writing of any change of status; (4) the student has an opportunity to seek counsel from at least two faculty members and, if desired, from the School Director (see Graduate Council Appeal Procedure, revised 5 May 1999); (5) the student has an opportunity to present his or her case before the faculty or appropriate committee; (6) the student be notified promptly in writing of the School decision and avenues of appeal; (7) written documentation is maintained of meetings held, actions taken, and decisions made, and (8) decisions are made within a reasonable time frame.

NON-ACADEMIC INFORMATION

It must be emphasized that when graduate students need to take action concerning payroll, travel, vehicles, purchasing, computer use, keys, photocopying, typing, or long distance phone calls they should do so through their Major Professor, who must authorize all such actions.

Payroll

The School of Natural Resources provides payment for employed students, either monthly or biweekly. School employment forms and federal tax status forms are available from the Senior Administrative Assistant in the School office (426 Plant Biotechnology Building.) and must be completed and approved before a student begins employment. Students employed on research/teaching assistantships (GRA/GTA) receive payment on the last working day of each month. No time sheets are required, and paychecks are directly deposited in the student's bank account. Some students may be paid on a biweekly basis and are required to return supervisor approved time sheets to the Senior Administrative staff by noon on the last Friday of each pay period. The Senior Administrative Assistant is responsible for the records of these employees and provides time sheets and information on payment schedules.

Travel

In-state travel on business does not require a travel authorization. Expenses may be claimed according to current state guidelines by filing appropriate reimbursement forms accompanied by receipts for lodging, registration fees, and miscellaneous expenses. Travel Authorizations must be filed to claim expenses for out-of-state travel. Travel advances are available to students for anticipated expenses while on official business. A form requesting

the travel advance can be submitted to the School bookkeeper when the travel authorization has been approved. If expense account forms are not processed within 30 days of return from travel, the amount of the advance will be deducted from the employee's paycheck.

Vehicles

UT Transportation Services

Students must be employed by The University of Tennessee and hold a valid driver's license to be eligible to operate a University vehicle. The University provides general liability coverage for employees injured while on official business. However, in the case of an automobile accident, injured parties must make an appeal to the State Board of Claims for compensation. If the operator is found negligent in an accident, he/she is considered liable for suit, not the University. It is advisable for employees to carry personal liability coverage which provides protection in any vehicle. Students or others not employed by the University who are riding in the UT vehicle are not provided coverage by the state.

The University of Tennessee Fleet Management (<https://fleetmanagement.utk.edu/>) provides vehicles varying from subcompacts to vans and four-wheel drive trucks for project use. Vehicles must be reserved and payment arranged in advance of the desired date of use. Vehicles can be returned after hours by parking the vehicle in the Fleet Management lot and placing the keys, credit cards, and receipts in the box provided at the back door. Vehicles are serviced by Fleet Management personnel prior to use to ensure safe and reliable operation. Fuel should be obtained from the Fleet Management facility when in town. When out of town, fuel can be purchased with the credit card supplied with the vehicle, following regulations in force at the time. Only some gas stations will honor the vehicle credit card, so check before pumping the fuel. A 1-800 number is listed on the card if assistance is needed to

locate a participating gas station. All receipts must be returned with the vehicle, and the vehicle must be returned in “essentially the same condition” as when it was picked up.

School Vehicles

Certain faculty members have vehicles assigned to them for use on research projects. Each faculty member has different requirements for the respective vehicle(s) and must be contacted by the student prior to use.

Equipment

Use

The School owns and maintains some audio-visual equipment available to students for classroom or project use, with approval of their major professor. This equipment must be checked out in the main office (474 Plant Biotechnology Bldg.). Basic field and laboratory equipment is available for graduate student use. Students should see their major professor for proper check-out and check-in procedures. It is the user's responsibility to perform simple maintenance. Broken or lost equipment should be reported to the student's major professor and repaired or replaced as soon as possible.

Purchasing

Purchasing should be approved by the Advisor. Purchases of less than \$2000 may be billed directly to the School by the vendor without a requisition procedure. Procurement cards are available through the Advisor and should be used for purchases whenever possible. Receipts should be turned in to Advisor or person in charge of the procurement card as soon as possible. Out of pocket expenditures by individuals may be reimbursed through petty cash. For all reimbursable purchase, a store receipt must be returned to the bookkeeper

accompanied by a petty cash form (T-4 form). Purchases in excess of \$2000 must be requisitioned through Purchasing; the Bookkeeper should be consulted for details.

Miscellaneous

Keys

Key requisitions are made when necessary through your Major Professor to the Senior Administrative Assistant, who has the necessary forms and information. There is a fee for each lost key. It is the keyholder's responsibility to report missing or stolen keys promptly. Key access to School facilities requires an awareness of proper security precautions. When leaving a building after hours, or a building that is normally locked, a student must re-lock the door. All authorized users should have a key. Students should also lock interior offices and lab doors. It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that university facilities are as secure as possible.

Photocopying

The School shares a photocopy machine located in Room 474 Plant Biotechnology Building capable of copying, enlarging, reducing, or making digital copies. Through the Advisor, students may request limited copying on these machines for research purposes. Photocopy machines are also in all university libraries, and there are several local copying services for personal use. The School does not provide copying except where it applies to research, teaching and extension and has the Major Professor's approval.

Office Support

School office supplies (pads, pencils, etc.) are not available for student use. Some exceptions may apply to Graduate Research Assistants (GRA) and Graduate Teaching

Assistants (GTA) for use in their research and teaching responsibilities, but these students should acquire the necessary supplies through their Major Professor.

Student Offices

Offices for graduate students are located in various buildings on the Ag Campus. Office space is limited. GRAs and GTAs are given preference in allocation of desk space, although an attempt is made to accommodate all graduate students.

The address and telephone numbers of the School are:

School of Natural Resources
The University of Tennessee
474 Plant Biotechnology Building
2505 E. J. Chapman Drive
Knoxville, TN 37996-4563
(865) 974-7126
FAX (865) 974-4714

There are mailboxes for graduate students in Room 474 Plant Biotechnology Building. A campus mail service is provided for inter-office correspondence. Mail is picked up and delivered once daily at approximately 2:00 p.m. A box for outgoing mail is located near the School mailboxes.

School phones are located in most student offices. Use of School phones, especially for long-distance calls, must be approved by the Advisor. Such calls should be made from the Advisor's phone (or other designated phone) so billing charges will be accurately assessed.

Safety Considerations

- The UTIA Safety Office provides policies, procedures, and training for graduate students to help ensure a safe work environment. Lab safety procedures, biosafety procedures, reporting of accidents and incidents, training and other information can be obtained from the UTIA Safety Office website <https://utiasafety.tennessee.edu/>.

- Web links to campus level resources for counseling, harassment, etc. are provided at the end of this handbook in the Appendix.

School History

The Department of Forestry at the University of Tennessee was established in 1964, and renamed the Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries in 1977. It became the School of Natural Resources in 2023. The School has a fully accredited academic program as recognized by the Society of American Foresters and is the only professional forestry program in the state. The mission of the School is: "To advance the science and sustainable management of natural resources to promote their health, utilization, and appreciation in Tennessee, the region, and beyond through programs in teaching, research, and extension." Graduate study in the School began in 1966 when a Master of Science with a major in Forestry was approved by the University of Tennessee Graduate Council. The Master of Science in Wildlife and Fisheries Science was established in 1970. A non-thesis option for the Master of Science in Forestry was initiated in 1979, and a Doctoral program in Natural Resources was approved in 2002. Financial support for much of the research within the School comes from a myriad of federal and state agencies, private organizations and corporations. Relationships exist in the form of grants, memoranda of understanding, cooperative research agreements, employee training, use of facilities, equipment and field sites, and other resource sharing activities. The professional staff consists of the School director, research/teaching professors, Extension professors, adjunct professors, professors emeritus, and numerous post-doctoral fellows, research or extension associates, assistants, and technicians. Cooperation with Oak Ridge National Laboratory, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Geological Survey,

Tennessee School of Conservation, Tennessee Division of Forestry, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and various forest industries further strengthens the teaching and research programs of the School. The School has about 37-50 graduate students enrolled throughout the year, with many receiving financial support from various funding sources.

The Southern Appalachian Field Laboratory

SAFL is in the U.S. Geological Survey's Biological Resources Division and is located on the campus at the University of Tennessee. Research at the SAFL is directed toward solving natural resource management problems faced by the U.S. School of the Interior (DOI), with particular emphasis on the southern Appalachian region. This area is rich in biological diversity but threatened with some severe environmental problems. These include air and water pollution, exotic pests, human use and abuse, and urban and agricultural development. The central focus of SAFL is to provide technical assistance and to facilitate cooperative research in the biological, geophysical, and social sciences with emphasis on upland ecosystems in the southern Appalachian highlands. We believe that the role of the SAFL is best expressed with an emphasis on experimental research; long-term or regional, national, or even global issues; and a holistic perspective of problem solving directed toward entire ecosystems. Our function is to conduct sound scientific research to be effected by in-house studies, cooperative studies with colleges and universities, and serving as a broker for research work through cooperative agreements. Dr. Joseph Clark serves as Branch Chief (Research Ecologist) whose interests include ecology of large mammals, population demographics, and habitat relationships.

Physical Facilities

Buildings

The School of Natural Resources shares the Plant Biotech Building (PBB) on the Agricultural Campus with the Schools of Ornamental Horticulture and Landscape Design, Entomology and Plant Pathology, and Plant and Soil Sciences. Some faculty member are located in McCord Hall. The Center for Renewable Carbon faculty and graduate students are located in the office and laboratory research building on the east end of the Ag Campus. Adjunct wildlife faculty and graduate students are also located in the Environment and Landscape Lab on the east end of the Ag Campus. The Wildlife Health lab suite of 3rd Floor PSB is a Biological Safety Level (BSL) 2 lab, and students need to be familiar with Biosecurity Procedures before entering the lab.

Field Research and Teaching Areas

Eastern Tennessee and the surrounding Southern Appalachians offer an abundance of forest, park and aquatic resources for teaching and research. Several national forests, national parks, wildlife areas, TVA lakes, state parks, and forest industries are within a one- to two- hour drive of campus. The quality and closeness of this resource base, and the agencies which manage it, are a real strength to the School. The School of Natural Resources has five University-owned or operated forested tracts available for field work. Because of the diverse characteristics of these tracts, each one is briefly described.

Ames Plantation

The 18,600-acre Ames Plantation is located near Grand Junction, Tennessee, 360 miles from Knoxville. About 10,000 acres are classified as forest land. The Plantation is part of the Hobart Ames Foundation established by the late Mrs. Julia Ames as a permanent

memorial to her husband. A provision of Mrs. Ames' will stipulates: "The trust herein... shall be created, held and operated exclusively for scientific and educational purposes as said CASNR or Institute of Agriculture is or may be lawfully authorized to pursue". The School of Natural Resources has been encouraged by the Trustees to make extensive use of the area both in research and instruction. A dormitory was built and a major purpose of this construction was to house forestry spring field session students. Forest lands on the Plantation include pine plantations, upland oak-hickory, and some fine stands of bottomland hardwoods. The combination of a wide variety of timber types and adjacent agricultural lands provides excellent resources for both instruction and research in forest and wildlife resources.

Cherokee Woodlot

The Cherokee Woodlot, a 120-acre area owned by the University of Tennessee, is located about one mile from the Agricultural Campus in Knoxville. This woodlot includes a wide array of forest types ranging from old-field, Virginia and shortleaf pine, and loblolly pine plantations, to oak-hickory and excellent cove hardwoods. Extensive use is made of this easily accessible field laboratory.

Forest Resources Research and Education Center

The Forest Resources Research and Education Center is comprised of three major university-owned and managed forests that are used for research and education purposes. The Cumberland Forest is an 8,000-acre forest tract located in Scott and Morgan counties, 64 miles from Knoxville. Major timber type groups on the forest include: yellow pine - hardwoods, cove hardwoods and upland oak-hickory. At present the instructional use of this

forest is for field trips to observe results of research in plantation management, spoil-bank rehabilitation, species comparison tests, and forest tree improvement.

The Oak Ridge Forest and Arboretum is 2,260 acres, located 18 miles from the Knoxville campus near Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Timber types range from old-field Virginia pine on severely eroded sites to fine stands of yellow-poplar. An arboretum of about 250 acres has been established as part of the Oak Ridge Forest.

The Highland Rim Forest of 860 acres is located in middle Tennessee about 163 miles from Knoxville. Much of the forest is in planting projects that include species comparison and provenance tests, hardwood and conifer regeneration investigations, and heritability studies.

School Organizations

Graduate school is an important step toward an individual's entrance into his/her profession. Activity in professional societies is regarded as an indispensable part of a natural resource manager's career. All graduate students should be members and take an active part in their respective professional societies.

Society of American Foresters - Student Chapter

The Society of American Foresters (SAF) - Student Chapter is chartered by the SAF national organization and the East Tennessee chapter of the Kentucky-Tennessee SAF. All students enrolled in the School of Natural Resources are eligible for membership in SAF through student membership in the UT Chapter. Application for membership should be made through the Faculty Advisor for SAF.

Student Wildlife and Fisheries Society (SWFS)

The Student Wildlife and Fisheries Society is comprised of members of the UTK Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society and the Tennessee Student Fisheries Association of the American Fisheries Society, as well as other interested students. Objectives, purposes, activities and principles are those established by The Wildlife Society and the American Fisheries Society, which include the conservation, management, and wise use of the wildlife and fisheries resources of the world. More specifically, the SWFS provides an opportunity for better liaison between the individual member, regional activities, and the parent Societies. It serves to focus the aims and objectives of the parent Societies upon professional wildlife/fisheries needs, problems and events at the state level. Full membership is available to any member of The Wildlife Society/American Fisheries Society in good standing, and affiliate membership is available in SWFS to those persons not members of the parent organizations. Meetings are held monthly during the school year. Graduate students in wildlife/fisheries should be members of both the parent society and the SWFS. Graduate students in Forestry who have an interest in wildlife/fisheries are encouraged to join SWFS.

Student Chapter of the Wildlife Disease Association

The Student Chapter of the Wildlife Disease Association combines students, faculty, and staff from across the Institute of Agriculture who are interested in wildlife health. Student members include undergraduate and graduate students from the School of Natural Resources and graduate and veterinary students from the College of Veterinary Medicine. Meetings are held every 2 weeks during the school year.

Honorary Societies

Honorary societies to which graduate students in the School can be nominated include Xi Sigma Pi (Forestry), Gamma Sigma Delta (Agricultural and Natural Resources Research),

Alpha Zeta (Agriculture), and Sigma Xi (Scientific Research). Students nominated for membership in one of these societies should consider that such memberships represent important elements of their overall academic credentials.

FACULTY

A current list of faculty with their expertise can be found at:

<https://naturalresources.tennessee.edu/our-people/>

APPENDICES

Pertinent Graduate Student Web Pages:

- Teaching and Learning Innovation – Developing Future Faculty
<https://teaching.utk.edu/futurefaculty/>
- International Student and Scholar Services – Center for Global Engagement
<https://international.utk.edu/>
- Counseling Center
<https://counselingcenter.utk.edu/>
- School of Natural Resources Website
<https://naturalresources.tennessee.edu/>
- Herbert College of Agriculture
<https://herbert.tennessee.edu/>
- Funding, Fellowships, Assistantships for Graduate Students
<https://gradschool.utk.edu/costs-and-funding/>
- Graduate School
<https://gradschool.utk.edu/>
- Graduate Catalog
<https://catalog.utk.edu/>
- Graduate Student Appeals Procedure
<https://gradschool.utk.edu/graduate-student-life/understanding-your-rights-and-obligations/>
- Graduate Student Senate
<https://gss.utk.edu/>
- International House
<https://ihouse.utk.edu/>
- Office of Access and Engagement
<https://dae.utk.edu/>

- Office of Multicultural Student Life

<https://multicultural.utk.edu/>

- Human Research Protection Program – Institutional Review Board

<https://research.utk.edu/research-integrity/human-research-protection-program/>

Research Compliance/Research with Animal Subjects – Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

<https://iacuc.utk.edu/>

- Library Services and Resources for Graduate Students

<https://libguides.utk.edu/graduate>

- Office of Information Technology

<https://oit.utk.edu/>

- Housing

<https://housing.utk.edu/>

- Safety

<https://safety.utk.edu/>