

# Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences

## Distance Education Graduate Student Handbook

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## GRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

### Admission:

Admission and general regulations for graduate programs at Auburn University are outlined in the AU Bulletin at the following web address: [http://www.auburn.edu/student\\_info/bulletin/](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin/). Prospective students may apply for admission to the Graduate School at the following website: <http://graduate.auburn.edu/prospective-students/>. One may enroll in individual graduate courses applying as a non-degree seeking student. To enroll in a distance education graduate degree program, it is important to specify the desired degree program (MS or MAG) and specify distance education.

### Graduate Programs:

The Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences offers two types of graduate degree programs, the traditional on-campus program, and distance education programs. The Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences Distance Education Graduate Degree Program provides a range of options related to crop science, soil science and environmental science. The Soil, Water and Environmental Sciences Graduate Degree Program is offered through the Ag\*IDEA Consortium ([www.agidea.org](http://www.agidea.org)) and provides a range of options in environmental soil science, hydrology and related subjects. The program is being deactivated, but existing students are allowed to complete their program. The Master of Turfgrass Management is a non-thesis program geared to management of warm season grasses. Thesis and non-thesis options are available in both the Crop Soil and Environmental Sciences and in Soil, Water and Environmental Science programs. Policies and course requirements differ between the four programs. Students applying to the Graduate School should select the program and degree that best meets their needs.

### Guidelines for Acceptance into Graduate Studies:

1. B.S. in Agronomic Sciences or related field or sufficient background in basic science and mathematics.
2. 3.0 GPA for last 90 semester hours for B.S degree.
3. Candidates for the M.S. degree should obtain a minimum of 290 GRE (145 each on verbal and quantitative).
4. If items "2" and "3" **are not met**, a student may be accepted by the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences on **provisional** status with approval of the department head provided sufficient justification is provided that the applicant is able to handle the course material. In the case of an applicant for the M.Ag. degree whose grades are marginal, a faculty member may request that the applicant take the GRE exam before a decision is made to accept or reject the applicant.

### **Tuition and Funding:**

There are several types of funding available to graduate students. For campus students, graduate research assistantships (GRA) are the most common in the department. GRA's receive a small stipend and out-of-state tuition waiver in return for participating in a research program.

Distance education students are expected to pay tuition. The tuition rate for graduate level distance education courses is set by the program. For the distance education courses taught in the College of Agriculture at Auburn University see:

<http://agriculture.auburn.edu/academics/distance-education/tuition-2/>; for courses taught through the AG\*IDEA Consortium see: <http://www.gpidea.org/students/costs/>.

Information concerning loans and other financial aid options can be obtained from the Student Financial Aid Office ([http://www.auburn.edu/administration/business\\_office/finaid/](http://www.auburn.edu/administration/business_office/finaid/)).

There are costs associated with carrying out thesis research. Arrangements for thesis research must be worked out on an individual basis. Most often the costs are covered either by the student's employer or arrangements are made for the student to participate in research carried out by a professor at a university located near the student. Some employers are willing to cover research expenses if the research results might benefit the company or institution. Likewise, faculty members at other universities are happy to have a graduate student to carry out research without having to provide an assistantship.

### **Student Standing, In-State vs. Out-of-State:**

Students taking graduate courses by distance education are not classified based upon residency and do not pay additional tuition or fees based upon residency. Graduate students enrolled in CSES distance education programs who take undergraduate courses are charged the graduate distance education tuition rate set by the College of Agriculture. Graduate students in a campus program may take online courses, however these online courses are not subject to tuition waiver. Students must pay the distance education tuition rate set by the College of Agriculture even if they are on an assistantship.

Undergraduate students taking distance education courses are subject to the same tuition and fees as campus students regardless of whether they are enrolled on campus or not, and non-resident tuition applies to out-of-state students. Undergraduate students also must pay registration fees each semester.

## **COURSES TAUGHT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CROP, SOIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND RELATED FIELDS**

### **Graduate Distance Education Courses**

6016 Analysis of Plant, Soil and Animal Data/Spring  
6026 Nutrient Management/Spring

- 6066 Soil Microbiology Lecture/Spring
- 6061 Soil Microbiology Lab/Spring (campus visit for distance education students)
- 6086 Soil Resources and Conservation/Fall
- 6106 Plant Genetics and Crop Improvement/Spring
- 6166 Advanced Turfgrass Management/Spring
- 6306 Soil Chemistry/Spring
- 6406 Bioenergy and the Environment/Spring
- 6906 Directed Studies
- 6936 Advanced Directed Studies
- 6966 Special Problems
- 7086 Experimental Methods/Summer
- 7146 Chemistry and Use of Herbicides in Crop Production/Fall
- 7956 Seminar/Fall and Spring
- 7976 Special Topics
- 7996 Research and Thesis

Relevant Graduate level Online Entomology and Plant Pathology Courses

- ENTM 6366 Landscape Entomology
- PLPA 6206 Introductory Mycology
- PLPA 6506 Plant Nematology

Foundational Online Undergraduate Courses

- CSES 1003 Basic Crop Science
- CSES 2043 Basic Soil Science
- CSES 3123 Principles of Weed Science
- CSES 3153 Turfgrass Management
- ENTM 2043 Insects: An Introduction to Entomology
- PLPA 3003 General Plant Pathology

**Transfer Credits for Distance Education Students:** Some of the above courses are available by distance education at other universities and may be taken as transfer credits or through the AG\*IDEA Consortium. Because distance education students may not find all of the courses that they need available by distance education at Auburn, the Graduate School will allow students enrolled in the Crop, Soils and Environmental Sciences Distance Education Graduate Degree Program to transfer up to 50 % of their course credits from other universities.

**CROP, SOIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM**

A degree in Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences can serve as the basis for careers in a range of fields related to crop science, agronomy, soil science and environmental science. These fields overlap, but in terms of courses and their prerequisites can be broken down into soil science and crop/weed science.

## **Prerequisite Foundational Courses**

Because of the multidisciplinary nature of the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences and the wide range of possible specializations, we do not have a fixed set of prerequisite foundational courses that apply to all students. We give considerable discretion to the student's major professor and graduate committee to decide on prerequisite courses required. **However, as a minimum, all students should have taken two semesters of general chemistry and two semesters of biology at the undergraduate level.** Additional suggested foundational courses are listed below. Students planning their program of study should also determine the prerequisites for graduate level courses that they intend to take.

For students with deficiencies in undergraduate agronomy, plant pathology and entomology courses, these courses may be taken online before or after the student is admitted to the Graduate School. Any identified deficiencies in chemistry, biology, physics or mathematics should be addressed prior to admission to the program or during a semester when the student is not taking classes from Auburn early within the student's program such as during summer semester. Foundational courses that are available online are listed above.

The following courses are recommended of candidates for Masters Degrees in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences. Courses selected for a plan of study are at the discretion of the student's graduate committee.

### **Recommended background courses for a Soil Science Curriculum**

Calculus I	MATH 1610 or 1680 or 1710
Physics	PHYS 1000 or 1510
Organic Chemistry	CHEM 2030 or 2070 & 2071
Fundamental Chemistry II	CHEM 1040 & 1041
Analytical Chemistry	CHEM 3050 & 3051
Organismal Biology	BIOL 1030

### **Recommended Background Courses for a Crop/Weed Science Curriculum**

Calculus I	MATH 1610 or 1680 or 1710
Organic Chemistry	CHEM 2030 or 2070 & 2071
Fundamental Chemistry II	CHEM 1040 & 1041
Analytical Chemistry	CHEM 3050 & 3051
Plant Biology (Plant Physiology)	BIOL 3100 or HORT 3000
Plant Pathology	PLPA 3000/3003
Economic Entomology	ENTM 4020 or
Systematic Botany	BIOL 5120/6120
Genetics*	BIOL 3000/3003
Or Organismal Biology	BIOL 1030

\* CSES 5103 can be substituted for BIOL 3003 if student is not majoring in plant breeding.

## Degree Requirements and Options

The Master of Agriculture (M.Ag.) and Master of Science (M.S.) have the same course requirements, except the M.Ag. degree requires at least two additional graded courses. In order to receive a M.S. degree, a student must carry out original research and submit a thesis. M.S. students must present two seminars, the first on their literature review and the second on their research results. Students on the M.S. track who change to the M.Ag. degree will not receive credit for thesis research hours. M.Ag. students must write a professional paper based on a specific project agreed upon with the student's graduate committee as part of an Advanced Directed Studies (CSES 6306) or Special Problems course (CSES 6966) and present an exit seminar (CSES 7956) on results of the project. Ideally the project should involve some hands-on activity and measurement, but can be limited to a literature review. Both degrees require a final oral examination.

	<b>Master of Science</b>	<b>Master of Agriculture</b>
<b>Graduate Record Exam (GRE)</b>	Required	Recommended
	Credit hours	Credit hours
<b>CSES 6996 Research &amp; Thesis†</b>	4	None
<b>CSES 6936 Advanced Directed Studies or CSES 6966 Special Problems</b>	None	1 – 3‡
<b>CSES 7956 Seminar</b>	2	1
<b>Electives</b>	24	26 – 28
<b>Total</b>	30	30

†Students may take additional credits of CSES 6996, but only 6 credits may apply to the 30 graduate credit hour requirement.

‡Maximum of 3 credits count toward the degree.

### Soil Science Courses (Minimum of 12 semester hours for soil science students):

Soils & Environmental Quality	CSES 6000†¶
Nutrient Management	CSES 6026
Soil Microbiology Lecture	CSES 6066
Soil Microbiology Laboratory	CSES 6061§
Soil Resources & Conservation	CSES 6080/6086
Soil Morphology	CSES 6150†¶
Soil Chemistry	CSES 6300/6306
Environmental Soil Physics	CSES 6590¶

†A course number ending in “0” denotes a campus course. A course number ending in “6” indicates a graduate distance education course, whereas a course number ending in “3” indicates an undergraduate distance education course. Courses ending in “1” indicate lab course.

§The soil microbiology lab is optional and requires that the student come to campus for four to five days.

¶Soil Morphology, Soil physics and Environmental Soil Science may be taken through the AG\*IDEA Consortium.

**(Where the course is not available by distance education from Auburn University, student may substitute the equivalent course available by distance education at another institution. For distance education students in the Crop, Soil and Environmental Science program only, the Graduate School will allow up to 50 % of course credits to be transfer credits)**

**Statistics courses:**

CSES 6016 Analysis of Plant, Soil and Animal Data  
CSES 7086 Experimental Methods

It is recommended that all graduate students take CSES 6016. Students completing a MS degree are encouraged to also take CSES 7086.

**Plant and Weed Science and Related Courses (Minimum of 12 semester hours for Plant/Weed Science students):**

Plant Genetics & Crop Improvement	CSES 6106
Advanced Turfgrass Management	CSES 6166
Bioenergy and The Environment	CSES 6406
Chemistry & Use of Herbicides	CSES 7146
Crop Ecology	CSES 7180†
Advanced Forage Mgt. & Research Methods	CSES 7190†
Crop Physiology	CSES 7256
Landscape Entomology	ENTM 6366
Plant Nematology	PLPA 6506
Field Survey Plant Pathology	PLPA 7080†

†Not currently listed as a distance education course. Students wishing to take these course should contact the CSES distance learning office ([agdista@auburn.edu](mailto:agdista@auburn.edu)).

**(Where the course is not available by distance education from Auburn University, student may substitute the equivalent course available by distance education at another institution. For distance education students only, the Graduate School will allow up to 50 % of course credits to be transfer credits)**

**Statistics courses:**

CSES 6016 Analysis of Plant, Soil and Animal Data  
CSES 7086 Experimental Methods

It is strongly recommended that all graduate students take CSES 6016. Students completing a MS degree are encouraged to also take CSES 7086.

### **Number of Hours Required for Degree, M.Ag.**

A minimum of 30 semester hours (6000-level or above) of which:

1. At least 21 semester hours must be related to the fields of Crop Science, Soil Science and/or Environmental Science.
2. One hour of AGRN 7956 (Seminar) to present results of the student's special project.
3. Minimum of 1 credit hour of CSES 6036 Advanced Directed Studies or CSES 6966 Advanced Special Problems. A professional report and any other deliverables must be presented to and approved by the student's advisory committee in order to graduate. Up to 3 hours of CSES 6036 or 6966 may be counted toward degree.

Courses selected for the plan of study are at the discretion of the graduate committee based on the student's interest and direction of special project.

### **Number of Hours Required for Degree, M.S.**

A minimum of 30 semester hours (6000-level or above) of which:

1. At least 21 semester hours must be related to the fields of Crop Science, Soil Science and/or Environmental Science.
2. Two hours of AGRN 7956 (Seminar). The first seminar will consist of a literature review and research plan. The second seminar is to present the student's research results

M.S. students must carry out original research and present a thesis in order to graduate. Distance Education students must take a minimum of 4 credit hours of CSES 7996 Research and Thesis over the course of their program. They should register for one hour of research and thesis in those semesters in which they are not registered for a course, or they may take 2 credits of AGRN 7996 in each of the last two semesters of their program. A maximum of 6 hours of AGRN 7996, may be counted toward degree.

3. In addition to the courses listed above, a student's major professor may have core courses which they expect you to take for your area of specialization. Advisory committee members may require you to take courses in addition to your advisor's and the departmental requirements. Courses selected for the plan of study are at the discretion of the graduate committee based on the student's interest and direction of thesis project.

**Certificate Program:** A graduate certificate in Crop and Soil Science is planned and will consist of a minimum of 15 credits chosen from the courses offered through the Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences distance education program.

**Language requirements:** There are no foreign language requirements for graduate degrees in Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences.

### **AG\*IDEA SOIL, WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAM**

The Soil, Water and Environmental Science (SWES) is a graduate degree program offered through the AG\*IDEA Distance Education Consortium, consisting of universities that shares courses. This program offers both Master of Agriculture and Master of Science degrees. Students enrolled in this program must take at least 36 credits including 12 to 15 credit hours

from four of five core courses (biology, chemistry, physics, hydrology, and pedology), with the remaining 21 to 24 credit hours in electives. A seminar course (1 credit hour) and one course in statistics (3 credit hours) are also required. A student may elect to conduct a research project and complete a thesis for a Master of Science degree. Students enrolled in the program may take any of the courses offered by the four universities and they all count towards credit from Auburn University. Students seeking a Master of Agriculture degree must complete a project on a subject approved by the students' graduate committees and register for CSES 3906 Advanced Directed Studies or CSES 6966 Advanced Special Problems, and submit a report and present a seminar (CSES 6966).

To enroll in this program, students must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate School and the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences (see above). To be considered for this program, a student must have taken at least two semesters of general chemistry, two semesters of biology and a semester of physics. Organic chemistry and calculus I are highly recommended. Students planning to take hydrology courses for non-engineers should have taken two semesters of calculus, while calculus III is expected for hydrology courses for engineering students.

**Course Requirements:**

**Background Courses:**

See recommended course list for Soil Science option under Crop, Soils and Environmental Sciences program. Physics and Calculus 1 are recommended for all students, Calculus 2 for students taking hydrology courses for non-engineers and Calculus 2 and 3 for students taking hydrology courses for engineering students that includes modeling.

**Core Courses (Students must take a course in four of five core areas):**

<b>Core Area</b>	<b>Courses</b>	
Soil Biology	CSES 6066	Soil Microbiology Lecture (3 credits) <u>OR</u>
	CSES 7276	Soil Microbiology (4 credits)
Soil Chemistry	CSES 6306	Soil Chemistry (4 credits) <u>OR</u>
	CSES 7436	Environmental Soil Chemistry (3 credits)
Soil Physics	CSES 7586	Soil Physics
Pedology	CSES 7136	Soil Morphology, Genesis and Classification
Hydrology	BSEN 7156	Introduction to Land and Water Engineering, <u>OR</u>
	BSEN 7526	Introduction to Fluvial Geomorphology, <u>OR</u>
	BSEN 7536	DRAINMOD

**Additional Required Courses:**

CSES 6016 Analysis of Plant, Soil and Animal Data  
 CSES 6036 Advanced Directed Studies OR CSES 6966 Special Problems OR CSES 6976  
 Advanced Special Problems

CSES 7956 Seminar

**Elective Courses:**

***Resource Management***

CSES 6026 Nutrient Management  
CSES 6086 Soil Resources and Conservation  
CSES 6406 Bioenergy and the Environment  
CSES 7016 Environmental Soil Science  
CSES 7076 Soil Erosion and Conservation  
CSES 7146 Chemistry and Use of Herbicides in Crop Production  
CSES 7226 Soil and Crops in Arid Lands  
CSES 7326 Wetland Soils  
BSEN 7216 Biomass to Renewable Energy Processes  
BSEN 7616 Agricultural Waste Management  
BSEN 7626 Design of Structural Stormwater BMP's  
BSEN 7636 Stream Channel Assessment and Restoration  
BSEN 7646 Open Channel Hydraulics for Natural Systems  
BSEN 7656 Ecohydraulics and River Corridor Function  
BSEN 7666 Wetlands Engineering (Wetlands Design and Restoration)

***Technology and Analytics***

CSES 7086 Experimental Methods  
CSES 7286 Applied Geostatistics  
BSEN 7016 Quantitative Agricultural Remote Sensing  
BSEN 7026 Precision Agriculture Technology  
BSEN 7116 Instrumentation for Hydrologic Application  
BSEN 7136 GIS Applications in Precision Agriculture  
BSEN 7366 Integrating AutoCAD Civil3D & GIS  
BSEN 7376 Watershed Monitoring & Assessment

***Policy and Law***

Environmental Law & Governmental Regulation

**For more information on the Soil, Water and Environmental Science graduate degree program, please refer to the following website:**

**<http://www.ag.auburn.edu/students/distanceeducation/degree-programs.php>**

## MASTER OF TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT

The Master of Turfgrass Management program is a 32 credit hour, non-thesis degree program geared to people working in, or planning to work in careers related to turfgrass management, such as golf course managers, athletic field management and lawn services. The program includes a professional capstone experience. The capstone experience covers two semesters in which the student registers for 3 credits of Directed Studies and 3 credits of Advanced Directed Studies. The student must also present a seminar on the results of the capstone experience.

### Required Courses

[CSES 6906 Directed Studies \(3 credits\)](#)

[CSES 6936 Advanced Directed Studies \(3 credits\)](#)

[CSES 7956 Seminar \(1 credit\)](#)

### Elective Courses (25 Hours Required)

[CSES 6106 Plant Genetics and Crop Improvement](#)

[CSES 6086 Soil Resources and Conservation](#)

[CSES 6066 Soil Microbiology Lecture](#)

[PLPA 6506 Plant Nematology](#)

[CSES 7146 Chemistry and Use of Herbicides in Crop Production](#)

[CSES 6166 Advanced Turfgrass Management](#)

[CSES 6406 Bioenergy and the Environment](#)

[CSES 6306 Soil Chemistry](#)

[CSES 6061 Soil Microbiology Lab](#)

[ENTM 6366 Landscape Entomology](#)

[CSES 6026 Nutrient Management](#)

### Required Undergraduate Courses in Pest and Crop Management

CSES 2040 or [CSES 2043 Basic Soil Science](#)

CSES 3150 or [CSES 3153 Turfgrass Management](#)

CSES 1000 or [CSES 1003 Basic Crop Science](#)

#### At least one of the following:

PLPA 3000 or [PLPA 3003: General Plant Pathology](#)

ENTM 4020 Basic Entomology or [ENTM 2043 Insects, an Introduction to Entomology](#)

CSES 3120 or [CSES 3123 Principles of Weed Science](#)

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PROGRAM OF STUDY

Before being admitted to a graduate degree program, you will need to identify a faculty member who agrees to be your major professor and who will guide you in developing your program of study and advise you in carrying out your research or special project. The Faculty Distance Education Coordinator can assist you in that effort. You should also begin right away to identify any deficiencies that you may have based upon the information provided above. Once you have been assigned a major professor, you should fill out the Background Courses Worksheet from

the “Staying on Track” webpage (<http://agriculture.auburn.edu/academics/distance-education/current-students-2/stay-on-track/>) and send to your major professor so your professor and you can decide if you require any of the background courses listed above. During the first semester of study, you and your major professor should set up an advisory committee and outline a program of study. The department requires three or more committee members for M.S. and M.Ag. committees. All forms mentioned in the next section will be posted on the website.

### **Policies for Graduate Students:**

1. The Staying on Track website is the location for guidance in meeting specific deadlines. The student and major professor should check this website each semester to make sure that students are staying on track with their programs.  
<http://agriculture.auburn.edu/academics/distance-education/current-students-2/stay-on-track/>
2. Deficiency background courses (departmental minimum course requirements) should be identified prior to the first semester. If possible, any background courses not available from the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Science or the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology should be taken before beginning the program or during the first year. The summer semester is often the best time to take these courses. **Use the Background Courses Worksheet** on the “Staying on Track” website.

All undergraduate level deficiency courses should be completed before the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester.

3. Following each semester, Form 0 should be submitted as a means for you to let your major professor know how you are doing and for your professor to make any comments.
4. A brief outline of the research project (MS students) or final project (MAG students) and a tentative plan-of-study must be presented to the students’ Graduate Committee before the end of the first year. Master of Agriculture students do not submit a thesis but must submit a project outline (see Checkpoints 2 and 3 on the website).

This outline will include:

1. Proposed thesis or project title
2. Research or project objectives
3. Outline of research or project methods
4. Advisory committee members

After the Departmental Graduate Program Committee approves the tentative plan-of-study and the research outline, the official plan-of-study must be entered into DegreeWorks, available in AU Access. A pdf file should be downloaded and sent to major professor and committee members for approval.

5. Midway through the research program (M.S. students), the student must present a progress report to the thesis advisory committee. This report will include:

1. Experiment outline.
  2. Explanation for deviations from item 1
  3. Problems encountered with the research and possible solutions.
  4. Accomplishments to date and future work.
  5. Estimated completion date.
6. The burden of meeting all deadlines is the responsibility of the graduate student and no one else. Situations beyond the control of the student must be presented to the Department Head prior to the deadline.
7. If a student's grade point average for all graded courses falls below 3.0, the student will have two semesters or 11 hours to bring it back to 3.0. If after two semesters the student fails to bring the GPA above 3.0, a remediation plan must be submitted by the student and approved by the department head and the associate dean of the Graduate School.
8. If a student receives an **incomplete** in a course, the incomplete must be removed before the end of the next semester. Failure to complete the course within the allotted time will result in a grade of F.

### **Seminar Requirements:**

All M.S. graduate students will present at least two seminars, the first on the literature review and research proposal and the second on the research results. Each M.S. graduate student will be required to take two hours of CSES 7956 for credit (1 credit hour for each seminar). Non-thesis students are required to take one hour of CSES 7956 during the semester in which they present a seminar on their project or professional paper.

Attendance is required at all departmental seminars. Distance education students may watch the recordings of seminars in Panopto:

<http://aces.panopto.auburn.edu/Panopto/Pages/Sessions/List.aspx#folderID=%22f7cccc26-0a90-4283-be20-b2be9abd5ebc%22> .

Seminars are scheduled for Fall and Spring semesters, but may also be presented in the summer upon request. Literature review seminars should be presented no later than the 6<sup>th</sup> semester. For MS students, detailed literature review (rough draft will be adequate), approved by the major professor, should be presented to the advisory committee prior to the literature review seminar presentation. The first seminar should focus on research objectives but some results may be presented.

A second seminar (first seminar for non-thesis students) will be presented near the end of the student's program. This seminar consists of the presentation of research or project results to a faculty/student audience. A third seminar may also be presented if you and your major professor feel it is necessary to split the results into two seminars. Seminars should be prepared to last

approximately 20 minutes with an additional 10 minutes given for discussion and questions. Two to 7 days before your seminar, e-mail an abstract of your seminar presentation to 'ay-all@acesag.auburn.edu'. If faculty on your advisory committee are outside of the department, invite them and send a copy of the abstract.

The format for abstracts should be adhered to:

TITLE:  
YOUR NAME:  
MAJOR PROFESSOR'S NAME:  
DATE:  
TIME:  
LOCATION:  
ABSTRACT:

Consult p. 21-24 of the ASA, CSSA, SSSA Publications Handbook and Style Manual for further information on abstracts.

Two to five of "the most important" references should be included at the end of the abstract. The abstract should be no longer than 1 page. All seminars are presented utilizing a LCD projector. Distance education students may present their seminar via video conference to the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences or to an audience approved by the student's graduate advisory committee.

For M.Ag. and Master of Turfgrass Management Students, only one seminar is required after completion of the special project in order to present project results.

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT**

Residency requirements do not apply to distance education students. However, M.S. distance education students may need to visit campus or another research facility in order to carry out the research program approved by the student's research committee.

## **PROCTORING OF EXAMS**

All major course exams must be proctored by a proctor approved by us or through an approved proctoring service. Proctoring may be done in person or virtually through the proctoring service. Proctoring is managed through the proctoring service, currently SmarterProctoring, which means that the proctor obtains the password to the exam and instructions for the exam through the service website. The proctor shall be responsible for verifying the identity of the student and ensuring that the exam is carried out in keeping with instructions, including duration, presence or absence of textbooks, notes and other course-related materials, etc. If the exam is a paper exam, the proctor will download a pdf file of the exam, print it up and following completion, will scan the written copy and upload it to the SmarterProctoring server. Students are usually given a period of several days within which they must take the exam.

At the start of your first semester, you must decide if you will use a proctor approved by SmarterProctoring, use their virtual proctoring service, each of which require payment of a fee, or identify a proctor approved the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences. Consider the following criteria when choosing a proctor:

- Higher education faculty, administrators, instructors, or library administration
- Independent learning or distance learning office, or testing service at another university or college
- Education offices on military bases
- Other person in position of authority approved by the Distance Education Coordinator, Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences.

**Your proctor should NOT be a relative, friend, or lateral co-worker.** Proctors shall be verified by the Distance Education Coordinator.

## **ORAL AND WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS**

### **Master of Science/Master of Agriculture:**

The advisory committee will administer the oral examination upon successful completion of course work and thesis research or special project. Distance education students may take the exam via video conferencing if they cannot come to campus. Oral examination results must be submitted to the Graduate School within three days. It is the responsibility of the student to get the necessary forms from The Graduate School before the examination.

Master of Agriculture students should have an oral exam on their project.

### **Graduation Application:**

The Graduate School requires each student to request a graduation check in the semester **preceding the semester of anticipated graduation**. The end of the semester is defined as graduation day. The Graduation Check form is available on-line at [www.grad.auburn.edu](http://www.grad.auburn.edu). This on-line form enables the student to submit a graduation check electronically instead of completing a hard copy form. This check is not to be confused with a residency plan or a plan of study which are due earlier in a student's program. This procedure provides sufficient time for a student to address any problems or needs to meet graduation deadlines. This procedure also facilitates the final graduation clearance.

## **COMPLETION OF THESIS OR PROJECT**

A final draft of the thesis/project report must be submitted to the advisory committee at least 3 weeks before the final examination. The draft is one which is approved by the major professor as being complete and editorially correct. The style of the thesis should be based upon

professional journals in the field of study. Completed theses and dissertations from Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences graduates are available at the library.

*The Guide to the Preparation and Submission of Theses and Dissertations* is available on the web at <http://graduate.auburn.edu/current-students/electronic-thesis-dissertation-guide/>.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

The graduate student is expected to read and follow the guidelines described in this handbook. Being a graduate student cannot be considered as only a job. Rather, it is a means of accomplishing professional goals. The student is a representative of Auburn University and the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences.

Both thesis and non-thesis students have the following responsibilities:

1. Make the commitment to his/her graduate program which is required for the successful completion of his/her degree. This often requires more time than generally expected when initiating a graduate program.
2. Read and be familiar with the information presented in the AU Graduate Bulletin, and to know and observe all regulations and procedures relating to the program he/she is pursuing. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of, or contends that he/she was not informed of, the regulations or procedures. Rules, regulations and requirements listed in Auburn University Bulletin take precedence over the departmental document if a difference occurs. A student planning to graduate should be familiar with the dates relating to application for graduation and other pertinent deadlines (Form 1).
3. Satisfy the requirements of the bulletin in force at the time the student is admitted to, and begins course work in, a degree program; or the student may, with the consent of his/her advisor, graduate under a subsequent bulletin provided the student complies with all requirements of the later bulletin.
4. Follow all policies and meet all requirements and deadlines.
5. Perform project related work, regardless of funding status, as defined by the faculty advisor.
6. Call meetings of the graduate committee and provide committee members with the time, location, and purpose of the meeting.
7. Conduct committee meetings.
8. Inform his/her graduate committee of the status of their program and research at regular

intervals.

9. Pursue employment upon graduation.

The thesis student also has the responsibility to:

10. Ensure that his/her research is original, which requires a detailed literature review.
11. Properly summarize and interpret his/her research.
12. Perform his/her own research-related work.

### **ADVISOR'S ROLE**

1. Provide competent advice on course work, research, and employment opportunities when requested.
2. Describe the limits of supplies, equipment, and labor, to the graduate student before the initiation of his/her work.
3. Provide the graduate student the opportunity to be imaginative and innovative in the pursuit of his/her degree program.
4. Provide an atmosphere that will encourage successful completion of the graduate program.
5. Stay abreast of the graduate student's research and its progress.
6. Provide assistance in the form of critical review of the initial project proposal, seminars, manuscripts, presentation, and the thesis/dissertation.
7. Accept final responsibility for research conducted under his/her project.

### **GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT (GRA) DUTIES**

Graduate assistantships generally do not apply to distance education students.

### **CROP, SOIL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES PERSONNEL**

Faculty and Staff are provided on the CSES Website: <http://ceses.auburn.edu/faculty-staff/>.

## **AUBURN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY**

[\(http://www.lib.auburn.edu/\)](http://www.lib.auburn.edu/):

The Ralph Brown Draughon Library is named in honor of Ralph Brown Draughon, President of Auburn University from 1947 to 1965, and a moving force behind the construction of the original portion of the Library. With the completion of a 207,000 square foot addition in 1991, the Library has a seating capacity of 2,500 designed to serve the study, teaching, and research needs of Auburn University.

The library has many electronic resources available 24/7 to distance education students including electronic databases, journals, electronic document delivery for graduate students and more. Library services are available to all students. Distance students can use their username/password to access library materials electronically through their web page ([lib.auburn.edu](http://lib.auburn.edu)). The archives support Boolean searches that often return full text PDF files that can be downloaded or emailed as needed. The AUBIExpress service allows graduate students electronic access to print materials on demand. Use the links below for information on AUBIExpress and the other great services available through RBDL.

- Services - <http://www.lib.auburn.edu/services/>
- Resource Lookup – <http://lib.auburn.edu>
- Contact – <http://lib.auburn.edu/contact>
- How To - <http://www.lib.auburn.edu/aubieasks/>

If special assistance is needed in finding information related to agriculture, Mrs. Claudine Jenda ([jendaca@auburn.edu](mailto:jendaca@auburn.edu)) is the subject specialist librarian for agriculture.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION**

If you are a foreign national and need to travel to Auburn University as part of your program, you will need to obtain a visa. You must work with the Office of International Students and Scholars for assistance in obtaining a student visa. They will provide you with the forms that you need to take to the American Consulate in your country.

Upon arrival at Auburn University, you must report to the Office of International Education, located in Foy Hall within 5 days. Afterwards, please present your passport, I-94 and I-20 documents to Kay Holloway in Funchess 201. Copies of these documents will be made and stored in departmental files. Additional departmental forms are required and will be given to each student for processing.

For more information, please see the international student website at:  
<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/international/oie/iss/>

For departmental regulations and instructions regarding a stay on the Auburn University campus, please see the AU Bulletin.