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Introduction and Overview

The mission of the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences (hereafter referred to as the Department) is:

- To prepare students for careers in soil, plant, and environmentally related disciplines.
- To discover scientific knowledge and to develop technologies to sustain environmentally sound and profitable production systems.
- To ensure that technology development and transfer to user clientele and society in general is effective and timely.
- To promote the wise use, management and stewardship of soil, plant, and water resources.

Graduate education is essential to meeting this mission. Graduate students are an extension of professorial research efforts which in turn provides the necessary practical training for the next generation of research scientists. Courses are designed to provide a logical progression of learning the technical aspects within each of the Department's disciplines. In addition to the Agronomy, Plant Breeding, and Soil Science programs, the Department is home for the Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences (MEPS) program. The Department also houses faculty who are members of the Food Science and Technology, Genetics, and Water Management and Hydrological Science programs intercollegiate faculty.

The commodities of research emphasis in the Department are cotton, small grains, corn, grain sorghum, peanuts, forages, turf grasses and bioenergy crops. Research disciplines include cereal chemistry food quality; herbicides and weed control; soil-plant-water relationships; soil clay mineralogy; soil chemistry and fertility; soil genesis; soil microbiology; soil physics; crop management; crop breeding; crop physiology; tissue culture; genetics; disposal of organic wastes; and land reclamation.

The student's graduate program is planned to ensure adequate training in botany, biochemistry, chemistry, genetics, geology, mathematics, physics, physiology, or other sciences that deal with the fundamental truths in an area of specialization. Interdisciplinary programs involving members of other departments on campus are possible.

The facilities of the Department are many and varied. They include laboratories for: studying the food qualities of cereal and other grains; soil testing to provide information on the fertility of individual soils and to aid in increasing crop yields; genetic and cytologic studies of forage plants, bioenergy plants, corn, cotton, peanuts, turfgrasses, and sorghum; environmental studies of soils and plants; studying the chemistry of soil; weed ecology and pesticide fate; the study of herbicides for the control of weeds in modern agriculture soil and water microbiology, and the impact of modern agriculture on the environment. The Department has several greenhouses and large growth chambers. Collections of food and fiber plants are maintained for use in teaching and research. The University maintains a large farm operation for field research. Ambitious students will have ample opportunity to be exposed to laboratory, greenhouse, and field research activities as they advance toward their educational goals. The facilities of the electron microscopy and other specialized laboratories can be used on a service basis. Other research

Degrees Available

Program Area	Degree**
Agronomy	M.S., Ph.D.
Food Science and Technology*	M.S., Ph.D.
Genetics*	Ph.D.
Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences*	M.S., Ph.D.
Plant Breeding	M.S., Ph.D.
Soil Science	M.S., Ph.D.
Water Management and Hydrological Sciences*	MS., Ph.D.

* *These degrees are through their respective Intercollegiate Faculty; Soil and Crop Sciences serves as the students home department if their committee chair is Soil and Crop Sciences faculty.*

** *The M.S. and Ph.D. degrees require a thesis or dissertation, respectively, dealing with the original research.*

Scholastic Requirements

This document summarizes policies and procedures to be followed by graduate studies in Soil and Crop Sciences. Students should consult the Graduate Catalog or the Office of Graduate Studies as the final authority on all matters discussed in the handbook.

Grade Point Average

Graduate students must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (4.0 scale) for all courses which are listed on the degree plan; as well as for all graded graduate and advanced undergraduate course work (300 and 400 level) completed at Texas A&M and eligible for application toward a graduate degree. Graduate students will not receive graduate degree credit for undergraduate courses taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. Graduate courses on the degree plan may not be taken S/U, except for 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 693, 695, and 697. Graduate courses not on the degree plan may be taken S/U.

If either a student's cumulative GPA or the GPA for courses listed on the degree plan fall below 3.0, he or she will be considered scholastically deficient and may be dropped from the University unless the minimum GPA is attained by the end of the next long semester. The student will have one semester to bring their GPA back to 3.0 or risk loss of their assistantship. Various scholarships have varying requirements for minimum GPA in order to retain the scholarship.

Additional information can be found in the Texas A&M University Graduate Catalog, which can be found on-line at www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogs/.

Requirements Leading to the Master of Science Degree

1. 32 graduate credit hours beyond the B.S. degree; general requirements are:
 - a. 23 course hours approved by the student's advisory committee and the Office of Graduate Studies.
 - b. Statistics 651 or equivalent.
 - c. Graduate Agronomy seminar (1 hr).
 - d. No more than 8 hours of SCSC 691 (Research) or SCSC 685 (Directed Studies).
*Do not register for any 684, 685 or 691 course with a 700 section number.
 - e. No more than 9 hours of upper level (300 or 400) undergraduate courses and no graduate credit for the following courses required for a B.S. degree:
 - SCSC 101
 - SCSC 105
 - SCSC 301
 - f. See Graduate Catalog for additional requirements, www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogs/.
2. A thesis written on original research as directed by student's advisory committee.

Requirements Leading to the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

1. 64 graduate credit hours beyond the M.S. degree (or 96 hours beyond the B.S. degree in cases where no M.S. degree is obtained; general requirements are:
 - a. No set number of course hours is required; however, most committee chairs and advisory committees demand from 32 to 40 semester hours of classroom study, which usually includes courses in fields other than agronomy.
*Do not register for any 684, 685 or 691 course with a 700 section number.
 - b. Graduate Agronomy seminar (1 hr).
 - c. Students who accumulate more than 99 semester credit hours may be required to pay out-of-state tuition on any additional hours.
 - d. See Graduate Catalog for additional comments: www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogs/.
2. A dissertation written on original research as directed by the student's advisory committee.

International Admission

Foreign nationals make up a significant portion of the graduate population in the Department as well as Texas A&M University. This international mix of students adds to the graduate experience. International Student Services (ISS, 845-1824) works with the Department to make sure all immigration issues are resolved fairly and quickly. Once the student is officially admitted to Texas A&M and the Department has tendered an offer of an assistantship, the prospective student's committee chair should copy ISS with the assistantship offer and ISS will initiate the proper paper work allowing the student to obtain the proper visa. Barbara Bracken can be of assistance in this effort. All international students on assistantship **MUST** obtain a social security number. ISS will inform you of the steps to complete this.

Language Requirement

Foreign nationals whose native language is not English are required to show English language proficiency. This is accomplished by [1] scoring at least 213 on the computer generated Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), 550 on the paper generated TOEFL, or 80 on the Internet Based form (iBT); or [2] scoring 6.0 on the IELTS; or [3] scoring 400 (146 on the current scale) or better on the verbal portion of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE); or [4] completing all 4 years of a B.S. degree at a U. S. university or college.

Continuous Registration

Graduate students receiving financial assistance from the Department or through University scholarships must register for 9 credit hours during each of the Fall and Spring semesters, and 6 hours during the Summer (either 6 hours during the 10-week session or 3 hours in each of the 5-week sessions). This constitutes full-time status. Students who are self supported are not required to meet these guidelines. All students in graduate degree programs requiring a thesis, dissertation, internship, or record of study (i.e., all Soil and Crop Sciences graduate students) must be in continuous registration. This continuous registration includes graduate students who have completed all course work on their degree plans [other than SCSC 691 (Research) or SCSC 684 (Internship)]. Once all formal course work is completed **and the student is not on assistantship/fellowship** continuous registration is satisfied by registration for at least 1 and not more than 4 hours during the Fall and Spring semesters. Summer semester registration is **ONLY** required if the student plans to take examinations or otherwise use University resources or facilities, or defend their thesis or dissertation. The continuous registration can be satisfied either:

In Absentia: the student must not have access to or use of facilities or properties belonging to the Texas A&M System during the semester;

In Residence: students who will be on campus or located at one of the Research and Extension Centers or Experiment Stations, and therefore using University facilities must register "in residence" for at least 1 credit hour during the Fall and Spring semesters, and the Summer semester if taking exams or defending.

NOTE: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS may have additional requirements and should consult with International Student Services (845-1824) to ensure that they are in compliance with immigration requirements and enrollment status.

NOTE: SELF SUPPORTED STUDENTS are not required to register during the summer sessions regardless of whether or not they have completed their formal course work.

Steps Leading to a Master of Science Degree

There are several steps that must be successfully completed to fulfill the requirements for the M.S. degree in Soil and Crop Sciences. These include:

Communicate with Department Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Wayne Smith

Once a student has applied for admission to Texas A&M University, the Office of Graduate Admissions converts all information to electronic format and notifies the Department of the application. *Letters of recommendation should be mailed directly to Dr. Wayne Smith, Associate Department Head, Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, 2474 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-2474.* Once the student's application and letters of recommendation are received, the student's information is circulated to the appropriate faculty. A student is accepted for graduate study only if a faculty member can be identified who will serve as the student's graduate advisory committee chair. This usually means that the faculty member and student have similar research interests and may depend upon the ability of the faculty member to provide funding for an assistantship.

Establish Advisory Committee

Students should, in consultation with their committee chair (and co-chair if applicable), identify appropriate faculty in both Soil and Crop Sciences and other departments to serve as members of their graduate advisory committee. This should be accomplished as soon as possible, preferably in the student's first long semester, as the committee will aid in planning the student's research and course work leading to their degree. One member of the advisory committee must be from a department other than Soil and Crop Sciences. All members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Submit a Degree Plan

In consultation with their advisory committee, students **MUST** submit a degree plan that identifies the courses leading to the M.S. degree. The degree plan (<http://ogs.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's advisory committee, Dr. Wayne Smith, and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's second long semester and no later than 90 days prior to final oral or thesis defense. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. This is an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their advisory committee.

Submit a Thesis Proposal

In consultation with their advisory committee, students **MUST** submit a thesis proposal that identifies the research problem which the student has been assigned, a partial literature review of the problem, objectives of the research, and the student's approach to the research. The thesis proposal (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's graduate advisory committee, Dr. Wayne Smith, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The document **MUST** be submitted no less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

Apply for Degree and Pay Graduation Fees

These items must be accomplished during the first week of the student's final semester. Students should note this and all deadlines on the OGAPS (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) calendar.

Submit Thesis to Advisory Committee

Well before submitting a request to schedule the thesis defense, students should meet with their committee chair and confirm that all course work is completed or will be complete in an appropriate manner. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS should confirm with their committee chair that all English language requirements have been completed. When all course work and English language requirements are satisfied, the student may submit his/her thesis to their committee.

Complete Residence Requirements

Graduate students who have lived away from College Station and attended classes at the College Station campus in a sporadic fashion must verify with OGAPS that they have met the residence requirements. These requirements state that the student must reside and attend classes at the College Station campus for 2 consecutive long semesters. OGAPS must confirm that the residence requirement has been fulfilled before the student may defend their thesis.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam

The request to schedule the student's thesis defense must be submitted to OGAPS (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) at least **10 working days** prior to the exam. There may be additional time requirements posted on the OGAPS calendar. The request must be approved by the student's advisory committee chair, co-chair if applicable, and Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

The exam results must be returned to OGAPS within 10 working days of the scheduled date of the exam.

Submit Thesis

Upload one approved final copy of the thesis as a single .PDF file (thesis.tamu.edu) and submit a signed approval page to the Thesis Office (Evans Library, 845-2225). Students should check the OGAPS calendar for semester deadlines relative to submission and graduation. The thesis must be approved by the advisory committee and Dr. Wayne Smith.

The steps leading to an M.S. degree are illustrated on the following page:

Summary of Steps to Fulfill Master of Science Degree in Soil and Crop Sciences

Item	Description
Meet with Departmental Graduate Coordinator	<i>When:</i> Before first semester registration
Establish Advisory Committee	<i>When:</i> During student's first semester
Submit Degree Plan	<i>When:</i> Before the end of student's second long semester and no later than 90 days prior to final oral or thesis defense. (OGAPS will block registration for the following semester). <i>Approval:</i> On-line process after consultation with advisory committee.
Submit Thesis Proposal	<i>When:</i> No less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for Final Examination <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
Apply for Degree; Pay Graduation Fees	<i>When:</i> During the first week of students final semester (see OGAPS calendar)
Submit Thesis to Advisory Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm all degree plan courses are complete. • Confirm ELPE, if applicable 	<i>When:</i> Well before submitting request to schedule final exam.
Complete residence requirement, if applicable	<i>When:</i> Before or during final semester <i>Approval:</i> Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
Submit request for permission to schedule final exam	<i>When:</i> Must be received by OGAPS at least 10 WORKING DAYS prior to the exam. Additional time requirements are on the OGAPS calendar for deadlines. NOTE: Results are to be submitted to OGAPS within 10 working days of the exam. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
Submit Thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single .PDF file • Signed approval page 	<i>NOTE:</i> See Thesis Manual for format <i>When:</i> See OGAPS calendar for each semester deadline. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator
If required, submit Research Focus and Benefits Form	<i>NOTE:</i> See Thesis Manual for format. <i>When:</i> See OGAPS calendar for each semester deadline. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator

NOTE: student must be continuously registered until all degree requirements are met.

Steps Leading to a Doctor of Philosophy

There are several steps that must be successfully completed to fulfill the requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Soil and Crop Sciences. These include:

Communicate with Department Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Wayne Smith

Once a student has applied for admission to Texas A&M University, the Office of Graduate Admissions converts all information to electronic format and notifies the Department of the application. *Letters of recommendation should be mailed directly to Dr. Wayne Smith, Associate Department Head, Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, 2474 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-2474.* Once the student's application and letters of recommendation are received, the student's information is circulated to the appropriate faculty. A student is accepted for graduate study only if a faculty member can be identified who will serve as the student's graduate advisory committee chair. This usually means that the faculty member and student have similar research interests and may depend upon the ability of the faculty member to provide funding for an assistantship.

Establish Advisory Committee

Students should, in consultation with their committee chair (and co-chair if applicable), identify appropriate faculty in both Soil and Crop Sciences and other departments to serve as members of their graduate advisory committee. This should be accomplished as soon as possible as the committee will aid in planning the student's research and course work leading to their degree. One member of the advisory committee must be from a department other than Soil and Crop Sciences. All members must be members of the Graduate Faculty.

Submit a Degree Plan

In consultation with their advisory committee, students MUST submit a degree plan that identifies the courses leading to the Ph.D. degree. The degree plan (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's advisory committee, Dr. Wayne Smith, and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's fourth long semester and no later than 90 days prior to preliminary examination. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. This is an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their advisory committee.

Complete English Language Requirements

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS who fail to score 213 (computer) on the TOEFL or 80 on the Internet Based form (iBT), 6.0 on the IELTS, or 400 on the verbal portion of the GRE are required to take the English Language Proficiency Exam (ELPE). These students must successfully complete all portions of the ELPE, or retake the TOEFL or GRE and score a passing grade before they can schedule their preliminary exams.

Review Prelim Eligibility Requirements

About the end of their fourth or fifth long semester and several weeks before they anticipate taking their prelims, students should review the eligibility requirements for the preliminary exam. Students should obtain the preliminary exam checklist form from the OGAPS homepage (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>). This checklist must be approved by the student's advisory committee chair, and Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator. **The checklist must be attached to the "report of exam results" and forwarded to OGAPS after completion of the preliminary exams.**

Announce Prelim Schedule

Once the student's advisory chair is satisfied that all prelim eligibility requirements have been met, the preliminary exam should be announced. The time frame from the first written exam until the oral exam should be approximately 3 weeks. Additional time requirements and deadlines are posted on the OGAPS calendar or in the graduate catalog. The announcement must be approved by the student's committee chair, and co-chair if applicable. A copy of the announcement should be provided to Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

Complete Prelims *

The results of the preliminary exams, written and oral, (see OGAPS homepage for the proper form - <http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) must be returned to OGAPS within **10 working days** of the oral examination. The Preliminary Exam Checklist must be attached. The results must be approved by the student's advisory committee. All prelim exams, including the oral prelim, **MUST** be completed at least 14 weeks prior to the student's dissertation defense.

Submit a Dissertation Proposal

In consultation with their advisory committee, the student **MUST** submit a dissertation proposal that identifies the research problem which the student has been assigned, a partial literature review of the problem, objectives of the research, and the student's approach to the research. The dissertation proposal (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's graduate advisory committee, Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator, and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. The document **MUST** be submitted no less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

Complete Residence Requirements

Graduate students who have lived away from College Station and attended classes at the College Station campus in a sporadic fashion must verify with OGAPS that they have met the residence requirements. These requirements state that the student must reside and attend classes at the College Station campus for 2 consecutive long semesters. OGAPS must confirm that the residence requirement has been fulfilled before students can schedule their final exam.

Apply for Degree and Pay Graduation Fees

These items must be accomplished during the first week of the student's final semester. Students should note this and all deadlines on the OGAPS calendar.

Submit Dissertation to Advisory Committee

Well before submitting a request to schedule the final exam the student should meet with their committee and confirm that all course work is completed, or will be completed in an appropriate time frame. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS should confirm with their committee chair that all English language requirements have been completed. When all course work and English language requirements are satisfied, the student may submit his/her dissertation to their advisory committee.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam *

The request to announce and schedule the student's final exam must be submitted to OGAPS (see OGAPS homepage for proper form—<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>) at least **10 working days** prior to the exam. There may be additional time requirements posted on the OGAPS calendar. The request must be approved by the student's advisory committee chair, co-chair if applicable, and Dr. Wayne Smith -Graduate Coordinator. *The results of the exam must be returned to OGAPS within 10 working days of the scheduled date of the exam.*

Submit Dissertation

Upload one approved final copy of the dissertation as a single .PDF file (thesis.tamu.edu) and submit a signed approval page to the Thesis Office. Students should check the OGAPS calendar for semester deadlines relative to submission and graduation. The dissertation must be approved by the advisory committee and Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

*** Examinations Logistics**

The student, chair, and committee members may participate in the examination by appropriate distance technology with OGAPS approval. The "Results of the Final Examination" and the "Results of the Preliminary Examination" forms should be faxed to the off-campus participants for their signatures prior to obtaining on campus signatures. All signatures should be on one form.

These steps leading to a Ph.D. degree are illustrated on the following page:

Summary of Steps to Fulfill Doctoral Degree in Soil & Crop Sciences

Item	Description
Meet with Departmental Graduate Coordinator	<i>When:</i> Before first semester registration
Establish Advisory Committee	<i>When:</i> During student's first semester
Submit Degree Plan	<i>When:</i> Before the end of student's fourth long semester and no later than 90 days prior to preliminary examination (OGAPS will block registration following semester) <i>Approval:</i> On-line process after consultation with advisory committee.
Complete English language proficiency requirements, if applicable	<i>When:</i> Before preliminary exams (see Graduate Handbook page 12 for requirements)
Review Preliminary Eligibility Requirements (see OGAPS homepage forms link for checklist)	<i>When:</i> End of fourth or fifth long semester and several weeks before the proposed date of the preliminary exams. Checklist must be signed by advisory committee chair, Department Graduate Coordinator. The checklist is held and submitted to OGAPS with the results of the preliminary exam(s)
Prepare and submit any petitions found necessary by the review of the eligibility requirements (checklist)	<i>When:</i> At least 3 weeks before the expected date of the preliminary examination <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, OGAPS
Determine date(s) of the preliminary exam(s) Announce schedule to committee and Departmental Graduate Coordinator	<i>When:</i> Student must be within 6 credit hours of completion of all formal course work (excluding 681, 684, 690, and 691) or no later than the end of the semester following completion of all formal course work on the degree plan, AND at least 14 weeks prior to the student's final defense. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator (Note that OGAPS does not approve the exam date nor is OGAPS notified of the prelim)
Complete preliminary exams and submit the Report of the Preliminary Examination and the Preliminary Examination Checklist to OGAPS	<i>When:</i> No later than the semester following completion of formal course work. Complete exams within 3 week time frame and report results to OGAPS within 10 working days. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory committee <i>Provide copy of results to:</i> Department Graduate Coordinator
OGAPS notifies the student and chair of deficiencies/problems	<i>When:</i> Following the review of the Report of the Preliminary Examination and the Preliminary Examination Checklist
Submit dissertation proposal	<i>When:</i> No less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator
Complete residence requirement	<i>When:</i> Before submitting request to schedule Final Exam <i>Approval:</i> OGAPS
Apply for degree, pay graduation fees	<i>When:</i> During the first week of the final semester (see OGAPS calendar for deadlines) <i>Approval:</i> OGAPS
Confirm with advisory committee that all degree plan courses are complete; submit dissertation to advisory committee; complete ELPE, if applicable	<i>When:</i> Well before submitting request to schedule final exam
Submit request for permission to hold and announce final oral exam	<i>When:</i> Must be received by OGAPS at least 10 working days prior to the exam (see OGAPS calendar for deadlines) <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, OGAPS <i>NOTE:</i> Results are to be submitted OGS within 10 workings days of the exam
Submit Dissertation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single .PDF file • Signed approval form 	<i>NOTE:</i> See Thesis Manual for format <i>When:</i> See OGAPS calendar for each semesters deadline <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator
If required, submit Research Focus and Benefits form	<i>Same as above</i>

NOTE: Student must be continuously registered until all degree requirements are met

Forms

All necessary forms for your graduate program can be found on the Internet at <http://ogaps.tamu.edu> or by visiting the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies in the Administration Building.

Forms available on this site include:

- Degree Plan Fact Sheet
- Online Degree Plan Submission System
- Written Thesis (M.S.) Approval Form
- Written Dissertation (Ph.D.) Approval Form
- Letter of Intent to Pursue Another Graduate Degree
- Preliminary Examination Checklist
- Request and Announcement of the Final Examination
- Proposal Approval Page for Thesis, Dissertation, or Record of Study
- OGAPS Calendars

Degree Plans and Petitions are submitted online via the Degree Plan Submission System.
<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>

PLEASE USE OGAPS.TAMU.EDU FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE FORMS AND CALENDARS.

Committee Structure

Most graduate students will know their advisory committee chair at the time they are admitted to the Department. In their first semester at Texas A&M, students should consult with their committee chair (and co-chair, if applicable) and establish their committee members. All committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Texas A&M University. Faculty and other additional members can be appointed who are not members of the Graduate Faculty as Special Appointments. These Special Appointments can come from other universities, government agencies, or private industry. Special Appointments should bring specific expertise to the committee structure that will be advantageous to the student's training and research. Special Appointees are "extra" appointments and do not count against the required number of committee members. Students should meet with Dr. Wayne Smith for further information regarding special or "extra" committee appointments, if questions arise.

Master of Science committees are composed of the chair and at least 2 additional members. One of the additional members may be a co-chair. The chair or at least one of the co-chairs must be a Soil and Crop Sciences faculty member. At least one of the remaining members must be from another TAMU department or Faculty. Adjunct faculty from USDA or other agencies may serve as committee members representing the department to which they are adjunct if they are members of the Graduate Faculty.

Doctor of Philosophy committees are composed of the chair and at least 3 additional members. One of the additional members may be a co-chair. The chair or at least one of the co-chairs must be a Soil and Crop Sciences faculty member, and at least one member must be from another TAMU department. Adjunct faculty from USDA or other agencies may serve as committee members representing the department to which they are adjunct if they are members of the Graduate Faculty.

Requirements for Assisting in Department Laboratories

It is departmental policy that all graduate students gain some teaching experience during their graduate training. Thus, students seeking an M.S. degree are expected to assist in 1 lab (2 sections) during their tenure, and Ph.D. students are expected to assist in 2 labs (2 sections each) during their tenure. Lab assignments are made by Dr. Wayne Smith, Graduate Coordinator, after consultation with the student and with the student's advisory committee chair. Every effort will be made to place the student in a lab which is most closely related to his/her field of study. However, more grad students are needed to assist in SCSC 105, World Food and Fiber Crops, and SCSC 301, Soil Science, than in any other courses. Thus, some students may assist in these laboratories regardless of their field of specialty. The student should meet with Dr. Wayne Smith during their first semester of graduate studies to discuss lab assignments. This will allow students to better plan their semester course loads.

Financial Assistance

The Department has a limited number of Graduate Research Assistantships available for qualified students. Faculty members also may provide assistantships from grant funds. In both cases, the assistantship is considered a half-time employment; which means that the student is expected to work 20 hours per week in the research program of their committee chair. Students also must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA and make satisfactory progress on their research in order to remain on assistantship. Assisting in labs as described above is also considered a requirement for assistantships. Such financial assistance is competitive and thus only well qualified students receive assistantships. There are a limited number of Fellowships at the University, College, and Departmental levels. These are highly competitive.

Students receiving any financial compensation, whether assistantship, fellowship, scholarship, or hourly wages, should contact Ms. Barbara Bracken (845-3042, bbracken@ag.tamu.edu) as soon as possible after arriving on campus.

Assistantship stipends follow University and Federal/State guidelines and these may change annually. Assistantships are subject to payroll deductions for income tax, however, full-time graduate students are exempt from social security and Medicare withholding taxes. ALL students who receive a stipend from the University MUST be registered as a full time student at ALL times. They must register for **9 hours** each long semester and **6 hours** during the summer. Fellowships MAY carry different requirements and students are responsible for following those guidelines in order to remain on fellowship. Students on half-time assistantships are exempt from the out-of-state portion of their tuition; however, students on fellowships and scholarships MAY NOT be exempt from the out-of-state portion of their tuition requirement.

Extension of Waiver of Out-of-State Tuition

Graduate Assistants-Research and Graduate Assistants-Non-teaching who are employed at least 1/2 time (i.e., hold a Soil and Crop Sciences assistantship funded through state funds or grant funds through an individual professor) are entitled to register themselves, their spouse, and their children at Texas A&M University by paying the tuition and fees required of Texas residents. This waiver does not apply to student worker positions.

**Minimum Annual Benefits & Estimated Tuition and Fees Effective
September 1, 2015**

Assistantship Funding Payable				Estimated Tuition and Fees					
Degree Sought	Base Salary	Health Insurance	Tuition Assistance	In-State			Out-of-State **		
				Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer
M.S.	17,000	Yes*	5,438 annual	3,364	3,364	2,415	6,937	6,937	4,798
Ph.D.	19,000	Yes*	5,438 annual	3,364	3,364	2,415	6,937	6,937	4,798

* Health Insurance is provided for all graduate students holding graduate research assistantships through the University Graduate Student Health Plan.

** The out-of-state portion of tuition will be waived for graduate assistants. Students receiving fellowships or scholarships may not be exempt from this portion of their tuition.

Health Insurance

All students who are on assistantship are provided the same health insurance as provided for faculty and staff. Additional group-health insurance to cover spouse and/or children may be purchased. Students receiving fellowships are not automatically covered; however, in most instances the department will assist by reimbursing their insurance costs. All insurance options will be discussed with incoming graduate students by Ms. Barbara Bracken (845-3042, bbracken@ag.tamu.edu).

Insurance Carrier	Employee	Employee + Spouse	Employee + Children	Employee + Family
A&M Care	\$10.00	\$281.22	\$199.87	\$389.70
Graduate Student Health Plan	\$0.00	\$16.76	\$1.44	\$32.52

Insurance Carrier	Student	Student + Spouse	Student + Children	Student + Family
BCBS, annual premium, domestic	\$1692.00	\$5,064.00	\$4392.00	5904.00
BCBS, annual premium, international	\$846.00	\$1686.00	\$1350.00	\$2106.00

First Week Activities at Texas A&M University

Miscellaneous

√	Activity
Financial and Departmental Travel/Driving Issues	
	Every graduate student , receiving financial assistance, should make an appointment with Ms. Barbara Bracken (434 Heep, 845-3042, bbracken@ag.tamu.edu) as soon as possible upon arrival on campus. If applicable, Ms. Bracken will advise the student on insurance options, initiate the employment process, and initiate the process to determine eligibility to drive departmental vehicles.
Computer Account, E-mail, etc.	
	Every graduate student should contact Ms. Amanda Ray (217 Heep, 845-4620, amanda.ray@ag.tamu.edu) to complete necessary forms to establish an E-mail account, provide biographical data for their personal web page, and have their picture taken for the Departmental picture board. Your University e-mail account and MS Outlook e-mail will be used to notify you of official University/Departmental news.
Departmental Vehicles	
	Several professors have research projects that require students to drive vehicles owned by the University or the Department. Students must have a valid Texas license or provide a copy of their driving record from their home state. The Brazos County Department of Transportation is located at 1003 N. Earl Rudder Freeway (Hwy. 6 Bypass), phone 776-3110. Students with state-determined numbers of moving traffic violations and/or accidents during the last 3 years will not be allowed to drive University /Departmental vehicles. Students can not drive state vehicles until cleared by the main office. Such approval must come from the Department of Public Safety and will take about two weeks.
Parking Permit	
	Go online to http://transport.tamu.edu and follow the prompts >Parking >Permits >Purchase Permit. This site will also provide permit pricing information. Students should read ALL information in their parking packet. Traffic on campus is closely monitored for safety reasons.
Student I.D. Card	
	As soon as a student has registered for class (i.e., pre-registered) then they should visit the General Services Building (on Agronomy Road) Suite 2801, to obtain a University ID card. This card will be used for access to University events and library use.
Office Assignment	
	Students may be assigned office space in labs or buildings under the immediate control of their committee chair or co-chair. If they are to be assigned office space in one of the corporate graduate student offices within Heep, they should see Ms. Amanda Ray (845-4620, amanda.ray@ag.tamu.edu) in room 217 of the Heep Center.
Keys	
	Students will need key(s) to their office and other areas depending upon responsibilities assigned by their committee chair. Keys and electronic access to Heep Center can be obtained from Ms. Judy Young (434 Heep, 845-3041, j-young@tamu.edu). Committee chair approval is required for all keys other than those for the corporate student office assignment.
Heep Computer Lab	
	Graduate students have open access to computers housed in Room 221, Heep. Please visit with Ms. Amanda Ray in 217 Heep (845-4620, amanda.ray@ag.tamu.edu) for access code.

Graduate Resident Tuition and Fees Fall 2015/Spring 2016

Semester Hour	1	2	3	4	5	6
Total Tuition + Fees	<u>\$836.92</u>	<u>\$1,152.72</u>	<u>\$1468.52</u>	<u>\$1784.32</u>	<u>\$2100.12</u>	<u>\$2415.92</u>
Semester Hour	7	8	9	10	11	12
Total Tuition + Fees	<u>\$2731.72</u>	<u>\$3047.52</u>	<u>\$3363.32</u>	<u>\$3679.12</u>	<u>\$3994.92</u>	<u>\$4310.71</u>
Semester Hour	13	14	15	16	17	18
Total Tuition + Fees	<u>\$4611.26</u>	<u>\$4911.80</u>	<u>\$5212.34</u>	<u>\$5443.26</u>	<u>\$5674.18</u>	<u>\$5905.10</u>

This list does not include the following fees:

- Course related Educational Enhancement, Equipment Access, Lab and/or Field Trip Fees
- Optional fees (housing, meal plans, parking, etc.)
- International Student Admin Fee of \$200-\$500— per semester charged to third-party sponsored students.
- International Student Service Fee of \$46 per semester.
- International Student Insurance
- Orientation Fees
- Distance Education Differential Tuition and Fees
- General Deposit \$100 fee which is refunded after graduation
- Parking
- Athletic Passes

 Graduate Non-Resident Tuition and Fees Fall 2015/Spring 2016

Semester Hour	1	2	3	4	5	6
Total Tuition + Fees	<u>\$1233.91</u>	<u>\$1946.70</u>	<u>\$2659.49</u>	<u>\$3372.28</u>	<u>\$4085.07</u>	<u>\$4797.86</u>
Semester Hour	7	8	9	10	11	12
Total Tuition + Fees	<u>\$5510.65</u>	<u>\$6223.44</u>	<u>\$6936.23</u>	<u>\$7649.02</u>	<u>\$8361.81</u>	<u>\$9074.55</u>
Semester Hour	13	14	15	16	17	18
Total Tuition + Fees	<u>\$9772.08</u>	<u>\$10469.61</u>	<u>\$11167.14</u>	<u>\$11795.04</u>	<u>\$12422.95</u>	<u>\$13050.86</u>

This list does not include the following fees:

- Course related Educational Enhancement, Equipment Access, Lab and/or Field Trip Fees
- Optional fees (housing, meal plans, parking, etc.)
- International Student Admin Fee of \$200-\$500— per semester charged to third-party sponsored students.
- International Student Service Fee of \$46 per semester.
- International Student Insurance
- Orientation Fees
- Distance Education Differential Tuition and Fees
- General Deposit \$100 fee which is refunded after graduation
- Parking
- Athletic Passes

Miscellaneous

Activating your Texas A&M Email Accounts:

Texas A&M Gmail is the official email system for students.

<http://gateway.tamu.edu>

Choose: Login for current campus members if you are a current campus member and need to make changes to your email or password setting, directory entry or email subscription.

Choose: Claim Your NetID if you are new to Texas A&M.

Enter UIN and Date of Birth and click LOGIN.

Enter your NetID and click SUBMIT.

Enter a password, confirm, and click SUBMIT.

*If you have any questions or problems, call the Help Desk at 979.845.8300 or visit their website at <http://hdc.tamu.edu>. Computing Services is open 8am-midnight and located in the Computing Services Center, room 1112.

*It is your job as a graduate student to check your email. If you are not receiving emails from the department, please let us know.

On line catalogs: www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogs/

How to Register:

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Select: My Record Tab

Select: TAMU Registration

Select: I agree

Select: Drop/Add Courses

Type: CRN number in box

*You must research the course and find the CRN number to register.

**Do not register for any 684, 685 or 691 course with a 700 section number.

Those on assistantships and/or fellowships need to register full time (9 hours) as soon as possible after registration opens or you may have problems. Tuition payments, out of state tuition waivers, and placement on payroll for the new semester cannot be processed until you have finished registering. Some of these items take several weeks or as much as a month to process so waiting to register or finish registering until a couple of weeks before school begins may cause delays and may cost you additional fees.

If you have trouble registering for any Soil and Crop Sciences course, please email Amanda Ray and include your UIN.

To Research Courses:

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Select: My Record Tab

Select: TAMU Registration

Select: I agree

Select: Look Up Classes

Search by Term, Select: Semester 20XX, College Station (i.e. fall 2014 College Station)

Subject, Select: SCSC

Scroll to bottom and select: Class Search

*CRN number is listed to the right of the course

How to Print your Statement:

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Select: My record tab

Scroll down to: Billing Services

Select: My Account

Login using your Net ID and password

The first screen is your current status

To get a detailed statement:

Select: Recent account activity (you will see a summary screen of current activity)

At the top of the page under ‘View Transactions by Term’ select: TAMU Semester 20XX \$\$\$ and click ‘go’.

Emergency Tuition Loans:

<http://financialaid.tamu.edu>

Eligibility

- Must be enrolled at least 1 hour
- Active GMAIL account
- Must be clear of ALL financial blocks
- Meet GPA requirements: Grad Students 3.0 minimum GPA

Interest Rate & Origination

- 5% simple interest rate
- A \$10 origination fee is assessed on each loan. The fee will be added to the amount of the loan you request.

Repayment:

Repayment is contingent upon the semester in which the loan is requested. All payments will be due on the 15th day of the month.

- Fall/Spring loans are due approximately 90 days after the loan is applied to your account.
- Summer loans are due approximately 30 days after the loan is applied to your account.

If the loan is not paid in full by the due date, both transcripts and registration will be blocked until the account is paid in full.

Installment Plan Information:

<http://finance.tamu.edu/sbs/tuition/installments.asp>

The installment plan is an option students must select each semester. If you were on the installment plan last semester and you wish to remain on the installment plan for this semester, you will have to select the installment plan option again. Installment due dates vary each semester. The referenced WEB site will provide all deadlines

Graduate Computer Lab:

The Graduate Computer Lab is open Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm. To use the lab after hours you must have a code. The code changes each academic year.

Mail:

Any mail you receive will be sent to you care of your major professor or through email. Check with your major professor as to where you may pick up your mail.

Mailing Address:

Your Name
c/o Major Professor
Department of Soil and Crop Sciences
2474 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2474

*This address is NOT to be used for personal mail. If you do not want to use the address at your residence you may get a post office box at the on campus Post Office or at the MSC. Personal mail may not be mailed through the mail room.

Purchase Orders (POs) or Credit Card Purchases:

Graduate students should contact their committee chair for PO purchases. If using a credit card, make sure NO TAX is charged. Turn ALL receipts/invoices in each FRIDAY. Receipts/invoices smaller than 8 1/2 x 11 should be taped to a sheet of paper.

Travel Authorization:

All Departmental employees, including graduate students, who must travel on official business must complete the proper travel authorization forms PRIOR to such travel.

If you are an employee, you MUST complete a travel authorization request in Concur. All students traveling MUST also complete the student activities travel form, https://studentactivities.tamu.edu/app/form_travel, and all students traveling abroad MUST also fill out the study abroad travel form, <http://studyabroad.tamu.edu>.

*There is a maximum allowable reimbursement for travel, and it is best to speak with your professor about the amount. Committee chairs are not required to provide full reimbursement.

Notes: