FOREST ECOSYSTEMS & SOCIETY

Graduate Program Handbook

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Our Mission

Our department brings together biological and social scientists and philosophers to understand ecological systems, social systems, and the interactions between these systems. We work in terrestrial to aquatic systems, in wildland to urban settings, and from local to global scales. We evaluate the scientific and philosophical basis for management and policy decisions, and provide enhanced frameworks for those decisions reflective of our latest findings. We conduct creative problem-solving and fundamental research; educate and engage the next generation of scholars, practitioners, and users of the world's natural resources; and share our knowledge and discoveries with others.

Program Overview

The Forest Ecosystems and Society graduate program seeks to develop interdisciplinary thinkers, highly capable scientists, and natural resource leaders who are prepared to solve complex socio-ecological problems.

By combining a strong social science faculty with a strong biological and ecological science faculty, FES provides an unusual opportunity to focus on the interface of social science and ecology in addition to standard ecological and social science studies. The FES graduate program provides specific disciplinary opportunities in both ecological and social sciences in natural resource settings, but also strives to develop interdisciplinary skills and knowledge. Graduates of the program will be able to identify and contribute to collaborative solutions in ecology and natural resource-related social science.

Degree Offerings

Students in our program pursue their Master of Science (M.S.), Master of Forestry (M.F.), or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. Some students will pursue more than one of these degrees through our program. The standards and challenges associated with these degrees can vary greatly. If you are pursuing one these degrees, please review the sections below for details on degree requirements and deadlines.

Master of Science (MS)

The MS degree focuses on building both disciplinary depth and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in a research context that should qualify graduates for careers in research, teaching, industry, consultation, and other roles that require specific or generalized expertise.

Who applies to the MS program?

The MS degree is a research and thesis based degree designed to enable students to work directly in their specific discipline or at the intersection of a diversity of disciplines at an advanced level. Some students in FES pursue their MS as the next step after earning an undergraduate degree or as a natural precursor to seeking their Ph.D.

Others are seeking to redirect or advance their careers. MS students typically need 6-7 quarters (2-2.5 years) to complete their degree.

What is a typical MS degree program like?

Throughout their program, most MS students learn the skills required to participate in high-level research. This includes developing researchable questions, crafting a professional research proposal, managing timelines, collecting and analyzing data, communicating their results, and ensuring all aspects of their research adhere to ethical standards. MS students are usually expected to publish 1-2 articles in journals as a result of their thesis and present their results at professional meetings. MS students are also expected to devote time and effort to professional development activities.

Although the student can count on their major professor and graduate committee for guidance, they must be responsible for managing their own time, taking action to meet learning outcomes, fulfilling program and University requirements, and making progress on their research and degree.

Master of Forestry (MF)

The MF degree builds skills and knowledge that graduates should be able to quickly and directly apply to their careers.

Who applies to the MF program?

The MF degree is a non-thesis terminal degree, typically designed for working professionals who are seeking continuing education. Some MF students are fully employed and remain fully employed for the duration of their program. Others may be seeking an opportunity to take their career to the next level or prepare for a career after completing an undergraduate degree.

What is a typical MF degree program like?

MF students typically do not develop or conduct high-level research, and are not required to submit a research proposal, do a presentation of this proposal, or write a thesis. Instead, MF students are required to complete a capstone project with the guidance of their major professor and graduate committee. MF students typically need 3-5 terms (1-1.5 years) to complete their degree.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

The FES Ph.D. degree prepares students to conduct original research in a specific field and includes deepening disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills.

Who applies to the Ph.D. program?

The Ph.D. degree is designed for students seeking careers at the highest levels of research in their specific discipline or at the intersection of a diversity of disciplines. A Ph.D. can be a pivotal benefit for those seeking high-level or impactful careers in biophysical or social science, but it requires a serious, long-term commitment of mental, physical, and emotional energy. Students should carefully consider their goals and evaluate whether earning a Ph.D. is the best way to meet these goals. Applicants to the FES Ph.D. program are not required to have an MS degree in their intended Ph.D. field.

What is a typical Ph.D. degree program like?

Newly-enrolled Ph.D. students are expected to be familiar with the basic concepts of research, including defining researchable questions, writing a research proposal, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating the results. Ph.D. students are expected to provide the creativity and rigor to identify impactful areas of research, develop researchable questions and research investigations, carry out these investigations, and effectively communicate the results. Ph.D. students are usually expected to publish 3-4 papers in journals as a result of their dissertation and present their results at professional meetings. Ph.D. students typically need 4-5 years to complete their degree.

Ph.D. students are expected to build credibility in their field by publishing their research, contributing to peer-reviewed journals, presenting at conferences, attending workshops and meetings, and seeking collaborations with other members of the field. Depending on their goals and interests, Ph.D. students may also be expected to build teaching experience, engage in professional development opportunities, and provide service to their discipline or their department.

Areas of Focus

FES includes students and faculty with diverse research interests, ranging between the purely biophysical and the purely sociological. The areas of focus below are not degree concentrations or options; rather, they are used during the application process to understand a student's interests and goals. Many students and faculty conduct research that combines several areas of focus or lies somewhere between these areas.

Forest, Wildlife, and Landscape Ecology
Uses a range of research tools and models to understand how species act, react, and interact at many spatial and temporal scales. These dynamics take place in an environment that can change gradually or quite rapidly, which can directly or indirectly affect species and their inter-relationships.

Genetics and Physiology
Examines the genetic and physiological mechanisms that determine how plants grow, reproduce, respond to their environment, and are managed and modified for human benefit. Research is conducted to improve the environmental sustainability of energy, wood, and paper production in trees using genomics (entire DNA) and genetic engineering methods.

Integrated Social and Ecological Systems
Explores issues created by the intersection of natural systems and society's rapidly evolving needs, and brings biophysical and social sciences together to explore complex natural resource issues.

Science of Conservation, Restoration, and Sustainable Management
Forests have long been influenced by anthropogenic and natural disturbances. To sustain the variety of ecosystem services generated by healthy forests requires understanding these processes and evaluating different management practices that can restore and sustain multiple values.

Social Science, Policy, and Natural Resources
Examines the complex interactions between our communities, cultures, governments, and the natural resources that support our continued life and development. Explores methods for engaging scientists, managers, and the public in addressing environmental problems.

Soil-Plant-Atmosphere Continuum
The movement of energy and matter within and among ecosystems controls how these systems function and the services they provide. This area of concentration investigates the mechanisms controlling ecosystem behavior from a micro to macro scale, including the impacts of anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases.

Sustainable Recreation and Tourism
Explores psychological motivations and benefits of recreation, as well as approaches to ensure sustainable recreation and tourism enterprises. Includes recreation and tourism behavior, social and/or ecological impacts of tourism, and planning, management, and policy.

Considerations for Admission

Aside from abiding by the Graduate School's admission requirements, FES does not disqualify applicants based solely on test scores, coursework, previous degrees, or any other single metric. FES will evaluate your application based on the big picture that your combined application materials will present. A successful application will include evidence of your potential to succeed in your selected degree program (MS, MF, or Ph.D.) and as a researcher or contributor in your selected area(s) of focus. This evidence can be demonstrated in any part of your application, including your transcripts, CV or resume, statement of objectives, or letters of reference. We encourage you to share our considerations for admission with your references when requesting letters of support.

Please note that applications cannot be accepted until a qualified major professor has agreed to serve as the applicant's major professor for the full duration of their graduate degree program.

Evidence to support admission

In addition to meeting the Graduate School's admission requirements, your application should demonstrate:

- A knowledge of the scientific method sufficient for the specified area of focus
- Oral and written communication skills
- Motivation to succeed
- A maturity that will allow the independent work required of a graduate student

Depending on the degree you are applying for, your application should also demonstrate:

Master of Science (MS)
- Advanced academic ability
- Intellectual curiosity and initiative
- Ability to think critically and solve unusual or complex problems
- Potential to master pertinent scientific concepts and methods

Master of Forestry (MF)
- Academic competency
- Intellectual curiosity and drive

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
- Academic excellence
- Intellectual curiosity and initiative
- Ability to think critically and solve unusual or complex problems
- Advanced knowledge of pertinent scientific concepts and methods
- Experience in research, including planning, execution, analysis, interpretation, and writing
- Depth and breadth, both in research experience and course work
- Intellectual and emotional maturity

Potential Major Professors

Applications cannot be accepted until a major professor (i.e., advisor) has officially agreed to serve as the applicant's major professor for the full duration of their graduate degree program. Before you apply, it is crucial that you research and contact potential major professors to secure the required commitment.

Finding potential major professors

Some major professors may not be accepting new students during your application period, and individual major professors may use more rigorous standards for selecting their graduate students than FES itself does. Researching and contacting potential major professors on your own is the best way to determine whether they are available and willing to advise you.

Start by creating a list of potential major professors doing the type of work you want to do during your graduate program. Use the online directory of potential major professors or look for faculty members associated with interesting projects you find on the research page of the FES Department website. When you have a few names, conduct a thorough review of their research, publications, and accomplishments. Use this information to help you determine if a particular major professor would be a good fit for you and to help you demonstrate your awareness and understanding of their work when contacting them.

Contacting potential major professors

Different major professors look for different qualities in potential students. In general, when contacting a potential major professor:

- Write in a concise, professional, and respectful manner
- Discuss your academic and professional qualifications
- Demonstrate your interest in and knowledge of their work
- Include your goals and motivations for your graduate education
- Include your CV, transcripts, or other pertinent documents
- Address any responses from your potential major professor in a timely and professional manner

Before committing

Before agreeing to work together, you and your major professor should have a detailed conversation (preferably face-to-face) about whether you are a good fit. This conversation should include:

- Whether their continued research and projects fit in with your long-term goals
- The expectations you have for each other while working together
- How you plan to fund your education, and who is responsible for which aspects of your funding.

How to Apply

In addition to the Graduate School's standards and requirements, FES applicants must submit a formal application, secure a commitment from a qualified major professor, and be reviewed and accepted by both the FES Graduate Program and the Graduate School before they can enroll.

Deadlines

Please review the Graduate School deadlines before submitting your application. Graduate School deadlines may be earlier than the deadlines described below. Please adhere to whichever deadlines are earliest. Applications cannot be reviewed or accepted until all required materials have been submitted, including 3 letters of reference.

FES has rolling admissions, meaning that you may apply and enroll in any term. However, many orientation activities and fellowship and scholarship opportunities are only available to students matriculating in Fall.

Applying for Fall term

For the best chance of being accepted and receiving funding from OSU, plan on submitting your application in November or December in the year before your first term. Applications submitted after February 15th may still be accepted, but will most likely be too late for OSU fellowships and scholarships. Applications for Fall term may still be submitted and accepted throughout Spring and early Summer, but as Fall term gets closer, it will become increasingly difficult to find an available major professor and secure the required commitment.

Applying for other terms

Applications submitted for Winter term may still be eligible for OSU fellowships and scholarships if they are submitted before February 15th in the year before your first term. Applications submitted for Spring or Summer are typically not eligible for University fellowships and scholarships. Although not required, most FES applicants apply for Fall term and most major professors allocate their resources accordingly. As a result, there are typically fewer major professors available for students matriculating in other terms. Beyond these considerations, applicants may submit their applications at any time in accordance with the Graduate School's deadlines.

Application materials

In addition to the [materials required by the Graduate School](), FES requires applicants to submit the following:

Statement of objectives

Your statement should be a well-written essay / letter of interest addressing the considerations for admission. It should include your reasons for applying to the FES program, how enrolling in FES will help you achieve your long-term goals, and the experiences and education that have prepared you for graduate education at your desired degree level and in your desired area of study. Your statement is vital to your application's success – please take the time to craft it carefully.

Letters of recommendation (3)

Your letters of recommendation should address your critical thinking skills, work ethic, and the considerations for admission for your desired degree. They should be written by sources who have first-hand experience with your performance in pertinent settings and who understand the demands of graduate school. Letter writers should not pose an actual or potential conflict of interest. For example, letters should not be supplied by your potential major professor or by someone supervised by your potential major professor. Letters must be submitted through the Online Letter of Recommendation System. Hard copy letters cannot be accepted.

Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resumé

Your CV or resumé should include experiences pertinent to your academic and professional goals. This may include work experience, volunteer experience, publications, presentations, and/or awards.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores

Please see the [Graduate School Admissions website]() for information on submitting your GRE scores. FES requires official verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing scores less than five years old. Applicants who have received a research-based Masters degree within the past five years may contact the FES Grad Coordinator to request a waiver. Subject-specific GRE test scores are not required.

Transcripts

OSU requires official or unofficial transcripts from each institution you have attended. If you are accepted to the program and admitted to OSU using an unofficial transcript, you must supply an official transcript before you can enroll. Official transcripts should be sent from your institution directly to the Graduate School, either physically or via electronic transcript providers Parchment, E-Scrip Safe, or National Clearinghouse. Unofficial transcripts are copies or scans of official transcripts including a transcript key. Web-generated transcripts are not accepted.

Application procedures

Before you submit your application, you must:

- Review the considerations for the degree you are applying for
- Review the Graduate School's requirements and application procedures
- Determine your area(s) of focus
- Determine needs and strategies for funding your degree program (see Page 49)
- Create a shortlist of potential major professors and initiate contact with these professors
- Ensure your application will meet program and Graduate School deadlines

When those tasks are completed, you can:

- Prepare the application materials required by both the program and the Graduate School
- Submit your application online
- Submit any additional materials not part of the fundamental application
- Ensure that all three references have submitted their letters via the Online Letter of Reference system

The wait time to receive a decision depends on the volume of applications we are receiving (heaviest in December, January, and February). Applicants who complete their applications without a commitment from a major professor can expect to wait longer than those who apply with a commitment already secured.

Applying for a FES Ph.D. without a Masters degree

It is possible for an applicant to be admitted to the FES Ph.D. program without a Masters degree. However, applicants without a Masters degree will still be expected to provide evidence of their qualifications consistent with the considerations for admission specified for the FES Ph.D. program (see Page 8). Without the framework of a successfully completed Masters program, this evidence may be difficult (though not impossible) to provide.

Before submitting a Ph.D. application, applicants without a Masters degree should have a serious discussion with their potential major professor regarding the benefits and drawbacks of directly pursuing a FES Ph.D. instead of first pursuing a FES MS. Applicants should never advance their MS application to a Ph.D. application simply to meet eligibility requirements for funding competitions.

Proceeding From a FES MS to a FES Ph.D.

Although it is not typical to get a Ph.D. and MS degree from the same institution, it is permitted in FES. If a FES MS student wishes to enroll in the FES Ph.D. degree after completing their MS degree, they must still apply to the FES Ph.D. degree via the process detailed below.

Students should be aware that the Ph.D. program is not an extension of their MS program; it is a far lengthier and more rigorous program with different expectations and standards that prepares students for a different career trajectory. Before applying, students should consult with their current MS major professor, their proposed Ph.D. major professor (see below), and/or the Graduate Program Director to determine whether they are prepared for a Ph.D. program.

As with standard applications, current MS students can only be accepted into the FES Ph.D. program after a faculty member has agreed to serve as their major professor for the full duration of their Ph.D. program. Students who intend for their MS major professor to continue as their Ph.D. major professor should ensure that professor is willing and approved to advise at the Ph.D. level, as not all MS major professors are.

Application materials

Although applications to the FES Ph.D. program include the same components as applications to the FES MS program, they are evaluated using different standards. Current FES MS students should produce new application materials that specifically reflect their qualifications and goals for the FES Ph.D. program, including a new statement of objectives, an updated CV or resume, and 3 new letters of reference. Please review and abide by the instructions in the 'How to Apply' section to produce these new materials.

After the Grad Coordinator receives these new materials, they will pull the student's current OSU transcripts and the GRE scores and transcripts from the student's FES MS application to complete the FES Ph.D. application.

If accepted

If a current FES MS student is accepted to the FES Ph.D. program, they may proceed to the Ph.D. program in one of two ways:

Option 1:
If the student does not plan to complete their current MS degree, they will complete a 'Change of Degree' form to switch from an MS to a Ph.D. effective immediately (or at a time designated by the student and their current/future major professor(s)).

Option 2:
If the student plans to complete their current MS degree, they will complete a 'Change of Degree' form to add a concurrent Ph.D. degree to their record in the months leading up to their MS final exam. During this period, the student will technically be an MS student *and* a Ph.D. student at the same time. When the student successfully completes their MS program, they may continue as a Ph.D. student uninterrupted.

Once enrolled in the FES Ph.D. program, students will be expected to meet the same standards and requirements expected of a new Ph.D. student, including completion and submission of a new Program of Study form, learning outcomes, and research proposal.

Applying for 'new student' funding

Current FES MS students seeking to apply to 'new student' funding for their Ph.D. program must carefully review eligibility requirements to determine if the funding is for 'new students' or for students who are 'new to OSU'. Current FES MS students will not qualify for funding designed for students new to OSU. This includes the Provost's Graduate Fellowship. However, FES MS students likely will qualify for funding designed for students new to their programs. This includes the CoF Graduate Fellowship Competition.

If current FES MS students wish to pursue this funding, they must apply to the FES Ph.D. program in accordance with funding deadlines. For details of funding deadlines for the current application season, please consult the Grad Coordinator.

Degree Program Overview for Master of Science (MS) Students

For a smooth and successful program, decide when you want to graduate and work backward to create a comprehensive 'to-do' list. Many tasks will require you to begin weeks or months before the deadline.   Please review the complete degree program instructions and requirements provided in this handbook.

Deadline	Task	Must submit…	Submit to…
Annually by June 30th	FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (due every year of enrollment)	Assessment (self-assessment, milestones, major professor assessment, signature sheet*)	FES
Before Program of Study meeting	Form your graduate committee	None	None
During 2nd term of enrollment	Program of Study meeting	None	None
End of 2nd term of enrollment	Program of Study (PoS)	PoS form*	FES, Grad School
	FES Learning Outcomes (LOs)	LO Document (LO List, Plan, & Coversheet*)	FES
End of 3rd term of enrollment, before beginning significant work on research	Research proposal	Research proposal, proposal approval form*	FES
	Proposal presentation	None	None
3 – 6 months before defense	Begin final exam / defense preparations	None	None
2 weeks before defense	Defendable draft of thesis	Defendable draft of thesis	Committee
	Defense and graduation paperwork**	Exam scheduling form, diploma application, thesis pretext pages	Grad School
Final term of enrollment	Final exam / defense	LO Assessment (FES Rep)*	FES
6 weeks after defense or before the first day of the next term, whichever is first	Thesis approval	ETD form*, thesis title page	Grad School
	Thesis submission	Thesis	ScholarsArchive
	Schedule exit interview	None	None
Before leaving OSU	Check-out	Check-out Checklist	Grad Coordinator

*Requires signatures | **If participating in commencement, deadlines may be different. See the Graduate School webpage for more information.

Degree Program Overview for Master of Forestry (MF) Students

For a smooth and successful program, decide when you want to graduate and work backward to create a comprehensive 'to-do' list. Many tasks will require you to begin weeks or months before the deadline.   Please review the complete degree program instructions and requirements provided in this handbook.

Deadline	Task	Must submit…	Submit to…
Annually by June 30th	FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (due every year of enrollment)	Assessment (self-assessment, milestones, major professor assessment, signature sheet*)	FES
Before Program of Study meeting	Form your graduate committee	None	None
During 2nd term of enrollment	Program of Study meeting	None	None
End of 2nd term of enrollment	Program of Study (PoS)	PoS form*	FES, Grad School
	FES Learning Outcomes (LOs)	LO Document (LO List, Plan, & Coversheet*)	FES
3 – 6 months before defense	Begin final exam / defense preparations	None	None
2 weeks before defense	Final draft of capstone	Final draft of capstone	Committee
	Defense and graduation paperwork**	Exam scheduling form, diploma application	Grad School
Final term of enrollment	Final exam / defense	LO Assessment (FES Rep)*	FES
6 weeks after defense or before the first day of the next term, whichever is first	Schedule exit interview	None	None
Before leaving OSU	Check-out	Check-out Checklist	Grad Coordinator

*Requires signatures | **If participating in commencement, deadlines may be different. See the Graduate School webpage for more information.

Degree Program Overview for Doctoral (Ph.D.) Students

For a smooth and successful program, decide when you want to graduate and work backward to create a comprehensive 'to-do' list. Many tasks will require you to begin weeks or months before the deadline.   Please review the complete degree program instructions and requirements provided in this handbook.

Deadline	Task	Must submit…	Submit to…
Annually by June 30th	FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (due every year of enrollment)	Assessment (self-assessment, milestones, major professor assessment, signature sheet*)	FES
Before Program of Study meeting	Form your graduate committee	None	None
End of 5th term of enrollment, before beginning significant work on research	Program of Study meeting	Doctoral Program Meeting Checklist	Grad School
	Program of Study (PoS)	PoS form*	FES, Grad School
	FES Learning Outcomes (LOs)	LO Document (LO List, Plan, & Coversheet*)	FES
	Research proposal	Research proposal, proposal approval form*	FES
	Proposal presentation	None	None
3 – 6 months before prelims	Begin written / oral prelim preparations	Exam scheduling form (2 weeks before)	Grad School
After / near completing all coursework	Written / oral prelims	LO Assessment (FES Rep)	FES
3 – 6 months before defense	Begin final exam / defense preparations	None	None
2 weeks before defense	Defendable draft of dissertation	Defendable draft of dissertation	Committee
	Defense and graduation paperwork**	Exam scheduling form, diploma application, dissertation pretext pages	Grad School
Final term of enrollment	Final exam / defense	LO Assessment (FES Rep)*	FES
6 weeks after defense or before the first day of the next term, whichever is first	Dissertation approval	ETD form*, dissertation title page	Grad School
	Dissertation submission	Dissertation	ScholarsArchive
	Schedule exit interview	None	None
Before leaving OSU	Check-out	Check-out Checklist	Grad Coordinator

*Requires signatures | **If participating in commencement, deadlines may be different. See the Graduate School webpage for more information.

Getting Started

Welcome to FES! As a new FES graduate student, you will need to attend orientation (if being admitted for Fall term), check in with the department office, and register for classes.

Required classes and registering for classes

Before you register, consult with your major professor to determine what classes you should take during your first term. Our program currently requires all students take the following 3 courses:

1. FES 520 (3 credits, "Posing Researchable Questions") usually in your first year (typically offered in Fall term)

2. FES 525 (3 credits, "Interdisciplinary Collaborative Problem Solving") usually in your second year (typically offered in Fall term)

3. FES 526 (1 credit, "Effective Communication and Presentation Skills for Scientists," typically offered in both Fall and Spring terms)
   a. MF students must enroll in this course for 1 term during their program
   b. MS students must enroll for 2 terms
   c. Ph.D. students must enroll for 3 terms

You will work with your major professor and advisory committee to select additional courses specific to your area of interest to meet the minimum number of credits required for your degree program.

You may also wish to review classes offered by the Graduate School to help you learn the skills and strategies you will need as a graduate student.

When you are ready, you can register through MyOSU. For registration instructions and troubleshooting, visit the Office of the Registrar's webpage.

Check-in

When you have set a date to arrive on campus, contact the Grad Coordinator to notify them and set up a check-in appointment. Appointments usually last 15-30 minutes, and include:

- Getting keys to the building, the mail room, and your office space
- A brief tour of the building, including your office space
- An opportunity to ask any questions you have so far

After completing check-in, you should be able to access the building after-hours, move in to your office, and access college computers, printers, and digital storage space.

Orientation

Orientation events sponsored by FES, the College of Forestry, and the OSU Graduate School usually occur the week before classes begin in Fall term. Keep an eye out for e-mails with specific dates, times, and locations. You will be notified if attending any orientation is a requirement. Please plan your arrival to Corvallis to accommodate required orientation events. If you cannot attend, please notify your major professor and the Grad Coordinator.

Finding Forms and Materials

To complete many of your degree requirements, you will need to use specific forms. Most of the forms and materials you will need will either be on the FES Current Student Resources webpage or the Graduate School Forms webpage. See below for a list of the most common forms required for your degree and where you can find them. Websites change frequently! If you cannot find the form at the listed location, please ask the Grad Coordinator.

Degree Program Forms

Requirement	Form	Location
FES Assess. of Satisfactory Academic Progress	FES Assess. of Satisfactory Academic Progress	FES Current Student Resources
Forming Your Graduate Committee	Generate GCR List	Graduate School Forms
FES Learning Outcomes	LO Coversheet	FES Current Student Resources
Program of Study Meeting (Ph.D. Only)	Doctoral Program Meeting Checklist	Graduate School Forms
Program of Study	Program of Study	Graduate School Forms
Research Proposal (MS/Ph.D. Only)	Research Proposal Approval Form	FES Current Student Resources
Preliminary Exams	Exam Scheduling Form	Graduate School Forms
	LO Assessment	FES Current Student Resources
Thesis / Dissertation	ETD Submission Approval Form	Graduate School Forms
Final Exam	Exam Scheduling Form	Graduate School Forms
	Diploma Application	Graduate School Forms
	LO Assessment	FES Current Student Resources
	Commencement Forms (if participating)	Graduate School Forms
Finishing Up	FES Checkout Checklist	FES Current Student Resources

Other Forms

Purpose	Form	Location
Starting or ending a leave of absence	Leave of Absence	Graduate School Forms
Adding transfer credits to your Program of Study	Transfer Credit Request	Graduate School Forms
Changing your Program of Study	Petition for Change in Program	Graduate School Forms
Changing registration after the add/drop period	Petition for Late Change of Registration	Office of the Registrar
Changing your degree	Change of Degree/Major/Certificate	Graduate School Forms
Graduate Assistantship evaluations	FES GA Evaluation	FES Current Student Resources

FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress

	Required:	Due:*	Notes:
MF:	Yes	Every year before June 30th	- To complete on time, begin drafting materials and scheduling assessment meetings in April or early May
MS:	Yes	Every year before June 30th	
Ph.D.:	Yes	Every year before June 30th	

* Please note that your major professor, the FES Department Head, and/or the FES Graduate Program Director may request or require an assessment at any time during the year.

As required by the Graduate School, the FES program has a process to assess and report on the student's academic progress. To fulfill this requirement, you must complete and submit a FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress every year before June 30th. Please note, however, that your major professor, the FES Department Head, and/or the FES Graduate Program Director may request or require an assessment at any time during the year.

Early in your program (potentially at your program meeting), you should collaborate with your major professor and committee to establish standards and expectations of satisfactory progress for your program. Timely submission of your Program of Study form, learning outcomes, and research proposal are required for satisfactory academic progress. Completed assessments will be filed in the FES office where you or your major professor can review them at any time.

This assessment requires your major professor's participation, but you are responsible for initiating that participation, supplying materials, and ensuring timely completion. It is strongly suggested (but not required) that you solicit input from other committee members as well. Failure to complete and submit this assessment annually may prevent you from receiving funding or accessing opportunities available through the department or Graduate School.

Please note: the FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress is not the same as the FES Graduate Assistant (GA) Evaluation. The former reviews student performance, whereas the latter reviews employee performance.

How to prepare and submit your assessment

To meet the June 30th deadline, you should begin the following activities in April or early May.

1. Read the full assessment instructions. Include the 'Definition of Satisfactory Academic Progress,' 'Plan for Assessment of Graduate Student Satisfactory Academic Progress,' and 'Assessment Procedures & Instructions.'

2. Fill out the Completion of Milestones. If nothing has changed since your previous assessment, you may copy or otherwise reuse your previous Completion of Milestones.

3. Write your self-assessment narrative. Before you begin, you may want to discuss your major professor's expectations for your progress and professional development with them. This narrative should summarize activities since your last assessment and plans for the coming year, including:

- Coursework taken and grades received
- Field work, data collection/analysis
- Progress on writing thesis/dissertation/capstone
- Participation in professional development opportunities
- Service to the department, college, and/or university
- Description of planned activities and accomplishments for the coming year.
- Any other relevant information, including any impediments to progress

4. Schedule a meeting with your major professor. You or your major professor may choose to request participation from committee members as well.

5. Meet with your major professor and any participating committee members. During your meeting, review your self-assessment narrative, assess your progress and accomplishments, and identify milestones for the coming year. This meeting can be as brief or in-depth as you need, but it is best to include:

- Meaningful feedback on what you are doing well and what you might improve
- Discussion about what you are expected to achieve in the coming year
- An opportunity for you to ask questions about your research or degree requirements
- An opportunity for you to bring up any issues holding you back or causing undue stress
- Notice of any urgent action you might need to take to stay on track

At the end of the meeting, ensure your major professor has completed the Major Professor Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress and the Signature Sheet. If other committee members provided input, they should sign the Signature Sheet as well.

6. Compile all parts of your assessment into a single packet. This will include Completion of Milestones, Major Professor Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress, Signature Sheet, and your self-assessment narrative. Ensure that everything has been completed: all required fields filled, all required boxes checked, all required signatures signed.

7. Submit your completed packet to the FES office.

Forming Your Graduate Committee

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	Yes	Before your Program of Study meeting	- Must complete before beginning any other degree program requirement
MS:	Yes	Before your Program of Study meeting	
Ph.D.:	Yes	Before your Program of Study meeting	

Your graduate committee is composed of faculty and professionals who have been approved to serve on OSU's Graduate Faculty. Your committee provides you with perspective and expertise that can help you succeed in your graduate program and prepare for a productive career. Since your committee plays a big role in completing the rest of your program requirements, **putting it together should be your first priority after enrolling and beginning classes.**

Committee composition

To meet program and Graduate School standards, your committee must:

- Have a minimum of:
  - Ph.D. – 5 members
  - MS – 4 members
  - MF – 3 members
- Include your major professor(s)
- Include a Graduate Council Representative (Ph.D. and MS only)
- Include at least 2 members from FES graduate faculty (one of these will be your FES Representative)
- Include at least 1 member from each minor you have declared

Any remaining members may be from the Graduate Faculty at large.

Including non-FES committee members

You and your major professor may wish to include a committee member who is based in another department, college, university, or even outside of academia altogether. You and your major professor should discuss and agree on the need for such a committee member.

Faculty from other OSU departments or colleges, or individuals from outside of academia are allowed to serve on your committee if they are a member of OSU's Graduate Faculty. If one of your proposed committee members is not a current member of the FES Graduate Faculty, your major professor will need to nominate them. The nomination and approval process typically takes at least a month.

To nominate a proposed committee member to the FES Graduate Faculty, your major professor must provide the following materials to the Grad Coordinator:

- A brief nomination letter (an e-mail is fine), explaining why the proposed member is a good fit for this committee and how they meet OSU's standards for Graduate Faculty membership
- A copy of the proposed member's CV or resumé, preferably less than two years old.
- A valid e-mail address for the proposed member, if not included on the CV or resumé.

Once the Grad Coordinator has received the materials above, they will draft the nomination paperwork, collect signatures, and forward the completed nomination packet to the Graduate School for review. The Graduate School will notify the proposed member and the Grad Coordinator when the nomination has been approved.

Committee meetings

After establishing committee membership, you and your committee should discuss and agree on expectations for committee meetings. This discussion should include:

- How often the committee will meet
- How you should prepare for each meeting
- Whether and how you will provide progress reports between meetings
- Scheduling and communication preferences

Your committee members have busy schedules, so you will likely need to schedule meetings at least one month in advance, although 3-5 months in advance is typically preferred. To schedule a room for your committee meeting, please contact the FES Office as soon as a date has been set.

Roles of committee members

Major Professor

Your major professor is the committee member from your major field who serves as your primary academic advisor, your principal thesis/dissertation advisor, and the general mentor for your academic program and research. They will be instrumental in helping you select the rest of your committee members and serve as a valuable source of advice on running effective committee meetings.

You and your major professor should discuss their expectations for your role in the coordination and development of your research and writing. Most students meet weekly or biweekly with their major professor and submit work for review and comment on an on-going basis. Students are typically responsible for scheduling meetings, contacting committee members, putting together meeting agendas, preparing any necessary meeting materials, and reserving rooms. You and your major professor may trade off leading committee discussion and activity. Your major professor is responsible for maintaining the rigor and quality of your research. In that capacity, they may require specific actions from you. Your major professor may advise or assist, but it is up to you to get the work done! For more information on interacting with your major professor, please see Page 58.

Minor Professor (if applicable)

Your minor professor represents your minor department or field, if you have declared one. They are responsible for maintaining the quality and rigor of your work in the minor field. This person must be an approved Graduate Faculty member in the minor department/program. If you have an "integrated" minor, your minor professor cannot be from your major department/program, but must be from one of the departments/programs represented by the courses in the minor.

Graduate Council Representative (GCR)

All Ph.D. and MS students are required to include a Graduate Council Representative (Grad Rep or GCR) on their committee. **GCRs should be selected at the same time as the rest of the committee and will function as a regular member, participating in all examinations, deliberations, and decisions.**

The GCR is responsible for assuring that the conduct of all committee meetings and actions are in compliance with policies and procedures of the Graduate Council as presented by the Graduate School. The GCR assumes responsibility for ensuring fair and appropriate treatment of the student and all committee members, and for ensuring the integrity of the degree. Your GCR must be present at your formal exam(s) and will be responsible for some of the paperwork that the Graduate School requires. Per Graduate School guidelines, they will also lead your committee's roundtable discussion following your final exam.

Your GCR must be a graduate faculty member outside your major and minor area. Select your GCR using the online GCR list generation tool. If none of the potential GCRs generated on the first list are available, you can re-generate the list daily until you find someone who is willing to serve. GCRs can be selected to provide disciplinary expertise as well. You and your committee, including the GCR, can determine the extent that the GCR participates in your research.

FES Representative

At least one of your committee members must be a qualified FES Representative. Your FES Representative is responsible for keeping you and your non-FES committee members informed about program requirements and any pertinent policy changes. Your FES Representative is also responsible for conducting the FES Learning Outcomes Assessment at your preliminary (Ph.D. only) and final (all students) exam(s). Eligible FES Representatives must…

- Be a regular faculty member (not courtesy, adjunct, or emeritus) employed by the FES Department
- Be located primarily (or frequently) at OSU's Corvallis campus
- Regularly attend FES Department meetings
- Have up-to-date knowledge on department policies and procedures.

Most tenure / tenure-track faculty members in FES will meet these requirements. Your major professor may serve as your FES Representative provided they meet the requirements above.

Experts in Biophysical and Social Science

Given that FES is an interdisciplinary program with interdisciplinary learning outcomes, it is strongly recommended that your committee include at least one member who focuses on biophysical science and at least one member who focuses on social science. Ideally, these committee members will have knowledge and experience that relate to (and benefit your study of) your research area.

FES Learning Outcomes

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	Yes	By the end of your 2nd term of enrollment	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Should be completed at the same time as your Program of Study form
MS:	Yes	By the end of your 2nd term of enrollment	
Ph.D.:	Yes	By the end of your 5th term of enrollment	

OSU requires every graduate degree program to have program-specific learning outcomes (LOs) that:

- describe what a graduate of the program can do as a result of attaining their graduate degree, and
- distinguish their degree program from other graduate degree programs at OSU.

Prior to the end of the 2nd (MF, MS) or 5th (PhD) term of enrollment, a student is required to, with the help of their committee, produce a document that defines their specific learning outcome(s) in each of the following 7 categories, and then file the document with the FES Department office.

- Disciplinary skills and knowledge
- Interdisciplinary collaborative problem solving
- Communication skills (and may include teaching)
- Critical thinking and critical awareness skills
- Research skills
- Research ethics and responsibilities
- Policy analysis and interpretation

At the preliminary (Ph.D. only) and final exam (MF, MS, Ph.D.), the committee assesses whether a student has met each of the learning outcomes as defined by the student's learning outcomes document. The FES Learning Outcomes Assessment form, filled out at the examination by the student's committee, records the result and is filed in the FES Department office.

Explanation of each learning outcome category

The explanations below are meant as general guidelines. Students and committees will interpret these and make specific recommendations for how students should prepare to meet them and demonstrate them to the committee in a manner suitable to their area of study and level of advancement.

Disciplinary skills and knowledge
- Knowledge of a student's chosen field of study, and closely related fields, including history and trends in major findings, concepts, theories, approaches, and context.

Interdisciplinary collaborative problem solving
- Situate environmental issues into appropriate biophysical and social contexts and identify disciplines necessary to address the problem.
- Collaborate in interdisciplinary teams (e.g., listen to, give and receive constructive feedback, define divisions of labor, set goals and milestones, actively work to see problems from multiple perspectives, understand group dynamics including issues around providing and accepting leadership, member responsibilities, and peer-to-peer communications).
- Provide disciplinary expertise to an interdisciplinary team.
- Articulate ideas that transcend contributing disciplines; identify commonalities and conflict among disciplines; devise approaches that support commonalities and reduce conflicts.

Communication skills (oral, written, professional)
- Effectively interact (write, speak, and listen) to diverse audiences in an organized and clear fashion about areas of expertise in oral, written, or electronic formats.
- Explain information from one discipline to researchers in other relevant disciplines, and communicate research to scientific and non-scientific audiences.
- **For students wishing to pursue careers in academia, the following learning outcomes for teaching may be applicable:**
    - Understand contemporary pedagogy, relevant STEM teaching methods, and experience in their application in classroom, online, and technical/professional learning environments.
    - Develop a classroom and/or online course, including development of a syllabus that includes learning outcomes, classroom activities, assignments, and assessment and evaluation methods. Development may (but is not required to) include course delivery.

Critical thinking and critical awareness skills
- Discern between, and infer consequences of, multiple perspectives.
- Evaluate the quality, context, scale, and biases in information, and synthesize diverse types of information in written and oral forms.
- Effectively participate in real-time discussions of biophysical and social systems and their interactions.
- Understand the application of methods and knowledge from one discipline to another.

Research skills
- Demonstrate facility with the research methods appropriate for the area of study.
- Understand the use of quantitative and qualitative summaries of data as evidence for conclusions and scientific inference. This can include skills and knowledge needed to plan, implement, analyze, and interpret research.

Research ethics and responsibilities
- Knowledge of processes and guidelines for ensuring that research is conducted in socially and professionally acceptable and legal ways, while minimizing and managing conflicts of interest.
- Topics of relevance may include responsible conduct of research, general ethics, peer review, bias during data analysis and presentation, plagiarism, animal welfare, treatment of human subjects, collaboration, and authorship.

Policy analysis and interpretation
- Understand the role of laws, regulations, social institutions, and governance processes relevant to the application of a student's disciplinary and/or inter/trans-disciplinary areas of study.

Roles and responsibilities for assessment

Prior to the preliminary and final exam(s)

1. **By the end of their 2nd term (MS, MF) or 5th term (Ph.D.) of enrollment** in the FES Graduate Program, the student must work with their graduate committee to develop their learning outcomes, culminating in a three-part LO Document filed with the FES Department. **Student responsibilities include:**

    a. Meeting with their committee and developing a list of specific learning outcomes associated with each category,
    b. Writing a plan to achieve the specific learning outcomes that is acceptable to the student's graduate committee,
    c. Obtaining required signatures on the coversheet indicating acceptance of the plan, and finally,
    d. Submitting the compiled document to the FES Department office for review, approval, and inclusion in the student's program file.

    Please see 'Guidance for Creating the Learning Outcomes Document' below for instructions for completing and submitting the LO Document.

2. **In the week prior to the preliminary (Ph.D.) and final (MF, MS, Ph.D.) exam,** the student is responsible for making sure copies of the previously-completed and signed LO Document are provided to all committee members

During the preliminary and final exam(s)

Learning outcomes are to be tested and assessed by the student's graduate committee at their preliminary (Ph.D.) and final (MS, MF, Ph.D.) exam(s). Learning outcomes are assessed independently of the thesis (or capstone or dissertation) and overall student performance. That is, the failure to meet expectations for any learning outcome as documented on the LO Assessment form need not necessarily affect the vote to pass.

The FES Representative is responsible for leading the discussion during the assessment and for filing the completed LO Assessment form with the FES Department after the conclusion of the exam.

1. During the defense portion of the exam, all graduate committee members may ask questions to assess how well the student has met their learning outcomes.

    a. The LO Document (previously completed by the student and approved by the committee) will define the specifics by which each category is assessed.

b. It is preferable that committee members rely on demonstrations during the exam to assess how well a student has met each learning outcome. However, committee members may use evidence of demonstrated ability outside of the exam when such demonstrations are not possible during the exam (e.g., teaching, ethical behavior during research).

c. All graduate committee members should participate fully in the assessment of the learning outcomes at the conclusion of the exam.

2. The FES Representative will lead the discussion concerning the LO Assessment during committee's deliberations on the student's performance and they will fill out the LO Assessment form based on input from the committee.

a. The FES Representative is a member of the graduate committee and regular member of the FES Department. 'Regular' means not courtesy, not adjunct, and regularly attends FES Department meetings. It is typical that the FES Representative is the student's major professor, but when the major professor is not a regular member of the department, another qualified committee member will be the FES Representative.

b. Committee members will provide the FES Representative with input to assist in completing the form.

c. Any required remedial action for the student and the timeline for that action are to be recorded and attached to the LO Assessment form.

d. Learning outcomes are assessed independently of the thesis (or capstone or dissertation) and overall student performance. That is, the failure to meet expectations for any learning outcome as documented on the LO Assessment form need not necessarily affect the vote to pass.

3. The student will sign the LO Assessment form acknowledging they understand the assessment.

At the conclusion of the preliminary and final exam(s)

The FES Representative turns the LO Assessment form into the FES Department Office immediately after the exam. The form will be placed in the student's file. **The FES Department Head will not sign off on the ETD form (required for thesis submission) until the completed LO Assessment form is on file with the department.**

Composition of the learning outcomes document

The learning outcomes document consists of 3 parts:

1. **The LO Coversheet:** A [FES form](#) requiring signatures from the student, the major professor(s), and the Graduate Program Director to indicate approval of the document.

2. **The LO List:** A 1-2 page list of student-specific learning outcomes for each LO category, described in single-sentence statements.

3. **The LO Plan:** A short narrative explaining how each learning outcome in the LO List will be achieved.

Guidance for creating the learning outcomes document

1. Develop specific learning outcomes for each of the 7 categories in consultation with your major professor and committee members.

   a. **Seek input from your committee members, either individually or in a formal meeting.**
      i. Discuss how the LOs you will write for each category will support your graduate work and career goals.
      ii. Consult committee members with first-hand experience with your desired career path about the skills and experiences that would make your resumé attractive to employers and then prepare to write your LOs with that future resumé in mind.

   b. **Create your LO List.** This is the heart of your LO Document. For each category, write a few (1 to 3 is typical) single-sentence LOs based on graduate-level verbs that describe specific actions you will be able to do as a result of your graduate program. The completed LO List should fit on 1–2 pages.
      i. **Developing the LO List is a significant part (if not the majority) of the work associated with creating the LO Document. Students and committees should thoroughly consider each LO developed for the LO List.**
      ii. Consult the Blooms Taxonomy Verbs (provided at the end of this section) for lists of verbs that describe actions indicative of graduate-level learning. The verbs you select to write your LOs should emphasize skills in the analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation areas as opposed to, or in addition to, skills in the knowledge, comprehension, and application areas, which are more characteristic of undergraduate-level learning.
      iii. **Please note that every LO developed for the LO List…**
         1. Should be a single sentence
         2. Should include graduate-level verbs from or similar to Bloom's Taxonomy
         3. Must be 'demonstrable' (i.e., your committee must be able to ask you to perform the action or see direct evidence that you have successfully performed the action), so "knowledge about…," "understanding of…," or "learning about…" are not appropriate LOs.
         4. Can include actions that you can already perform as a result of prior learning, experiences, and life skills.
         5. Should describe actions you can continue to do after you graduate, not something you did while developing the ability. Saying, "I lived in the field for two weeks," only describes an experience, whereas "I will be able to develop protocols for obtaining quality data while under primitive field conditions" explains what you can do as a result of that experience.
      iv. **Example:** "*I will be able to synthesize information about requirements and assumptions of common statistical methods for survey data, and identify the most effective method for a given situation. I will be able to explain why the selected method is preferable to other options, and describe how that method would be applied.*"

   c. **Create your LO Plan.** Write a short plan (1-2 paragraphs per category) describing how you will develop the skills and knowledge to support each specific LO. You may include experiences and

activities undertaken as part of your coursework, research, professional development, department service, previous education, or previous life experience.

    i. The purpose of the LO Plan is to make clear to the committee and the student how learning activities support the learning outcomes. There is no penalty if you develop your skills/knowledge in a different way than you described in your plan.

    ii. **Example:** "*I will pass FES 523: Quantitative Analysis in Social Science and complete coursework with an emphasis on statistical analysis, focusing on understanding data, selecting appropriate statistics for theoretical and managerial problems, using statistical software for analyses, and interpreting findings.*"

2. **Sign the LO Coversheet and obtain your major professor's signature.** Other committee members should review and approve your completed LO List and LO Plan, but are not required to sign the LO Coversheet.

3. **Create your LO Document.** After completing the steps above, compile the resulting products in the following order:

    a. Your LO Coversheet
    b. Your LO List
    c. Your LO Plan

4. **Submit your LO Document to the Grad Coordinator by the appropriate deadline.** Once received, the Grad Coordinator will review your LO Document and submit it to the Graduate Program Director for review and approval.

    a. If the Graduate Program Director approves, they will sign it and return it to the Grad Coordinator. If your specific learning outcomes are unclear or do not reflect graduate level learning, you may be asked to complete and submit a revised version.
    b. After the Graduate Program Director approves your LO Document, the Graduate Coordinator will provide you with a digital copy and retain a copy in your program file.

5. **Prior to your preliminary (Ph.D. only) and final (MF, MS, Ph.D.) exam(s), resend your LO Document to all members of your committee, including the Graduate Council Representative.**

Bloom's Taxonomy

Definitions	Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Bloom's Definition	Remember previously learned information.	Demonstrate an understanding of the facts.	Apply knowledge to actual situations.	Break down objects or ideas into simpler parts and find evidence to support generalizations.	Compile component ideas into a new whole or propose alternative solutions.	Make and defend judgments based on internal evidence or external criteria.
Verbs	• Arrange • Define • Describe • Duplicate • Identify • Label • List • Match • Memorize • Name • Order • Outline • Recognize • Relate • Recall • Repeat • Reproduce • Select • State	• Classify • Convert • Defend • Describe • Discuss • Distinguish • Estimate • Explain • Express • Extend • Generalized • Give example(s) • Identify • Indicate • Infer • Locate • Paraphrase • Predict • Recognize • Rewrite • Review • Select • Summarize • Translate	• Apply • Change • Choose • Compute • Demonstrate • Discover • Dramatize • Employ • Illustrate • Interpret • Manipulate • Modify • Operate • Practice • Predict • Prepare • Produce • Relate • Schedule • Show • Sketch • Solve • Use • Write	• Analyze • Appraise • Breakdown • Calculate • Categorize • Compare • Contrast • Criticize • Diagram • Differentiate • Discriminate • Distinguish • Examine • Experiment • Identify • Illustrate • Infer • Model • Outline • Point out • Question • Relate • Select • Separate • Subdivide • Test	• Arrange • Assemble • Categorize • Collect • Combine • Comply • Compose • Construct • Create • Design • Develop • Devise • Explain • Formulate • Generate • Plan • Prepare • Rearrange • Reconstruct • Reorganize • Revise • Rewrite • Set up • Summarize • Synthesize • Tell • Write	• Appraise • Argue • Assess • Attach • Choose • Compare • Conclude • Contrast • Defend • Describe • Discriminate • Estimate • Evaluate • Explain • Judge • Justify • Interpret • Relate • Predict • Rate • Select • Summarize • Support • Value

Program of Study

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	Yes	By the end of your 2nd term of enrollment	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Should be completed at the same time as your FES Learning Outcomes
MS:	Yes	By the end of your 2nd term of enrollment	
Ph.D.:	Yes	By the end of your 5th term of enrollment	

Your Program of Study (PoS) is a contract between you and your committee that records the courses that will comprise your degree program. Early in your graduate program, you are required to have a formal PoS meeting with your committee to discuss, complete, and sign your PoS form. Once your PoS form is complete and signed by you, your major professor(s), and your committee members, you will submit it to the FES Grad Coordinator for approval by the Grad Program Director, who will sign as the Academic Unit Chair. After your PoS form is returned to you with the Grad Program Director's signature, you will submit it to the Graduate School. Submission to FES and the Graduate School must be done in accordance with their respective deadlines.

How to Draft and Submit Your Program of Study

1. Schedule the required PoS meeting with your committee. If you are a Ph.D. student, review the Doctoral Program Meeting Checklist located in the 'Forms' section of the Graduate School website. This is likely the first time your committee will meet as a group. To ensure full attendance, schedule your meeting 2-5 months in advance and send a reminder before the meeting takes place. Contact the FES Office to reserve a room as soon as you know the date and time.

2. Review the rules on the PoS form and create a rough draft to use in your meeting. Work with your major professor and ask them to help you with anything on the PoS form that you do not understand.

3. Hold your PoS meeting. During your meeting, discuss your PoS draft and finalize a course list for your program that meets the FES course requirements (i.e., FES 520, FES 525, FES 526), your committee's approval, supports your research, and works with the PoS rules.

4. Finalize your PoS form. Double-check that all required sections have been completed correctly. Sign the PoS form and obtain signatures from your major professor(s) and all committee members, including your GCR. Signatures from the Academic Unit Chair and Graduate School are not required before submission.

5. Submit your PoS form to the Grad Coordinator. If your PoS form contains errors, it will be returned to you for corrections. If there are no errors, a digital copy of your PoS form will be returned to you with the Graduate Program Director's signature as the Academic Unit Chair. A digital copy will be retained in your program file.

6. Submit your PoS form to the Graduate School. If there are no errors, your PoS will be returned to you with the Graduate School's approval. A digital copy will be retained by the Graduate School and in your program file.

Credit Types

Graduate Standalone Courses

Graduate standalone courses are courses that are **only** offered at the graduate level. Undergraduate courses and courses offered with an undergraduate component (also known as 4xx/5xx or slash courses) cannot be counted as graduate standalone. If a course does not count toward the Graduate School standalone requirements, it will sometimes say so in the Graduate Catalog.

Slash Courses

Slash courses are offered at both the undergraduate and graduate level at the same time, with nearly identical entries in the Graduate Catalog at both the 400 and 500 level. Slash courses do **not** count as graduate standalone courses.

Blanket Credits

Blanket credits typically refer to seminars or reading and conference courses such as FES 505, 605, 507, and 607, and usually have a 0 in the middle of the course designator. Thesis, project, and special topics credits (503, 603, 606, 599, 699) do **not** count as blanket credits. Blanket credit courses may also count as graduate standalone courses.

Thesis Credits

Thesis credits do **not** count as blanket credits on your PoS form, but **do** count as graduate standalone courses. On the PoS form, Ph.D. students must list minimum 36 thesis credits (FES 603) with no maximum, provided other credit requirements are met. MS students must list between 6 and 12 thesis credits (FES 503). MF students should not list any thesis credits, but will list 3-6 project credits (FES 506).

Unusable Credits

The Graduate School will not accept the following courses on your Program of Study:
- Undergraduate courses (1xx, 2xx, 3xx, 4xx) without a slash (5xx) component
- Audited courses
- Courses graded S/U or credit/no credit
- Courses graded lower than C (including C-)

FAQ

Can I do my PoS form without one of my committee members?
No, the form requires input and signatures from a fully-formed committee, including a GCR.

Can I change my PoS form later?
You can change your PoS form with the approval of your major professor and committee by submitting a Petition for Change in Program form, located in the 'Forms' section of the Graduate School website.

Can I put transfer courses on my PoS form?

Yes, provided they are approved by the Graduate School before you submit your PoS form and satisfy the requirements of the PoS form. To get the Graduate School's approval, prepare and submit a Transfer Credit Request form, located in the 'Forms' section of the Graduate School website.

Can I put courses from my Masters on my PoS form?

Yes, though the rules for inclusion may differ depending on where the courses were taken and your current degree program. See the 'Transfer Credit' section under 'Policies Governing All Graduate Programs' in the Graduate Catalog for more information.

As an MF student, which part of the 'Capstone' box should I fill out?

Put 3 – 6 credits of FES 506 in the 'Non-Thesis Project, Research, or PSM Internship' part of the 'Capstone' box.

As an MS student, which part of the 'Capstone' box should I fill out?

Put 6 – 12 credits of FES 503 in the 'Thesis' part of the 'Capstone' box. Do not enter any credits in the 'Non-Thesis Project, Research, or PSM Internship' part. If you are including any FES 501, 505, or 506 credits on your PoS form, they belong in the 'Major Courses' box with the rest of your course credits.

What do I put for my 'Academic Unit' and 'Major'?

Both are 'Forest Ecosystems and Society.'

What do I put in the 'Ethical Research Training' box?

Please consult with your committee to determine how you should meet this OSU Graduate Learning Outcome.

Research Proposal

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	No	-	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Must be completed before beginning significant work on research
MS:	Yes	By the end of your 3rd term of enrollment	
Ph.D.:	Yes	By the end of your 5th term of enrollment	

Research is at the heart of the FES MS and Ph.D. degree programs, and provides the basis for your thesis/dissertation. As part of your program, you will work closely with your major professor and (usually) other committee members to create a formal research proposal for your thesis/dissertation work. You are required to file your initial proposal with the department in accordance with program deadlines. A formal presentation of the proposal is also required, especially given it is part of the required FES 526 course.

Proposal

Your research proposal documents the research that forms the basis of your thesis/dissertation, and demonstrates that you are progressing toward completion of your degree. Your major professor and committee will help you determine what your research proposal needs to include, how long it needs to be, how much detail it should have, and the format in which it should be. A general rule of thumb is to write your proposal as though you were applying for a research grant and include your research questions or hypotheses, your methods, and your timeline. It is important that your proposal clearly documents all the work that you are proposing to do as part of your thesis/dissertation.

Solicit frequent feedback from your committee as you draft and revise your proposal to make sure you are on the right track. **After your major professor and committee approve your proposal, submit it (with the fully-signed approval form) to the Grad Coordinator as a .PDF.**

Presentation

Before you begin your research, your research proposal should be critically examined and reviewed by a wider group. To achieve this, you are required to formally present your research proposal to both your committee and a wider group. Outlets for you to present your proposal include the required FES 526 ("Effective Communication and Presentation Skills for Scientists") course (this is the most likely outlet for your proposal presentation), the annual Western Forestry Graduate Research Symposium (WFGRS) sponsored by the College of Forestry, or a separate seminar or presentation session.

To advertise your proposal presentation, the Grad Coordinator will create and post color flyers, send announcements to the department, and post announcements in the CoF Weekly and OSU Today newsletters. The Grad Coordinator will contact you approximately one month before your proposal presentation to get the information required for this advertising.

You may choose not to advertise your proposal presentation with the permission of your major professor and committee, but this is strongly discouraged. Presenting your work to a broad public audience is a valuable part of your graduate education. Choosing not to advertise will deprive you of that audience and of the benefits that come with it.

Preliminary Exams

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	No	(Ph.D.): After/near completion of all coursework on your PoS form, contingent on committee approval	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Requires submitted/approved PoS form - Requires submitted/approved FES LOs - Must register for at least 3 credits
MS:	No		
Ph.D.:	Yes		

Ph.D. students must pass a comprehensive preliminary examination (prelims) to determine their understanding of their major and minor fields, assess their capability for research, and advance from Ph.D. student to Ph.D. candidate (i.e., candidacy). In FES, prelims consist of both a written exam (conducted first) and an oral exam at a later date.

Your major professor and committee will determine when you are ready for your prelims, how you should prepare, and how your prelims will be formatted. Most students schedule their prelims at least 3-6 months in advance to allow adequate preparation. Plan to conduct your prelims when you are close to completing the courses on your PoS form, pending your committee's approval.

Potential Outcomes

Potential exam outcomes are 'Passing', 'Not Passing', and 'Fail'. If you receive a 'Passing' outcome, you officially become a Ph.D. candidate. If you receive a 'Not Passing' outcome, you may be permitted to retake the exam once at a date set by your committee. If you receive a 'Fail' outcome, there will likely be a discussion with you, your major professor, and the Graduate Program Director about the direction of your program.

Written Preliminary Exam

Unlike your oral exam, your written exam does not need to be scheduled with FES or the Graduate School; it is only scheduled with your major professor and committee. You must take and pass your written exam within a short time before you take your oral exam.

Your written exam can be conducted in one of two ways:

Option 1: Your committee submits questions to your major professor, who then gives you a cumulative 40 hours to answer them. Testing time is constrained to no more than 8 hours each day, and may not exceed 10 business days. There are no specified minimums for number of days or hours within a day.*

Option 2: Your committee selects a research topic (unrelated to your dissertation research) and gives you one month to write and submit a full research proposal about that topic.

In both options, your major professor and committee will determine the details, including:

- The content of the written exam
- Whether it will be open book, closed book, or a combination
- Where you will take your written exam
- Whether someone will proctor your written exam
- The format of your responses

After completing your written exam, your major professor and committee will review the results and determine whether you pass. If you pass, you can proceed to your oral exam.

*Current Preliminary Written Exam testing period policies were voted into effect Spring, 2016.   Ph.D. students who first enrolled after Spring 2016 must adhere to the policy above. However, Ph.D. students who first enrolled in Spring 2016 or earlier may choose to follow the previous policy instead: a testing period of cumulative 24 hours, spread over several days with no set maximum or minimum hours per day or days in the testing period.

Oral Preliminary Exam

Per Graduate School requirements, your oral exam will test your knowledge of your major and minor (if applicable) subjects and may cover your proposed research topic, although no more than half the time should be devoted to specific aspects of your proposed dissertation work. The exam should be scheduled for at least 2 hours. The most common timeframe is 3 hours, but it could be longer.

Unlike your written exam, your oral exam must be scheduled with FES and the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to the exam.

The Grad School will send their required paperwork to your GCR prior to your exam. Your FES Representative can access the required FES LO Assessment on the FES website. **At least one week prior to your exam, you must provide a copy of your LOs for each member of your committee.**

Your Oral Exam Timeline

At least 3-6 months before the oral exam:
- Work with your major professor and committee to determine how you should prepare.
- Decide a date, time, and place for your exam that works for your committee.
- Contact the Grad Coordinator to reserve a room.

At least 2 weeks before the oral exam:
- Submit the Exam Scheduling Form to the Grad School.

At least 1 week before the oral exam:
- Provide copies of your LOs to all of your committee members.

- Make sure your FES Representative is prepared to conduct the required FES LO Assessment. (See Page 29)
- Make sure your GCR has received paperwork from the Graduate School.
- Make sure all committee members have a copy of your written exam (questions and your answers)

Capstone Project

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	Yes	(MF): Within six weeks after your defense or before the first day of the next term, whichever is first.	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Requires submitted/approved PoS form - Requires submitted/approved FES LOs
MS:	No		
Ph.D.:	No		

Your capstone project culminates in a written document that will demonstrate the work you have done and the skills and knowledge that you have learned throughout your program. You will determine the details of your project with your major professor and committee, including how your project will be structured, the length and format of the write-up/report, and when it should be completed.

As part of your final exam, you will present and be questioned about your capstone project.

You are not required to submit your capstone project to FES or the Graduate School. By giving you the go-ahead for your final exam, your major professor and committee signify that you have completed your capstone project to their approval.

Thesis/Dissertation

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	No	(MS, Ph.D.): Within six weeks after your defense or before the first day of the next term, whichever is first.	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Requires submitted/approved PoS form - Requires submitted/approved FES LOs - Requires submitted research proposal
MS:	Yes		
Ph.D.:	Yes		

An acceptable thesis/dissertation demonstrates that you have met one of the OSU learning outcomes: the production and defense of an original significant contribution to knowledge (Ph.D.) or the production or conductance of research or another form of creative work (M.S.).

Your thesis/dissertation should demonstrate your ability to plan, conduct, analyze, and communicate your research in a format consistent with the Graduate School's requirements. Your thesis/dissertation must be approved by your major professor, the Department Head or Graduate Program Director, and the Dean of the Graduate School before you can graduate.

Expectations and Requirements

You must be enrolled for a minimum of 3 credits during the term in which you take your final defense (exam) and submit your thesis/dissertation.

Before you begin formatting your thesis/dissertation, review the Thesis Guide on the Graduate School's website and discuss expectations and requirements with your major professor and committee. Given that your thesis/dissertation is a representative product of the work you conducted in an interdisciplinary graduate program, it is strongly recommended (especially for Ph.D. students) to include a section that grapples with integration, synthesis, and implications of the biophysical and social dimensions of your research.

You are expected to produce 2-4 publications from your thesis/dissertation depending on your degree type. Discuss publication prospects with your major professor early in your program to determine what you should submit for publication and whether you should submit these publications before or after you defend.

Deadlines

Your final thesis/dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School within 6 weeks after your final exam or before the first day of the next term, whichever comes first. Your final thesis/dissertation must include any revisions your committee requests during your final exam.

If your final exam takes place late in the term, you may not have the 6 full weeks to revise and submit your thesis/dissertation to the Graduate School. If you cannot revise and submit your thesis/dissertation before the next term begins, you will be required to register for the next term.

Students participating in Commencement may be subject to different thesis/dissertation submission deadlines. Please review these deadlines on the Grad School webpage.

Submission and Approval

After passing your final exam, you will begin preparing your thesis/dissertation for submission and approval. As part of the submission and approval process, you must complete the following.

At least 2 weeks before your final exam:
- Distribute a defendable copy of your thesis/dissertation to your committee
- Deliver your pretext pages to Julie Kurtz at the Graduate School

Right after your final exam:
- Discuss revisions with your committee and establish a timeline for completing them
- Determine your thesis/dissertation submission deadline
- Determine when you will need the Department Head's signature and confirm availability

Within 6 weeks after your final exam or before the first day of the next term (whichever comes first):
- Complete all required thesis/dissertation revisions to the satisfaction of your committee
- Fill out the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) Submission Approval form
- Sign the ETD form and get your major professor's signature
- Get the Department Head's signature (see below)
- Submit your title page to Julie Kurtz at the Graduate School
- Submit your fully-signed ETD form to Julie Kurtz at the Graduate School
- Submit your fully-revised thesis/dissertation to ScholarsArchive

Some of these tasks involve additional steps or requirements. Please review the Graduate School's Thesis Guide and see below for complete instructions.

Completing the ETD Form

The Electronic Thesis/Dissertation Submission Approval (ETD) form must be submitted to the Graduate School when you submit your thesis/dissertation to ScholarsArchive. This form requires signatures from you, your major professor, and the FES Department Head. The Graduate School's signature is not required for submission.

The Department Head will not sign your ETD form until:

- All program requirements have been completed
- All revisions to the thesis/dissertation have been completed
- Your major professor has signed indicating their approval of the finished product

- The department has received the completed FES LO Assessment from your final exam
- The department has received a .PDF copy of the thesis/dissertation or, at minimum, the abstract

Please contact the Grad Coordinator well before you need the FES Department Head's signature to ensure they will be in the office and available to sign when you need it signed. If you bring your form in without notice (or only contact the Grad Coordinator a few days in advance) the Department Head may not be available to sign.

Students are encouraged to obtain the FES Department Head's signature by scheduling their exit interview for the same day and time they will need their ETD form signed.

Resources

Thesis Guide
The Thesis Guide describes the Graduate School's rules, requirements, and deadlines for completing and submitting your thesis/dissertation. It also links to a formatting guide, a template, an electronic submission guide, and the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) Submission Approval form.

Formatting Your Thesis in MS-Word: How to Win the Battle
This workshop is sometimes held by the Forestry Computing Help Desk. Topics include table of contents, lists of tables and figures, page layout settings, section breaks, creating custom styles, mixing portrait and landscape pages in the same document, and a template to help get you started. Watch for an e-mail announcing the next session or check the webpage to register.

Thesis Editor
The Graduate School's thesis editor can answer any questions about formatting, deadlines, submission, or copyrights that are not already answered in the Thesis Guide. The current Thesis Editor is Julie Kurtz.

Your Major Professor
Your major professor's experience with your subject matter makes them your most valuable collaborator and editor. Establish a clear plan with your major professor to regularly send drafts and receive and implement feedback.

Your Graduate Committee
Your committee should be familiar with your thesis/dissertation well before you send them the defendable copy at least two weeks prior to your final exam. Use their perspectives to strengthen your work and to counter questions or concerns before they pose a problem. Work with each committee member to establish when and how they will participate in the feedback and review process. Be sure you budget time into your schedule to allow adequate input from committee members.

Final Exam

	Required:	Due:	Notes:
MF:	Yes	By the end of your final term of enrollment, contingent on committee approval. Ph.D.: One full term must elapse between passing prelims and taking your final exam.	- Requires fully-formed grad committee - Requires submitted/approved PoS form - Requires submitted/approved FES LOs - Must pass all PoS courses w/ at least "C" - Must have GPA of at least 3.00 - Must register for at least 3 credits - Defendable draft of thesis / dissertation must be provided to committee at least 2 weeks before defense
MS:	Yes		
Ph.D.:	Yes		

The final phase of your degree is like setting up a row of dominos. You need to accomplish a long string of related tasks that begin **months** before your final exam. If you do not prepare well, the tasks that you missed or did late will prevent you from graduating on time. **Decide what term you want to graduate, carefully review all the requirements and deadlines, and work backward to create your timeline. If you stick to that timeline, everything should fall into place.**

Your final exam starts with a public presentation of your thesis/dissertation/capstone to demonstrate your mastery of your project area. After the presentation, you will meet privately with your committee so they can test you on your disciplinary knowledge and expertise, assess your progress on your learning outcomes, and discuss your thesis/dissertation/capstone in greater depth. You will then be excused while the committee evaluates your performance in the exam and your FES Representative conducts the FES LO Assessment.

Final Exam Timeline

The tasks and timelines for your final exam and your thesis/dissertation are closely linked. Make sure you incorporate thesis/dissertation requirements (not listed below) into your to-do list for your final exam.

3 to 6 months before your final exam: Confirm that you are eligible for it and make sure you are prepared to meet all the associated requirements and deadlines you will be responsible for in the coming months.

- Review the Graduate Catalog section on final examinations for your degree (Masters or Doctoral).
- Review Graduate School deadlines for defending, thesis/dissertation submission, and commencement.
- Contact the Grad Coordinator to confirm that all program requirements have been completed.
- Contact the Grad Coordinator to confirm that all members of your committee are current members of the OSU Graduate Faculty with the appropriate permissions in place.

1 to 3 months before your final exam: **C**ommunicate with your committee and get it all on the calendar.

- Work with your committee to set the date, time, and location of the exam.
- Contact the Grad Coordinator to reserve a room.
- Register for at least 3 credits in the term you will defend (per Continuous Enrollment requirements).
- Respond to the Grad Coordinator's e-mailed request for advertising information.

At least 2 weeks before your final exam: Handle administrative requirements, provide materials to your committee, and make sure your committee members are prepared to fulfill their responsibilities.

- Distribute examination copies of your thesis/dissertation to your committee.
- Distribute copies of your learning outcomes plan to your committee.
- Remind your committee of the date, time, and location of the exam.
- Apply for a diploma.
- Submit an Exam Scheduling Form to the Grad School.

1-2 weeks before your final exam: Confirm your preparations and handle any remaining last-minute tasks.

- Confirm that your GCR has received paperwork from the Graduate School.
- Confirm your room reservation.

As soon as possible after your final exam: Establish a plan for the final phase of your degree.

- Confirm that your FES Representative has submitted your LO Assessment to the Grad Coordinator.
- Confirm that your GCR has submitted their required paperwork to the Graduate School.
- Meet with your major professor to discuss feedback from the defense.
- Work with your committee to establish a timeline for thesis/dissertation revisions and submission.
- Complete and submit the FES Check-out Checklist to the Grad Coordinator.

Advertising Your Defense

To advertise your defense, the Grad Coordinator will create and post color flyers, send announcements to the department, and post announcements in the CoF Weekly and OSU Today newsletters. The Grad Coordinator will contact you approximately one month before your final exam to get the information required for this advertising.

You may choose not to advertise your defense with the permission of your major professor and committee, but this is strongly discouraged. Presenting the results of your work to a broad public audience is a valuable part of your graduate education. Choosing not to advertise will deprive you of that audience and of the benefits that come with it.

Finishing Up

The following tasks should be completed after passing your final exam, prior to leaving or closing contact with OSU. If you will continue working with OSU after you complete your degree, please contact the Grad Coordinator and Office Manager, as some of these tasks may change.

Please see the FES Check-out Checklist for additional details and requirements, and use the checklist to mark off completed items. The FES Check-out Checklist is available on the FES Current Student Resources webpage or by contacting the Grad Coordinator. Completed checklists should be submitted to the Grad Coordinator.

- Respond to any requests for information from the Graduate School
- Contact the Grad Coordinator to schedule your exit interview with the FES Department Head
- Archive all data and materials stored on OSU or CoF computer drives
- Confirm that all necessary parties have received all data and materials related to your research
- Complete the online 'Close Forestry User Account' form
- Update your information in MyOSU
- Clean out your Richardson or Peavy Hall office space
- Turn all of your keys in to the Grad Coordinator or Office Manager
- Complete the Contact & Employment Info form

Funding Your Program

A clear and reasonable funding plan is a key part of every student's graduate education. Although many students cooperate with their major professor to create their funding plan, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure that all of their costs are covered.

Expenses

Graduate students need to plan for expenses in three general categories:

- **Institutional expenses**
  Paid to OSU to facilitate the core components of graduate education. These include tuition, fees, health insurance, textbooks, printing, and parking.

- **Research expenses**
  Support the completion and communication of research. These include travel to research sites, equipment used to collect or analyze samples, and travel to conferences to present research.

- **Living expenses**
  Support basic survival. These include rent, food, clothing, and transportation.

Due to the unique research interests and lifestyles that each student brings to their graduate program, it is difficult for OSU to estimate the exact total cost of any specific student's attendance. Students must assess their own expenses and how to pay them, both before their program begins and as their program progresses.

Few (if any) students have sufficient financial resources available to cover all of these expenses. Consequently, most students need some kind of financial support to get through their graduate program.

Types of funding

Most FES graduate students are funded by Graduate Assistantships, Graduate Fellow Appointments, OSU awards, or by an external source. Students are also permitted to self-fund if they have the means.

Funding often comes with stipulations and restrictions. Your funding source may only allow you to receive your funding in a particular way or may restrict what your funding can be used to pay for. You may also be subject to requirements such as registering for a particular number of credits, purchasing health insurance, or submitting reports to your funding source.

It is crucial that you read all documentation associated with any funding you apply for or receive to ensure you can use it for your intended purpose and can fulfill any associated requirements.

Graduate Assistantships (GAs, GRAs, GTAs)

Graduate Assistants (GAs) are employees of OSU who receive payment and benefits to perform the duties described in their position description. GAs are classified into two categories: Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) and Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs). GRAs and GTAs are paid at the same rate and receive the same benefits, but have different responsibilities. Depending on the duties in their position descriptions, some GAs may be classified as GRAs and GTAs at the same time. Most GRAs are supervised by their major professor and are paid using the grants, contracts, or agreements that support their professor's research. Most GTAs are supervised by course instructors to assist with classes. For every term that a student is appointed as a GA, they receive tuition remission, access to health insurance, and a stipend. GA funding supports institutional and living expenses but may not include research expenses. See Page 51 for more about GAs.

OSU awards, scholarships, and fellowships

Competitive scholarships and fellowships are administered by the Graduate School, the College of Forestry (CoF), and/or the department (FES). Scholarships and fellowships are usually paid as one lump sum or in installments deposited into the student's business account. Very few fellowships meet the criteria to qualify the recipient for a Graduate Fellow Appointment. OSU awards, scholarships, and fellowships are best accessed by applying in careful accordance with award instructions and deadlines. Applications for awards administered by the Graduate School and the CoF may need to be submitted to FES several weeks before the deadlines advertised by the Graduate School and CoF. Please contact the Grad Coordinator to determine FES deadlines for any awards for which you wish to apply.

Graduate Fellow Appointments (GFAs)

To be appointed as a Graduate Fellow, you must receive a fellowship that meets the criteria in the Graduate Fellowship policies on the Graduate School webpage. Most scholarships and fellowships will not qualify for a GFA. If you receive a GFA, you will be notified with an appointment letter from the administrating unit, typically FES or the Graduate School. In addition to the benefits provided by the qualifying fellowship, Graduate Fellows receive a tuition waiver and access to subsidized health insurance for every term they are appointed. Tuition waivers typically do not include any fee coverage and cannot be used during Summer term. If you receive a tuition waiver with your GFA, you will receive a Tuition Support Scholarship award letter from the Graduate School. There are few fellowships offered at OSU that qualify for a GFA, and those that do often require students to have funding prepared for after the fellowship ends. Most fellowships that qualify for a GFA will come from external organizations, such as the NSF, NASA, or EPA. GFAs are best accessed by researching and applying for fellowships that meet the criteria described on the Graduate School webpage.

External awards, scholarships, and fellowships:

External funding is typically a scholarship, fellowship, award or grant paid directly to the student without interacting with OSU, although some may qualify the recipient for a Graduate Fellow Appointment. External funding is best accessed by independently researching potential funding sources and competitions, and then applying in careful accordance with advertised instructions and deadlines.

Graduate Assistantships (GAs)

Graduate Assistants (GAs) are employed by the FES Department to perform the duties defined in their position description to the satisfaction of their supervisor who is typically (but not always) their major professor.

Students seeking assistantships should first consult with their major professor. If their major professor does not have any GA opportunities available, students may contact individual faculty in their area of interest or who instruct courses with which the student may be able to assist. FES students can also explore GA opportunities in other departments or colleges, such as Integrative Biology or Fisheries & Wildlife.

Payment and benefits

During appointed terms, GAs receive a waiver that covers their tuition and a subsidy to cover substantial portions of their mandatory fees and health insurance coverage. They also receive a stipend (subject to taxes) as specified in the first paragraph of their appointment letter. Stipend amounts are determined by FTE, the student's degree, and the CoF wage schedule.

Some GAs are appointed to conduct research that will also be used for their thesis/dissertation/capstone. The funding source for the GA may also provide additional funds to assist with research expenses. Before beginning their appointment, GAs should consult with their supervisor to determine the existence and extent of additional funds to support their research.

Duties and responsibilities

Every GA receives a work assignment before their appointment begins. The work assignment includes a position description and a rough outline of how the GAs time will be split between their duties. GA responsibilities may include (but are not limited to):

- **Serving as a GTA**
  Assisting the instructor of one or more courses by supervising lab or recitation sessions, grading homework or tests, holding regular office hours, preparing class materials, and proctoring exams.

- **Serving as a GRA for their supervisor's research**
  Collecting or analyzing samples, recording and maintaining databases, reviewing literature, writing reports, ordering equipment or materials, maintaining equipment and laboratory/classroom space, shipping, and mailing.

- **Serving as a GRA for their own research under their major professor's supervision**
  Creating and implementing their research proposal, applying for additional research funding, preparing and submitting manuscripts for publication, presenting their research, and writing their thesis/dissertation/capstone.

Satisfactory academic progress

In addition to the expectations for their work assignment, all GAs are required to make satisfactory academic progress to continue their assistantship. In FES, satisfactory academic progress is assessed annually (or more frequently if needed) by a student's major professor. Almost all GAs will need to devote personal, unpaid time toward completing their degree-related requirements and making satisfactory academic progress. This includes GAs who are paid to perform duties that contribute to their thesis/dissertation/capstone.

Explaining FTE

FTE (Full-Time Equivalency) refers to the number of hours that an employee is expected to work. GAs can be hired to work anywhere between 0.30 FTE and 0.49 FTE, or an average of 12 – 19.6 hours per week. Some GAs will work a set number of hours every day or week. Other GAs will work a variable schedule with the understanding that they will meet their overall FTE by the end of the term. GAs should discuss the best way to track their hours with their supervisor before beginning their appointment.

Again, GAs should understand that if their paid work contributes to their thesis/dissertation/capstone, such that they would be doing it whether they are employed or not, they will likely work more than their FTE requires.

FES GA Evaluation

If you were appointed as a GRA or GTA through FES for one or more terms, your supervisor must complete and submit a FES GA Evaluation before the end of that academic year (June 30th). This requirement is detailed in the 2016-2020 CGE Contract. Your major professor, the FES Department Head, and/or the FES Graduate Program Director may request or require an assessment at any time during the year. You do not need to be evaluated if…

- You were appointed by FERM, WSE, F&W, or some other non-FES department
- You did not have a GRA/GTA appointment that year – just an hourly or Graduate Fellow appointment

GA Evaluations are completed by your designated GA supervisor. If you had multiple supervisors during the evaluation year, each must conduct their own evaluation. Multiple supervisors may conduct a joint evaluation if they co-supervised the same set of duties. Your supervisor will provide you with the opportunity to review and sign your GA Evaluation before submitting it to the FES Department. You may submit a rebuttal to the FES Department within 30 days of signing. Rebuttals will be attached to your evaluation and included in your file.

Evaluations only cover tasks that you were specifically appointed and paid to perform. **FES GA Evaluations are not the same as the FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (discussed earlier in this handbook).** FES GA Evaluations review your performance as an employee, whereas the FES Assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress reviews your performance as a student in the FES Graduate Program. Unless included in your position description and covered by your FTE, your evaluation should not critique your progress on degree requirements, performance in classes, professional development activities, or 'citizenship' activities such as providing departmental service or unpaid assistance for your lab group.

Graduate School Awards

Graduate School scholarships and fellowships are subject to much competition, so receiving one is a matter of great prestige. Students and their major professors are responsible for identifying the awards for which they can and should apply.

The Graduate School usually does not accept applications directly from students or faculty. Instead, students and faculty must submit their materials to the Grad Coordinator **at least 4 weeks before the deadline** stated on the Graduate School webpage. Given that most Graduate School award competitions accept a limited number of nominees per program or department, FES requires the extra 4 weeks to evaluate applications, select a nominee, and work with the nominee and major professor to prepare any additional materials. Ask the FES Grad Coordinator about the FES deadlines for any Graduate School awards for which you are interested.

Students must be formally accepted to the FES program before applying for these awards. Prospective students who have not yet been accepted via standard program procedures cannot be considered.

College of Forestry Fellowships

The College of Forestry Fellowship Competition awards supplementary funding to exemplary new and continuing students. The competition usually has three rounds to award funding for the following academic year. In each round, the FES Fellowship & Scholarship Committee selects up to 7 top-performing applicants to forward to the CoF Fellowship Committee for consideration.

Award amounts vary, but are typically between $500 and $12,000 per academic year.

New students…
- Can be considered for Rounds 1 & 2
- Must have formally applied and been accepted to an OSU Grad Program for the following academic year
- Must either enroll in FES or have a major professor who is a regular graduate faculty member in FES
- Must already have some funding in place for the award year

Continuing students…
- Can only be considered for Round 3
- Cannot receive CoF Fellowships for more than 2 (MS/MF) or 3 (Ph.D.) academic years (3 terms per year)
- Must already have some funding in place for the award year
- Must either be enrolled in FES or have a major professor who is a regular graduate faculty member in FES

Application procedures for the CoF Fellowships are often being revised for each year's award season. New students should contact the FES Grad Coordinator to inquire about the most recent application procedures. Continuing students will be notified about application procedures via e-mail when applications open in the winter or spring.

FES Department Awards

Every year, FES is pleased to offer both monetary and congratulatory awards to exemplary continuing students. Recipients are recognized at the FES Awards Ceremony every spring.

FES Fellowships & Scholarships

Every spring, the FES Fellowship and Scholarship Committee selects continuing students who best exemplify the goals of FES' endowed fellowships (contingent on availability) and award accordingly.

These endowed fellowships usually include and are awarded to:

- **James H Dukes, Jr Graduate Fellowship:** Ph.D. students in forest ecology
- **Robert F Tarrant Graduate Fellowship:** Full-time students studying hardwood ecology and silviculture
- **Harry and Mildred Fowells Fellowship:** Students studying tree physiology and/or genetics
- **Catherine G Bacon Graduate Fellowship:** Female students studying forest ecology or silviculture
- **Social Science Graduate Student Award:** FES students primarily studying social sciences

Applications

Deadlines for the FES Department Awards are announced via e-mail in the winter or spring. For full consideration, students must send an updated CV to the Grad Coordinator by the date specified in the announcement, typically April 15th. Submitted CVs should visually (e.g., bold, highlight) differentiate accomplishments since arriving at OSU from prior accomplishments. Students will automatically be considered for the FES Fellowships & Scholarships if they already submitted a CV to FES for an award competition earlier that year, though they may update this CV if desired. Students are not required to pick the FES Fellowships and Scholarships for which they wish to apply. After submitting their CV, students will be considered for every FES Fellowship and Scholarship for which they are eligible.

Outstanding Graduate Student Awards

The Outstanding Graduate Student Awards (sometimes referred to as the Graduate Student Achievement Awards) recognize one continuing MS student and one continuing Ph.D. student who consistently demonstrate their exceptional scholastic ability, work ethic, and department citizenship. Any MS or Ph.D. student with a major professor in FES is eligible. The FES Outstanding Graduate Student Awards will be announced each winter or spring via e-mail. To nominate a student, a FES Graduate Faculty member (or a non-FES major professor advising a FES graduate student) must submit a letter of endorsement and a copy of the student's CV to the Grad Coordinator by the date specified in the announcement, typically April 15th.

Travel Funding

Most graduate students travel to conferences, meetings, symposia, or workshops during their program. Some students receive funding to support this travel from their major professor or the source funding their research, but many will need to locate and apply for their own travel funding.

Most travel funding will be issued in the form of reimbursements for pre-approved expenses after students return from their trip, but in some cases students may use awarded funds before the trip to make purchases through CoF's Business Center. Travel funding cannot be disbursed to the student as cash or check before the trip.

Waring Travel Fund Awards

Awards from the Waring Travel Fund provide supplementary funding for graduate students to travel to and present at professional or scientific meetings. Awarded funds are generally restricted to transportation, lodging, and meeting registration costs.

Students are only eligible for one grant per academic year. Funds can only be awarded if the student will conduct an oral or poster presentation at the event to which they are traveling. To be considered, students must be enrolled in the FES graduate program or have a major professor who is a regular graduate faculty member in FES. Preference is given to applications demonstrating additional partial travel funding from other sources.

Applications may be submitted at any time. To apply, students must submit a proposal containing the following:

- Student name
- Degree program and date of initial enrollment
- Major professor
- Name of the meeting
- Organization hosting the meeting (if not apparent from the name)
- Meeting dates
- Proposed travel dates
- Type of presentation (volunteer/invited, oral, poster, etc.)
- Title of presentation
- Brief abstract of the presentation
- Budget including estimated expenses and any funds available from other sources. The budget should include a justification for any expenses that are not apparent (e.g. rental car, extra days before or after the meeting, etc.).
- Date by which a decision is needed from the committee to confirm travel plans
- Any supporting documents that might help the committee evaluate the application, such as an invitation letter

Proposals should be e-mailed as a single PDF to the Grad Coordinator and the chair of the FES Fellowship and Scholarship Committee. Please direct questions to the Grad Coordinator and the chair of the FES Fellowship and Scholarship Committee.

Graduate Student Travel Award

The Graduate Student Travel Award helps cover the costs of presenting scholarly achievements at prestigious conferences and venues. The award usually covers up to half of the full cost of attending a conference, or a maximum of $500 for domestic travel and $1,000 for international travel.

Applications for this award open once per term. **Applications must be submitted to the FES Grad Coordinator at least one week prior to the Graduate School's deadline.** FES students will receive an e-mail notifying them of the deadline to submit their application to the Grad Coordinator. Application requirements, deadlines, and eligibility details are available on the Grad School website.

HSRC Graduate Student Conference Reimbursement

The Graduate Student Conference Reimbursement is available to assist with student expenses pertaining to educational and professional conferences, up to $250. Students can only receive the reimbursement once per fiscal year. Conferences must have occurred within the current fiscal year.

Applications must be submitted to HSRC within 30 days of the conference. Contact HSRC in Champinefu Lodge or at 541-737-3747 for applications or more information.

J. Richard Dilworth Graduate Award in Forestry

The Dilworth Award provides funding for scholarship, student travel, and graduate teaching. In regards to student travel, priority is given to travel for student research not covered by departmental or project funds, and for group instructional activities not covered by departmental funds.

Applications are usually due in early Spring, with total award amounts to be determined by the annual yield of the foundation account. Please see the award website or contact the FERM Grad Coordinator for more information.

Dean's Investment Fund for International Engagement

This provides funding to assist students in pursuing their interests through international study, research, internships, and other collaborative experiences. This fund can include conference attendance, if the student is presenting/participating in a poster session. Students should visit the fund's webpage for details on applying and due dates for applications.

College of Forestry Experiential Learning Funds

The College of Forestry offers experiential learning funds to students who would like to attend a conference or workshop that is related to their program of study and supports their education, professional development, and/or leadership experiences. Students can apply for up to $500 to help pay travel, lodging, and registration

costs. Please review the program details, award requirements, application deadline dates, as well as download the proposal form from the Experiential Learning Funds website.

External Funding

We strongly encourage students to search and apply for external funding to help support their research and living expenses. Besides helping to relieve financial stress, receiving external funding is an excellent addition to a student's CV. Graduate students should discuss options for external funding with their major professors. Major professors are expected to alert their students to funding opportunities in their professional fields.

The Graduate School website provides lists of external fellowships and strategies for finding external funding. Students should ask their major professor and committee members to suggest additional opportunities. Searching online may also yield funding opportunities specific to particular areas of study.

Program and Department Resources

Where to begin? If you need something and you are unsure where to direct your question or concern after reviewing the following resources, **start with your major professor or the Grad Coordinator.**

Your major professor

Every student has an individual style of learning and every major professor has an individual style of advising, which means that every student / major professor relationship will be different. In general, you should be able to rely on your major professor to:

- Make sure your research and professional development are held to and meet rigorous standards
- Help you define your interests and choose appropriate course work
- Provide guidance on designing and carrying out your research (particularly for MS)
- Provide funding for graduate school or provide guidance on finding and applying for your own funding
- Alert you to pertinent job opportunities during your program and after graduation
- Help you identify and network with professionals in your field
- When appropriate, offer guidance on career and personal decisions affecting professional development

If your major professor has not offered the kind of assistance or guidance you were expecting, talk to them! They may not be aware you need it or may have expected you to handle the situation yourself as part of your educational and professional development.

Starting out with your major professor

Early in your program, you should have a frank conversation with your major professor about expectations and timelines. This is the time to set boundaries and define responsibilities so that you and your major professor can get what you need from each other throughout your program. For some students and their major professors, one conversation with a brief written plan is enough to establish expectations. Others prefer to create a more detailed written agreement defining specific obligations and responsibilities, and some may even create a signed contract that the student and major professor can refer to if they feel that their needs are not being met. During your discussion, consider the following questions:

- How often should you meet?
- How involved will you be in each other's research?
- What is your proposed timeline for completing your program?
- What is the best way to communicate?
- How frequently will you communicate?
- Who is going to do what to make sure you are funded?

There may not be answers to all of these questions in the beginning. That is fine; at this point, discussing and writing down your needs and expectations is likely more important than coming to firm conclusions.

Maintaining a productive relationship with your major professor

It is possible that you will have occasional disagreements with your major professor. Unclear expectations, delayed or dropped responsibilities, personality clashes, or crossed boundaries could make it difficult to work together. If your relationship with your major professor is becoming a problem, you have several options.

Discuss the problem with your major professor directly
Schedule some time to talk with your major professor about the issue. Be clear about how it is impacting your work and present possible solutions. Work with your major professor to figure out what changes you both may need to make as you move forward, and discuss how you can hold each other accountable. If you and your major professor defined your respective responsibilities when you first enrolled, this would be a good time to refer back to your agreement or make adjustments.

Ask a third party to mediate a meeting with your major professor
If you would like to speak with your major professor directly, but feel an objective third party would help facilitate the conversation, you can ask the FES Graduate Program Director or the FES Department Head to sit in on your meeting.

Ask a third party for help
If you feel that meeting with your major professor would not be productive, you can contact the FES Graduate Program Director, the FES Department Head, the Graduate School, or the University Ombuds Office to help you resolve the issue. With your consent and input, they can speak with your major professor about the issue, help you plan a meeting with your major professor, or discuss steps that you can take to improve the situation. They can also act as a confidential sounding board for your thoughts and ideas.

Switch to a different major professor
This step should not be taken lightly and certainly not before trying at least one of the options above. Although it might be necessary in rare cases, switching major professors can have a significant impact on your funding, your research, and may (at least temporarily) slow or stall progress on your degree. It could also present major problems if an alternate major professor is unavailable or cannot be found.

The student/major professor relationship comes with responsibilities for both parties. In addition to their mentoring responsibilities, major professors may have commitments with external parties relating to your research. In the unlikely event that a student is considering a change of major professor, the student should speak to their major professor (if possible) and the FES Department Head and FES Graduate Program Director to understand how the change would impact their research and responsibilities.   If you believe it may be necessary for you to switch to a different major professor, please contact the Grad Coordinator.

FES Graduate Program Support

The FES Graduate Program is administrated by the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Graduate Program Director with oversight by the Department Head and some additional assistance from FES Department staff.

FES Graduate Program Coordinator: Michelle Greene

Richardson 321 | 541-737-6556 | Michelle.Greene@oregonstate.edu

The Grad Coordinator tracks your progress, helps administrate your funding, helps you understand and fulfill your degree requirements, and generally supports you throughout your program.   After your major professor, the Grad Coordinator should be your first point of contact for questions and needs related to your graduate degree. This person can help you understand requirements and policies, troubleshoot funding issues, locate resources, or deal with the occasional 'weird' questions that are liable to pop up. Even if they do not have the answer, they can help you figure out where to go.

FES Graduate Program Director: Mark Needham

Richardson 204 | 541-737-1498 | Mark.Needham@oregonstate.edu

The Graduate Program Director helps create, define, and regulate the policies and systems that support the graduate program. This person develops strategies to better address the needs of FES students, either individually or as a group, and supervises program administration. They can help you address issues with your major professor or instructors, form plans to work through complex academic or procedural problems, address sensitive or confidential concerns, or work with you on questions that cannot be addressed to your major professor or the Grad Coordinator.

FES Department Head: Troy Hall

Richardson 321 | 541-737-1306 | Troy.Hall@oregonstate.edu

The Department Head directs the administration and planning necessary for a productive and successful department. This person leads discussion on new and existing policy, helps define goals and initiatives, and oversees the successful functioning of all units and programs. Contact the FES Department Head if you have a serious or confidential concern about your program, if you want to share feedback, or if you need help resolving a sensitive issue involving others in the department or college.

FES Graduate Program Student Resources Website

fes.forestry.oregonstate.edu/fes-student-resources

Many of the forms and materials you will need for your program (including this handbook) are available on the [FES website for current graduate students](#).

FES Department Support

The FES Department is primarily administrated by the Department Head, the Office Manager, and a few office staff members, including the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Online Degree and Certificate Coordinator.

FES Office Staff

Richardson 321 | 541-737-2244 | FES.Workbox@oregonstate.edu

The FES Office staff keep things running smoothly on a day-to-day basis. They are a great place to start if you are not sure where to direct your questions. Call, e-mail, or visit the department office if you need help with:

- Locating people
- Locating resources
- Reserving rooms
- Shipping and mailing
- Getting keys

- Operating copiers
- Finding office supplies
- Facilities issues
- Course overrides
- Any administrative business!

FES Office Manager: Misty Magers

Richardson 321 | 541-737-1484 | Misty.Magers@oregonstate.edu

The Office Manager supervises department administration, including travel and other reimbursements, department facilities, budgets, policies, TA allocation, and record-keeping. If the Grad Coordinator is unavailable or cannot answer your funding or facilities question, contact the Office Manager for help.

FES Online Degree and Certificate Coordinator: Juliet Sutton

Richardson 321 | 541-737-6088 | Juliet.Sutton@oregonstate.edu

The Online Degree Coordinator administrates the online Master of Natural Resources (MNR) program as well as our three graduate certificate programs: Forests and Climate Change, Sustainable Natural Resources, and Urban Forestry. Some students may also enroll in one of these certificate programs while pursuing their FES graduate degree. Contact the Online Degree and Certificate Coordinator if you are interested in the MNR program or FES certificate programs.

FES Department Website

fes.forestry.oregonstate.edu

On the FES Department website, you can find contact information for staff, faculty, and students, as well as information about department research, programs, and other resources.

College of Forestry Resources

Can the FES Department help with your problem? Before contacting other CoF units, try checking with the FES Office staff to see if your problem can (and perhaps should) be addressed at the Department level.

CoF Business Center (FOBC)

FOBC handles issues related to payroll, travel, hiring, human resources, and grant administration. For assistance with a particular issue, please contact…

Travel reimbursements and purchasing: Becky Currier | 541-737-3188 | Rebecca.Currier@oregonstate.edu
Invoices and accounts payable: Christina Fierro | 541-737-1588 | Christina.Fierro@oregonstate.edu
Payroll: Alan Rudisill | 541-737-4062 | Alan.Rudisill@oregonstate.edu
Human Resources: FOBC.HR@oregonstate.edu

Goods and equipment

Purchasing goods and equipment
Oak Creek 169 | 541-737-4280 | Glenn.Folkert@oregonstate.edu

Purchasing through OSU is often less expensive than purchasing directly from vendors. In some cases, CoF may have the requested goods in stock and can deliver them to the FES Department Office the same or next business day. If the goods need to be ordered, they will be delivered to the FES Department Office 1-2 business days after arriving at OSU. Contact Glenn Folkert with an index number to submit an order.

Fabricating custom goods and equipment
Oak Creek 170 | 541-737-4275 | John.Mikkelson@oregonstate.edu

The Projects and Maintenance department has a wide range of metal- and wood-working capabilities, and (if provided with a valid index number) can fabricate most custom equipment. Their shop rate, set by FOBC, is $50/hr. Minor work may not incur a charge, depending on the nature of the task(s). Please be prepared to provide complete specifications, including dimensions, a diagram, and the context in which the equipment will be used. For further information, contact John Mikkelson, the Director of Projects and Maintenance.

Renting equipment
541-737-2192 | Jim.Kiser@oregonstate.edu

CoF has some general forestry equipment available to check out, contingent on availability, including safety gear, measuring tools, handheld tools such as hammers and shovels, stakes, and flags. Contact Jim Kiser for more information.

Forestry Computing Helpdesk

A CoF Network Account is established through the Forestry Computing Help Desk for every new FES grad student. Students must read and adhere to OSU's Acceptable Use of Computing Resources Policy. As part of your CoF Network Account, you will have access to…

- E-mail accounts
- Disk space
- Printing & scanning
- Computing workshops

- Equipment checkout
- Remote access to lab software
- Workshops
- Purchasing assistance

Contact the Forestry Computing Helpdesk with questions or concerns about your CoF Network Account.

Forestry Computing Helpdesk
Richardson 215 | (541) 737-2152 | helpdesk.forestry.oregonstate.edu

Forestry Computing Helpdesk can help you with services related to your CoF Network Account (see above) and more. For a list of services and equipment, see the Forestry Computing Help Desk webpage.

Forestry computing labs
helpdesk.forestry.oregonstate.edu/facilities

CoF provides students with access to undergraduate and graduate computer labs with multiple monitors, printing and scanning, and specialized software such as ArcGIS, Sigmaplot, SPSS, and the Adobe Suite. Contact the Computing Helpdesk or visit their webpage for current computer lab locations and hours.

Forestry computing workshops
helpdesk.forestry.oregonstate.edu/training

The Forestry Computing Helpdesk provides various workshops throughout the year, covering topics for common programs such as Microsoft Excel and Access as well as for niche tools such as SigmaPlot, ArcGIS, and R. All workshops are free of charge to the CoF community. Watch for e-mails announcing upcoming workshops, or visit the website to check for scheduled workshops or register interest for unscheduled workshops.

Statistical consulting
helpdesk.forestry.oregonstate.edu/statistical-consulting

CoF Statistical Consulting provides services including training, consultation, and help with research study design, statistical analysis, programming languages (e.g., R), and interpretation of statistical literature. Students are especially encouraged to meet with a consultant before beginning field work or data collection to make sure their methods and study design are as sound as possible. Visit the website for more information about the process.

Additional Resources

Graduate Student Success Guide

The Graduate Student Success Guide is a hub for much of the information and resources you will need throughout your Graduate Program. In particular, their Graduate Student Resources page is an easily navigable guide to many (if not all) of the University resources available to you.

There are a wealth of resources available to you through the Graduate School and University, and the Graduate Student Success Guide is the best place to find them.

International Students and Programs

Office of International Services (OIS)
University Plaza Ste 130 | 541-737-6310 | international.oregonstate.edu/ois/students

The Office of International Services helps international students understand and abide by the policies and practices for studying in Oregon.

CoF International Programs
Strand 258 | 541-737-6458 | https://www.forestry.oregonstate.edu/international

The CoF International Programs office arranges international study and travel opportunities for students and faculty, and arranges for scholars to visit OSU from around the world.

OSU Office of Global Opportunities
University Plaza, Suite 130 | 541-737-3006 | international.oregonstate.edu/osugo

The OSU Office of Global Opportunities (OSU GO) administers, promotes, and advises OSU students, faculty, and staff on opportunities related to the International Degree program, study abroad, international internships and service learning, and education abroad scholarships and fellowships.

Jobs and Professional Development

Workshops and Trainings

https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/graduate-student-success

The Graduate School regularly holds professional development workshops and trainings, and tracks additional professional development opportunities available across the University. Visit the Graduate Student Success Guide for lists of upcoming events and special events by term.

Career Development Center (CDC)

Kerr B008 | 541-737-4085 | career.services@oregonstate.edu | career.oregonstate.edu

The Career Development Center provides resources for students and alumni to achieve their professional goals through job fairs, the Beaver Recruiting Program, career counseling, workshops, internship opportunities, and job-hunting tools. CDC also posts student employment information for positions on and off campus.

CoF Job Board

jobs.forestry.oregonstate.edu

The CoF Jobs webpage tracks and links to job opportunities for which CoF students may want to apply. If you are preparing for your next step after graduate school, we encourage you to check this page early and often.

Managing Your Health and Wellness

Your health and wellness are vital to your education and the quality of your work, besides being an essential part of the happy life you deserve. If you are struggling and are not sure where to turn after reviewing the resources below, please reach out to the FES Grad Coordinator, Graduate Program Director, or Department Head.

Coping with Stress

Many people believe that stress, lack of sleep, and social isolation are all just a normal part of being a graduate student, but that is absolutely not true! Graduate school is about discovery, challenging yourself and those around you, and becoming a professional who can make real contributions to your field. This process does take a significant amount of work and it can be stressful at times, but it should never feel hopeless, unsustainable, unending, or unmanageable.

A graduate degree program is a complicated balancing act between your academic pursuits, supporting yourself, and creating a sustainable life. It is common for students to lose steam now and then, especially as they hit obstacles or ruts in their research. It is also common for students to worry about their progress or to feel overwhelmed by their to-do list. Recharging your mental batteries by allowing yourself to relax and pursuing

activities unrelated to your graduate program are vital for coping with the stress of graduate school. Keeping a healthy perspective is critical to your well-being. Remember, nobody does great work when they are burned out.

Stress Prevention

Some students worry that their friends and professors will have less respect for them if they are 'caught' doing anything other than working on their research. However, most students (and faculty!) actually aspire to a work/life balance that keeps them healthy and focused, even while working hard. Make sure you…

- Take daily breaks for exercise and rest
- Take daily breaks for full meals
- Schedule daily time to maintain relationships with friends and family
- Sleep 7-9 hours per night

It is also important to be kind to yourself and communicate with your peers. Do not beat yourself up for feeling stressed, tired, frustrated, or uncertain; it happens! Vent about it to your fellow students. They are an excellent source of support, commiseration, and perspective.

Although campus resources are well-equipped to help students in crisis, we strongly encourage you to explore and use these resources *before* you reach your stress limit. Many students regularly visit the Mind Spa or use campus counseling or support sessions to help understand their stress levels, make small adjustments, and improve their general well-being. Check out the CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) webpage for resources to meet a variety of needs and stress levels.

When to Ask For Help

Some students may not realize the effect that their stress is having on them, or may not recognize it as an issue for which they can seek help.

Some potential negative effects of stress are:

- Difficulty concentrating or paying attention
- Poor sleep (trouble falling asleep, nightmares, etc.)
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, or difficulty breathing
- Waves of sadness with urges to cry
- Ongoing headaches, muscle aches/spasms, or back aches
- Problems eating, stomach problems, diarrhea, or frequent urination
- Increase in severity and duration of "colds"
- Low frustration tolerance

If you experience these symptoms, or if you are feeling like…

- The harder and longer you work, the less you seem to get done
- Talking to your peers, major professor, or committee members might 'expose' you as a fraud
- Resting, eating, and taking time to relax or socialize makes you feel guilty because you are not working

- You are unable to focus on or accomplish easy things
- It is hopeless – there is just too much to do, and you are not good enough to do it

…then we want you to ask for help.

If you are comfortable talking about personal matters with your major professor, you should go to them first. Remember: they have been through this too! If you are not comfortable bringing it up with your major professor, you can speak to the Graduate Program Director or the Department Head instead. If you would rather talk with someone outside the department, consider visiting CAPS. CAPS offers individual, group, and couples counseling, as well as therapeutic equipment loans and meditation sessions.

You are surrounded by people who sincerely care about you and want to help. Talk to somebody!

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence status is available for eligible students who need to suspend their program of study for good cause. It is not required for students who do not wish to register during summer term. Please see the Graduate Catalog for more information about setting up a Leave of Absence and the associated rules and restrictions.

Before registering for a Leave of Absence, you should discuss the issue with your major professor and confirm that there are no better solutions available. It may be helpful to discuss the issue with the FES Grad Coordinator, the Graduate Program Director, and/or the Department Head as well. If a leave of absence is the best option, please work with the Grad Coordinator to submit the necessary paperwork to the Graduate School.

It is important to remember that your major professor, your committee, and your program administrators all want you to succeed and a big part of this involves being healthy and happy. They may talk to you frankly about the challenges involved in taking a break, but they will never be upset with you for prioritizing and addressing your physical and/or mental health or supporting the needs of your family.

Health & Wellness Resources

Student Health Services (SHS)

Plageman 201 | (541) 737-9355 | studenthealth.oregonstate.edu

Student Health Services clinicians, health educators, and other highly skilled health professionals provide campus-wide comprehensive primary health care, disease prevention and treatment services, and extensive health promotion for all OSU students.

Student Health Insurance Office

Plageman 110 | (541) 737-6748 | studenthealth.oregonstate.edu/insurance

The staff in the Student Health Insurance Office are available to answer any questions you have about student health insurance, including how to enroll, understanding your plan, and abiding by its policies and requirements.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Snell 500 | (541) 737-2131 | counseling.oregonstate.edu

CAPS provides counseling, consultation, outreach, and education to OSU students, faculty, and staff. Through these services, CAPS facilitates students' academic success, mental health, and personal development, and promotes a culture of positive mental health at OSU.

Survivor Advocacy & Resource Center (SARC)

Plageman 311 | (541) 737-2030 | survivoradvocacy@oregonstate.edu | studenthealth.oregonstate.edu/sarc

The Survivor Advocacy and Resource Center serves as a first point of contact for survivors and their allies. SARC provides information about survivors' choices and their rights, referrals to other services, and support for their right to regain control over their lives. SARC is committed to listening, believing, and supporting survivors and providing resources to aid in the healing process.

Human Services Resources Center (HSRC)

Champinefu Lodge | (541) 737-3747 | studentlife.oregonstate.edu/hsrc

The HSRC provides direct service, outreach, education, and referral services to OSU students to help alleviate the effects of hunger, poverty, and other human needs, allowing students to focus on a quality education.

Childcare and Family Resources

Champinefu Lodge 211/213 | (541) 737-4906 | familyresources.oregonstate.edu

The Family Resource Center is here to support all families on the OSU Corvallis campus. See their website for information about child care assistance programs, breastfeeding/lactation room information, upcoming events, information about free care.com memberships, and much more.

Grievances, Advocacy, & Mediation

The following resources are all available to help you resolve any issues that are affecting your experience here at OSU. Please review your options carefully and contact the resource that is right for you and your situation.

FES Department

Richardson 321 | 541-737-2244 | fes.forestry.oregonstate.edu

You are always welcome to discuss any issues with the FES Graduate Program Director or Department Head. We are committed to providing you with a quality education and a positive experience, and will address any issues seriously. If your issue is beyond the scope of the department, we can refer you to more appropriate resources.

Graduate School

Heckart Lodge | 541-737-4881 | gradschool.oregonstate.edu

If you would like to file a formal grievance at the University level, please refer to the Graduate School's grievance procedures for graduate students. These procedures are designed to maintain harmonious relations among students, faculty, and staff, and address all facets of graduate education and employment of graduate students at OSU, except for those explicitly noted.

Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA)

Snell 330 | 541-737-3556 | eoa.oregonstate.edu

Individuals who feel they are being treated unfairly because of a protected status such as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical ability, or individuals who believe they are subject to retaliation for engaging in a protected activity or to behavior that rises to the level of bullying should bring the issue to EOA. Through EOA, students can begin an informal process to resolve a disagreement or can file a formal complaint.

University Ombuds Office

Waldo 116 | 541-737-4537 | ombuds.oregonstate.edu

The Ombuds is a designated neutral or impartial conflict resolution practitioner who provides confidential and informal assistance to visitors on a variety of issues and concerns. The Ombuds Office operates independently and has no formal decision-making authority or disciplinary responsibilities. Ombuds do not act as advocates for any one position in a dispute; rather they strive for fairness of process and healthy campus conflict resolution. If you are not sure where to take your concern, the Ombuds is a safe place to start.

Associated Students of Oregon State University (ASOSU)

Student Experience Center 250 | asosu.oregonstate.edu

ASOSU can help you with issues pertaining to academic dishonesty, financial aid, privacy, student conduct, tuition and fees, on-campus disputes with law enforcement, faculty misconduct, grade appeals, parking, and more.

Coalition of Graduate Employees (CGE)

101 NW 23rd St | 541-757-7141 | cge6069.org

CGE represents the interests and rights of OSU's graduate employees through the bargaining and maintenance of a fair working contract. CGE strives to create a community empowered to advocate for collective issues. For grievances concerning graduate student employment, please refer to the Coalition of Graduate Employees (CGE) Contract Resources page.

University Requirements and Policies

About This Section

The content in this section has been provided by the OSU Graduate School and may repeat some content in previous sections. If discrepancies exist between the following content and the content in previous sections, please contact the FES Grad Coordinator to determine the correct policy.

Some policies may have been updated since department receipt of the following content. Please check the Graduate Catalog for continuously updated policy content.

Graduate School

What is the Graduate School?

- The Graduate School at OSU assures quality and consistent interpretation of Graduate Council policies related to graduate education across all programs. The OSU Catalog is the official source for information regarding OSU graduate education policy and procedures. It is the student's responsibility to refer to the catalog for this information.

- The Graduate School supports students throughout the academic lifecycle, from admissions to degree completion.

- The Graduate Schools offers an array of professional development opportunities specific to the success of graduate students. Topics covered in these offerings include: research and ethics, teaching and facilitation, writing and communication, leadership and management, career skills, graduate life and wellness. Please visit the Graduate School links to browse our student success offerings.

University Emergency Contacts

OSU is dedicated to providing a safe and secure learning and living environment for its community members. The Department of Public Safety provides resources, information, emergency telephone numbers, and protocols for maintaining personal safety. Sign up for OSU Alerts to get timely messages delivered right to your telephone or email inbox regarding university closures and emergency situations.

Academic and Support Resources

OSU offers a wide array of academic and support resources designed to meet graduate student needs. Some of the more commonly used resources are included below. For a more complete list, please visit the Graduate School's Student Resources web page. Note that some services are campus-specific. See also OSU Cascades

Campus Life and Ecampus Student Services for services specifically provided to graduate students pursuing degrees or certificates via those venues.

Campus Safety: Emergency phone numbers, university alerts
Career Development Center: Resume/CV, networking, job search strategies
Childcare and Family Resources: University child care centers, child care assistance
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): Individual and group counseling
Cultural Resource Centers: Cultural based community centers, social support
Disability Access Services (DAS): Academic accommodations
Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA): Employment accommodations, discrimination or bias response
Financing your education: Funding options and information, graduate awards
Graduate Student Success Center (GSSC): Lounge, study space, printing, meeting rooms to reserve
Graduate Writing Center: Writing workshops, groups, and 1:1 writing coaching
Health Insurance: Plans for graduate students and graduate employees
Human Services Resource Center (HSRC): Food pantry, housing and food stamp assistance
Institutional Review Board (IRB): Review for human subjects research
Office of International Services (OIS): Visa and immigration advising
Ombuds Conflict Management Services: Informal, impartial conflict resolution advising
Recreational Sports: Dixon Recreation Center, intramural sports
Statistics Consulting Service: Graduate student research statistical advising
Student Health Services (SHS): Clinic and pharmacy
Student Multimedia Services (SMS): Poster printing, equipment and laptop loans
Transportation Alternatives: Bike, bus, SafeRide
Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS): Parking permits, maps
Valley Library: Reference and research assistance, study spaces, research tools

Committee Membership

Graduate Council Representative

A Graduate Council Representative (known as a GCR or Grad Rep) is required for all doctoral committees, all M.A.I.S. committees, and all master's degrees involving a thesis. Your GCR represents the OSU Graduate Council and ensures that all rules governing committee procedures are followed. Your GCR must be present at your formal exam(s) and will be responsible for some of the paperwork that the Graduate School requires. Per Graduate School guidelines, the GCR will also lead your committee's roundtable discussion following your final oral exam(s). Your GCR must be a graduate faculty member outside your major and minor area.

The GCR is a full voting member of your graduate committee. Many students select a GCR who can also add disciplinary expertise. Select your GCR using the online GCR list generation tool and be sure to allow ample time for this selection process. If you run into difficulty finding a GCR to serve on your committee, you can re-generate the list until you find someone who is willing to serve.

Policy on non-OSU committee membership

Your graduate committee guides your course work and research, and serves as your final examining committee. It is generally expected that all committee members or approved substitutes must be present for all formal meetings with the student (e.g., final oral exams). I f you have a special case in which a committee member may need to participate remotely, you and your committee must assure that all the conditions for remote participation are met.

If the faculty member is not a member of the Graduate Faculty or is not approved for the role proposed, your major department/program will need to nominate the proposed member to act in those roles using the Nomination to Graduate Faculty form. Consult the FES Grad Coordinator to help facilitate this process and the required paperwork. Committee structure is evaluated when your program of study is received by the Graduate School and when you schedule your formal examination(s).

Deadlines related to Program of Study, Exam Paperwork, Etc.

Please visit this page for the minimum deadlines as defined by the Graduate School. Programs can require a more rigorous set of deadlines. Students are expected to check with their program and the Graduate School regarding specific deadlines unique to the term and academic year they plan to complete their degree requirements.

Registration

The OSU Schedule of Classes is available online and contains academic regulations and registration procedures that apply to all students in the university, as well as the final examination week schedule. The online catalog is the source for up-to-date changes for the current and immediately upcoming term. It is your responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for any funding eligibility and/or to meet the requirements of the continuous enrollment policy. Problems arising from registration procedures, such as late registration, adding or withdrawing from courses after deadlines, or late changes from letter or S/U grading are resolved through the petition for late change in registration filed with the Graduate School. A late registration fee may be applied.

Students are responsible for staying current on registration requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (i.e., international, financial aid, veteran's).

Minimum Course Loads

Course load requirements for graduate students are established by the Registrar and the Graduate School. You are considered a "full-time" graduate student if you are registered for 9–16 credits in a given academic term. You are considered a "part-time" graduate student if you have fewer than nine credits. If you are a degree-seeking student, you must be registered for a minimum of three graduate credits in any term you wish to be enrolled and access university resources, including the term of the final defense. Students are responsible for staying current

on course load requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (i.e., international, financial aid, veteran's)

Continuous Graduate Enrollment

All graduate students enrolled in a degree program must register continuously for a minimum of 3 graduate credits each term (fall, winter, and spring terms) until all degree requirements are met, regardless of student's location. Students on approved leave are exempt from the continuous enrollment policy for the term(s) they are on leave.

Graduate students who use facilities or faculty/staff time during summer session are required to register for a minimum of 3 credits during the summer session. Students defending in the summer term are required to register for a minimum of 3 graduate credits.

Students may appeal the provisions of the continuous graduate enrollment policy if extraordinary circumstances arise by submitting a detailed request in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School. Scheduling difficulties related to the preliminary oral exam or the final oral exam are not considered an extraordinary circumstance. Graduate assistantship eligibility requires enrollment levels that supersede those contained in this continuous enrollment policy. Various agencies and offices maintain their own registration requirements that also may exceed those specified by this continuous enrollment policy (e.g., those of the Veterans Administration, Immigration and Naturalization Service for international students, and those required for federal financial aid programs). Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for funding eligibility and/or compliance as outlined by specific agency regulations under which they are governed.

NOTE: Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the continuous enrollment policy.

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence status is available to eligible students who need to suspend their program of study for good cause. The time the student spends on approved leave will be included in any time limits prescribed by the university relevant to degree completion. Students on approved leave may not: (a) use any university facilities, (b) make demands upon faculty time, (c) receive a fellowship or financial aid, or (d) take course work of any kind at Oregon State University. Leave of Absence/Intent to Resume Graduate Study Forms must be received by the Graduate School at least 15 working days prior to the first day of the term involved. Family Medical Leave (FML) may be granted at any point during a term. FML inquiries should be directed to medical.leave@oregonstate.edu. **NOTE**: Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the Leave of Absence Policy.

Limits

If your first term was Fall 2016 or later, you may use unlimited leaves as long as you complete your degree within 7 (MS/MF) or 9 (Ph.D.) years. If your first term was Summer 2016 or earlier, you may take up to 3 terms of regular leave over the course of your program (MS/MF) or up to 3 terms before your preliminary exam and 3 terms after

your preliminary exam (Ph.D.). Leaves of absence may be approved for up to three terms at a time, but must be renewed to retain student status.

Family and Medical Leave

If you are contracted to be a Graduate Assistant (GA) for the term you will be on leave, you may qualify for Family and Medical Leave. Family and Medical Leave is available for 12 continuous weeks that may span multiple terms and must meet FMLA leave requirements as determined by the Office of Human Resources. These absences will not be included in time limits pertaining to the student's degree program. Family Medical Leave (FML) may be granted at any point during a term. FML inquiries should be directed to medical.leave@oregonstate.edu.

Unauthorized Break in Registration

Degree seeking graduate students who take an unauthorized break in registration relinquish graduate standing at the University.

To have graduate standing reinstated after an unauthorized break, students are required to reapply to their program (complete the online graduate admission application, pay the application fee, and may be required to register for three graduate credits for each term of unauthorized break in registration). It is advisable that students in this situation state that they are applying for readmission in the application packet. A reapplication does not ensure admittance to the program.

Grievance Procedures

All students desiring to appeal matters relating to their graduate degree should follow the Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students. Graduate assistants, whose terms and conditions of employment are prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement between OSU and the Coalition of Graduate Employees, American Federation of Teachers Local 6069, should also refer to that document and seek guidance from OSU's Office of Human Resources.

Grade Requirements and Program of Study

A grade-point average of 3.00 is required: (a) for all courses taken as a degree-seeking graduate student, and (b) for courses included in the graduate degree or graduate certificate program of study. Grades below C (2.00) cannot be used on a graduate program of study. A grade-point average of 3.00 is required before the final oral or written exam may be undertaken. Enforced graduate-level prerequisite courses must be completed with a minimum grade of C. Programs may have more stringent grade requirements than those prescribed by the Graduate School.

Incomplete Grades

An "I" (incomplete) grade is granted only at the discretion of the instructor. The incomplete that is filed by the instructor at the end of the term must include an alternate/default grade to which the incomplete grade defaults at the end of the specified time period. The time allocated to complete the required tasks for the course may be extended by petition to the University Academic Requirements Committee. You can obtain the form from the Registrar's Office. It is the student's responsibility to see that "I" grades are removed within the allotted time.

Student Conduct and Community Standards

Graduate students enrolled at Oregon State University are expected to conform to basic regulations and policies developed to govern the behavior of students as members of the university community. The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) is the central coordinating office for student conduct-related matters at Oregon State University.

Choosing to join the Oregon State University community obligates each member to a code of responsible behavior which is outlined in the Student Conduct Code. The assumption upon which this Code is based is that all persons must treat one another with dignity and respect for scholarship to thrive. Violations of the regulations subject a student to appropriate disciplinary action.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another. It includes:

- CHEATING — use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.

- FABRICATION — falsification or invention of any information including, but not limited to, falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.

- ASSISTING — helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, or taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).

- TAMPERING — altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents

- PLAGIARISM — representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Office of Equal Opportunity and Access

The OSU Office of Equal Opportunity and Access defines sexual harassment as the following:

- Unwelcome* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
- Submission to or reject of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment of education related decisions affecting such an individual; or
- Such conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that is has the effect, intended or unintended, of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance because it has created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment and would have such an effect on a reasonable person of that individual's status.

Employee conduct directed toward a student – whether unwelcome or welcome – can constitute sexual harassment under OAR.

There are two confidential resources to discuss reporting options: Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence (CARDV) provides 24/7 confidential crisis response at 541-754-0110 or 800-927-0197, and OSU Sexual Assault Support Services is available weekdays at 541-737-7604.

Student Records

Both federal and state laws permit Oregon State University staff to release directory information (e.g., name, address, degree program, birthdate) to the general public without your consent. You can prohibit the release of directory information to the public by signing the Confidentiality Restriction form available from the Registrar's Office. It will not prohibit the release of directory information to entities of Oregon State University that have a "need to know" to accomplish their required tasks. It further will not prohibit Oregon State University departments from including your name on mailing lists for distribution of materials that are essential to your enrollment at Oregon State University.