



Horticulture Graduate Programs

Program Handbook

2025-2026

Department of Plant and Agroecosystem Sciences

Reference this handbook to learn about the unique policies, requirements, procedures, resources, and norms for graduate students in the Horticulture Graduate Program.

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Navigating Policy and Resources at UW-Madison

This handbook is one of many sources to consult as you become familiar with the policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms of graduate education at UW-Madison:



[Graduate Guide](#)

[Graduate School AP&P](#)

[UW-Madison Policy Library](#)

[Graduate Student Life](#)

[Graduate School at UW-Madison](#)

Who to Contact for Questions

Many of your questions about how to meet expectations and thrive as a graduate student will be answered by the various sources of policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms listed above. Several key positions in this department and on campus are ready to answer your remaining questions:

Department Chair	Dr. Amaya Atucha	atucha@wisc.edu
Graduate Program Chair	Dr. Jeff Endelman	endelman@wisc.edu
Graduate Program Coordinator	Kathryn Jones	kjones26@wisc.edu
Department Administrator	Tricia Check	tlcheck@wisc.edu

Faculty Advisor

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor in each graduate program in which they are enrolled. Your faculty advisor(s) will be a key source of guidance for your academic development. Further definition can be found here: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1232. Guidelines for finding, changing, and working with your advisor can be found in the Advising & Mentoring section below.

The name and contact information of your faculty advisor can be found on your Student Center on MyUW (my.wisc.edu) under “Academic Progress” and then “Advisors.”

Graduate School Services

For general inquiries and graduate student services from the Graduate School, see the operations and front desk contact information on this contact page: <https://grad.wisc.edu/contacts/>

Department & Program Overview

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Department of Plant and Agroecosystems is committed to providing a safe and welcoming space for all students, staff, and faculty. Our department has an active Equity & Diversity Committee that meets regularly throughout the academic year. Any graduate student interested in participating can contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to get more information.

Resources:

- Horticulture MS Grievances and Appeals - <https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/plant-agroecosystem-sciences/horticulture-ms/#policiestext>
- Horticulture PhD Grievances and Appeals - <https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/plant-agroecosystem-sciences/horticulture-phd/#policiestext>
- MOSAIC (Mentorship Opportunities in Science & Agriculture for Individuals of Color) - <https://mosaic.cals.wisc.edu/>
- Comprehensive list of campus resources- <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>
- Graduate Assistants Equity Workshops - <https://diversity.wisc.edu/graduate-assistants-equity-workshops/>
- Graduate School Resources - <https://grad.wisc.edu/diversity/>
- College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) Equity & Diversity Committee - <https://equitydiversity.cals.wisc.edu/>

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact any of the following:

Department Chair	Dr. Amaya Atucha	atucha@wisc.edu
Graduate Program Chair	Dr. Jeff Endelman	endelman@wisc.edu
Graduate Program Coordinator	Kathryn Jones	kjones26@wisc.edu
Department Administrator	Tricia Check	tlcheck@wisc.edu

How to Get Involved

As a graduate student at UW-Madison, you have a multitude of opportunities to become involved on campus and in your academic discipline. This involvement often enhances your academic, professional, and personal growth through developing advanced leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. It also provides opportunity for professional networking.

In Our Discipline

- American Society for Horticultural Science - <https://ashs.org/>
- American Horticultural Society - <https://ahsgardening.org/>
- American Society of Plant Biologists- <https://aspb.org/>
- Horticultural Research Institute - <https://www.hriresearch.org/>

In Our Program/Department

There are many opportunities for you to get involved in our department. Some opportunities include, but are not limited to, department meetings, departmental committees, and social events. We would also encourage you to get involved with the [Plant Sciences Graduate Student Council \(PSGSC\)](#), or any of the other plant sciences-related organizations on campus.

Department meetings - During the academic year, the department meets monthly. All faculty, staff, and graduate students are welcome to attend. The agenda is typically sent out a week prior to the meeting by the department administrator, Tricia Check, tlcheck@wisc.edu.

Departmental Committees

- Curriculum Committee
- Equity & Diversity Committee

Please contact Kathryn Jones, kjones26@wisc.edu if interested in joining any of these committees and she can connect you with them.

Social events - Be sure to check your email frequently for departmental events. In the past, we've had welcome events, lunches like a taco bar or baked potato bar, events like Fruit Fest, ice cream socials, and more. We love to eat food in the department and we hope you'll join us for a future event!

Student-suggested organizations and social groups

MOSAIC (Mentorship Opportunities in Science and Agriculture for Individuals of Color): A student-formed mentorship network for BIPOC graduate students and postdocs in CALS, connecting them with BIPOC mentors in industry, academia, and more. Learn more on their [website](#), or reach out via [email](#) with any inquiries.

QGRADS: A queer graduate student group that meets during the school year for community and connection. More group info can be found on their [Facebook page](#).

PSGSC Journal Club: Weekly lunchtime presentations and group discussions on wide-ranging topics, from personal passions to professional development and interesting journal articles. You should already be signed up for weekly digest emails from PSGSC, which will contain all the event updates for the week. If have questions or would like to

present on a topic, reach out to the current Journal Club Chair:

<https://psgsc.wisc.edu/about/officers/>

On Campus & In the Community

The Wisconsin Idea is the principle that education should influence and improve people's lives beyond the university classroom. For more than 100 years, this idea has guided the university's work.

You will find a list of ways to engage in campus and local community life at:

The Graduate School's Current Student Page

grad.wisc.edu/current-students

If you are a student actively involved in leadership and service activities, consider nominating yourself for membership in the following honor society:

Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society

grad.wisc.edu/diversity/bouchet

Getting Started as a Graduate Student

This section guides you through important steps to take as you begin your journey as a graduate student at UW-Madison.

New Graduate Student Checklist

Be sure to review all steps listed on this webpage for new graduate students:

The Graduate School's New Student Page

grad.wisc.edu/new-students

In addition to a checklist for all new graduate students, that webpage includes sections with additional steps to take if you are a new international student, student with a disability, student veteran, student with children, or student with funding.

In Our Program

New graduate students will receive an invite to a Canvas Course prior to the start of their first semester. You will also be contacted by a member of the Plant Sciences Graduate Student Council. Feel free to connect with them or Kathryn Jones, kjones26@wisc.edu if you have any questions!

Advising & Mentoring

Advising relationships are a central part of academia, important to both the experience and development of students and faculty members alike.

The Graduate School's definition of an advisor can be found here: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1232. Your advisor has two main roles: 1) To assist you in acquiring the highest possible level of knowledge and competence in the field, and 2) to chair the committee that will determine whether you have performed at an acceptable level in each of your degree milestones (see "Degree Requirements" section below for further information on building your committee). Other roles of your advisor may include tracking your progress in completing your degree (note: this may include use of the Graduate Student Tracking System at <https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/graduate-student-tracking-system/>), assisting with course selection and planning your academic path, and helping you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.

Both the student and advisor are responsible for making their expectations clear to each other. Be sure to discuss this with your advisor.

Finding & Selecting an Advisor

Your advisor should be a faculty member in the program whose expertise and project/research interests match closely with those that you intend to acquire. To learn more about the faculty in your program, consider consulting the following sources:

- Courses and seminars you attend
- Our program website
- Faculty publications
- Students currently in a prospective advisor's group/lab

Additionally, you may wish to have a discussion with a prospective advisor. Below are some questions to consider asking in this discussion, though it is not a complete list.

You should spend some time identifying what is most important to you in your graduate training and ask questions accordingly.

Questions to Ask of Prospective Advisors

Adapted from IPiB handbook

- What thesis projects would be available to me if I were to join your group?
- Would these projects expose me to a variety of different approaches?
- In general, how available will you be to answer questions I might have?
- What is your philosophy regarding the amount of guidance the advisor should provide to a student during preparation of the thesis proposal, literature seminars, thesis writing, etc.?
- What are your expectations for the amount of time I should spend each day/week in your group/lab?
- What regularly scheduled activities (e.g., group meetings, joint group meetings, research clubs) does your group participate in that provide an opportunity to get outside input on my research project and to hear about the work of other students and postdocs?
- Do you encourage your students to attend seminars and journal clubs, including those that may be outside of their narrow field of interest/research?
- Do students in your group/lab have the opportunity to attend professional meetings where they can interact with colleagues/researchers from other institutions?
- Do you include your graduate students in professional activities that will familiarize them with their field of interest/research, such as reviewing manuscripts and meeting with visiting speakers?
- How long do you think it should take me to get my degree?
- What are your former graduate students (if any) doing now?
- What is your general philosophy of graduate training and what goals do you have for your graduate students?

No faculty member is obligated to accept a student's request to serve as advisor, though invitations are often accepted unless the faculty member judges that a different advisor would serve your needs better.

Changing Your Advisor

As the advisor-student relationship is one of mutual agreement, it may be terminated by either party. If you decide that you would prefer working with a different advisor, discuss this with your prospective advisor to seek the change.

If you change your advisor, you must notify your Graduate Program Coordinator and follow any related procedures.

Every graduate student must have an advisor or else they may be suspended from graduate study at UW-Madison by the Graduate School. Be sure to follow procedures to re-select a new advisor (described above) prior to finalizing the termination of your current advising relationship. You can confirm that the name of your advisor has been updated in the official record by looking in your Student Center on MyUW (my.wisc.edu) under “Academic Progress” and then “Advisors.”

A Graduate Student Guide to Working with Faculty Advisors

Through [this interactive, self-paced micro-course](#), graduate students learn about the characteristics of functional and dysfunctional relationships with faculty advisors, strategies for communicating effectively and aligning expectations, as well as program grievance processes and Hostile and Intimidating Behavior resources. Completion of the micro-course takes about 20 minutes and is optional but encouraged for all graduate students.

Mentoring Networks

In addition to a formal advisor, you are encouraged to develop a broad network of individuals who can provide academic and professional mentorship during and beyond your time as a graduate student.

Degree Requirements

Master's Degree

All students in the Horticulture MS graduate program are responsible for keeping aware of the following requirements to complete the degree.

Requirements

For all current requirements to complete your degree (e.g., credits, courses, milestones, learning outcomes/goals, etc.) see your program's page in the *Graduate Guide*. Navigate to guide.wisc.edu/graduate, then select "Degrees/Majors," your program's name, the "Named Option" of your program (if applicable; found near the bottom of the Requirements tab), and then "Requirements" from the navigation bar on the right side. You will be taken to a subsection of your program's *Guide* page that contains all official requirements for your degree. Similarly, see "Policies" from the navigation bar of your program's page to learn about policies affecting these requirements (e.g., prior coursework, probation, credits per term allowed, time constraints, grievances and appeals, etc.). Note that when you look at the *Guide* to learn about program requirements, you will be viewing the current year's version. To find past versions of program requirements, see the [Guide Archive](#) and search for your program and the year you would like to reference.

Graduate Committee

Students are responsible for forming their Graduate Committee before the end of the second semester, in accordance with current [policy of the Graduate School](#) and in consultation with their advisor. The role of this committee is to provide advice, evaluate satisfactory progress, and administer the final examination (thesis defense). In addition to the student's advisor, two more committee members are needed, and the chair (or one of the co-chairs) must be Horticulture graduate faculty.

Examination and Review Procedures

Master's Warrant

The student is required to request a Master's Warrant **at least three weeks prior** to their Final Oral Exam date. Students can request a warrant here: https://uwmadison.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7VXFWvhLwZnXL01. A student will not be issued a warrant if there are any insufficient grades (i.e. I, NR, P grade in anything other than 990).

Final Oral Exam

All students in the Master's Program are required to pass a Final Oral Exam in order to earn a Master's Degree in Horticulture. The final oral examination deals with the breadth of knowledge in the field of Horticulture, as well as the content of the Master's Thesis for

those students who have elected to write a thesis. Within Horticulture, students traditionally begin their oral exam with a public seminar summarizing their research accomplishments. The seminar should consist of a 40 minute lecture and a 10 minute public question/answer period. The oral examination typically lasts up to 2 hrs, or until the committee is satisfied with their individual evaluations. The student is then excused from the room, and after deliberation, the members of the Master's Committee decide whether or not to endorse the degree completion. To pass the final examination, a student must receive no more than one dissenting vote from the graduate committee. A missing signature on the Warrant is considered a dissent. At the discretion of the student's Master's Committee, a student may repeat a failed final exam once. Failure of the final examination two times will result in the student being dropped from the Program

Thesis

A Master's Thesis is required for the MS degree. Students are expected to carry out an independent research project during their enrollment as a student in the Master's program. This research will be the basis of their Master's Thesis. The thesis must be formatted according to the guidelines of the Graduate School, present evidence of a substantial intellectual effort by the student, and meet all standards set by the student's Master's Committee. If the work is the result of collaborative enterprises, the writing must clearly define those portions representing the student's own contribution. The thesis must also include a substantive review of literature relevant to the project. It should be written with a high level of literary skill, such as would be found in leading journals in that research area

The thesis must be completed and distributed to the members of the student's Master's Committee ***not less than two weeks before*** the date of the Final Oral Examination.

The thesis must be deposited at Memorial Library. Students are responsible for all costs associated with depositing their thesis. Students are also responsible for knowing and meeting all thesis filing deadlines for degree completion. The Graduate School web site provides clear instructions for preparing your thesis for deposit with Memorial Library

Resources

- Graduate School's Completing Your Degree - <https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/masters-guide/>
- Degree Deadlines - <https://grad.wisc.edu/deadlines/>

Doctoral Degree

All students in the Horticulture PhD graduate program are responsible for keeping aware of the following requirements to complete the degree.

Requirements

For all current requirements to complete your degree (e.g., credits, courses, milestones, and learning outcomes/goals) see your program's page in the *Graduate Guide*.

Navigate to guide.wisc.edu/graduate, then select "Degrees/Majors," your program's name, the "Named Option" of your program (if applicable; found near the bottom of the Requirements tab), and then "Requirements" from the navigation bar on the right side. You will be taken to a subsection of your program's *Guide* page that contains all official requirements for your degree. Similarly, see "Policies" from the navigation bar of your program's page to learn about policies affecting these requirements (e.g., prior coursework, probation, credits per term allowed, time constraints, grievances and appeals, etc.). Note that when you look at the *Guide* to learn about program requirements, you will be viewing the current year's version. To find past versions of program requirements, see the [Guide Archive](#) and search for your program and the year you would like to reference.

Rectifying Admission Deficiencies Any deficiencies identified in the student's background course work by their PhD Committee will be detailed in writing to the student, and must be made up during the first two years of graduate study.

Required Teaching/Outreach All students in the Horticulture PhD program are required to enroll in Hort 799 (Practicum in Horticulture Teaching) for one semester and obtain a passing grade. Students may enroll in Hort 799 for 1 to 3 credits. Each student is expected to work with their PhD advisor to identify an opportunity within the department for the student to engage in teaching or outreach work. This requirement is broadly defined, and could include assisting a Horticulture graduate program faculty member with their classroom teaching or working with a Horticulture graduate program faculty member on an extension or outreach project.

Graduate Committee

Students are responsible for forming their Graduate Committee before the end of the second semester, in accordance with current [policy of the Graduate School](#) and in consultation with their advisor. The role of this committee is to provide advice, approve the plan of study (certification), evaluate satisfactory progress, administer the preliminary examination and the dissertation defense (final examination). In addition to

the student's advisor, at least three committee members are needed, and the chair (or one of the co-chairs) must be Horticulture graduate faculty. The committee must represent more than one graduate program, including the PhD minor program when Option A is selected. Many Horticulture graduate faculty are also graduate faculty in other programs (e.g., Agronomy, Agroecology, Plant Breeding & Plant Genetics) and therefore satisfy this requirement. Continuity in membership of the Graduate Committee through the student's certification, preliminary exam, and final thesis defense is strongly encouraged.

Certification

Certification is the process by which a student and their Graduate (PhD) Committee determine an approved plan of coursework.

This meeting should result in the Certification Form, a written document that details the student's progress towards completing the coursework requirements for their degree. This document should list the classes that have already been completed by the student as well as those that still need to be completed. If the committee is satisfied that the student's planned program of coursework meets all university and departmental requirements for the PhD degree, then the committee will sign the student's Certification Form. A student cannot take their preliminary examination until they have a completed Certification Form that has been signed by all the members of their PhD committee and filed with Program staff.

Research Proposal

The suggested length of the proposal is 20 pages of double-spaced text (12 pt. font), excluding title page, figures, and references; however this can vary according to the discretion of the PI.

The research proposal should include the following sections:

Title: Should be short and informative.

Summary: In one page, define the problem and state the objectives of the proposed research. Include a brief description of the experimental approaches to be used and indicate why the expected results should represent a significant advance in the field.

Background: Review current knowledge in the field that is relevant to the proposed research plan. The student should convey how the research proposal represents a

logical and important extension of current knowledge. This section should demonstrate familiarity with, and critical analysis of, the literature in the area. Confine this section to 2-4 pages. The "Proposed Research" section should flow naturally from the final paragraph of this section.

Proposed Research: One might begin this section by stating the specific aims of the project and how they relate to the broader questions that the proposal addresses. Subsequently, describe how you propose to approach each specific aim. Explain the objectives and rationale of the designed experiments, the results you expect from the experiments, and how the results will be interpreted. Include here (or in a separate section before the Proposed Research) any preliminary data. Be as specific as possible about how you will do an experiment, but realize that details can be elaborated upon orally during the committee meeting. Discuss the problems inherent to the experimental approach, and alternate approaches you might try if one approach fails. From the results you anticipate, what new experiments will follow? Indicate what specific aims are dependent upon successful resolution of earlier objectives, and which are independent. Indicate the priority you think should be devoted to each objective. This should be the major section of the proposal, perhaps 6-8 pages.

Possible Extensions and Importance (Optional): In one or two paragraphs, you may wish to indicate new approaches or important extensions that might stem from the proposed research. You might, for example, discuss the more speculative ramifications of the research or suggest experiments that may be too broad in scope for one person to accomplish.

Priorities / Timeline: You should define the order in which you plan to pursue the proposed experiments and how long you expect each stage of the research to take

Preliminary Exam

Preliminary Warrant. As part of the preliminary exam procedure, the student must contact Program staff at least three (3) weeks before the preliminary exam to ask the Graduate School to issue a "preliminary warrant." After a successful Preliminary Examination, a student's PhD Committee will sign this warrant, and the student or a member of the committee must return the warrant to the Program office where it is kept until the student has completed all required course work, including the Graduate School minimum credit requirement. In lieu of a minor professor, the Department Chair of the student's Major Professor signs the warrant for a distributed minor. Only after the warrant is completed and filed with the Graduate School, is a student "certified for the PhD" and eligible for registration as a dissertator.

In Horticulture, the Advanced Seminar Requirement and the Teaching/Outreach Requirement do not need to be completed before filing the preliminary warrant with the Graduate School.

Dissertator eligibility deadlines can be found here: <https://grad.wisc.edu/deadlines/>

Exam Content. Preliminary Examinations are a standard feature of PhD Programs. The exam serves to evaluate whether a student meets the expected professional standards for educational acumen, scientific background, aptitude for research, and literary competency. In addition to subject areas related to the student's proposed thesis research, the exam will also cover topics from the breadth of Horticultural science.

Exam Timing. Horticulture students are expected to complete the Preliminary Exam between their 3rd and 4th year in residence.

Exam Format. The student will schedule a meeting of their PhD Committee for the purpose of administering the Preliminary Examination. At the beginning of the Preliminary Examination, the student's major professor will nominate one member of the PhD Committee to serve as the chair of the Preliminary Examination. The committee Chair for the Preliminary Examination cannot be the student's major professor. The Preliminary Examination begins with the candidate giving a ten minute oral presentation summarizing their proposed research. The purpose of this brief presentation is to provide the committee members with a broad overview of the student's research project in order to stimulate the initial round of questioning. ***This oral presentation must not last longer than ten minutes.***

The remainder of the Preliminary Examination involves the student responding to oral questions posed by the members of the PhD Committee. These questions may be drawn from the breadth of knowledge in the field of Horticulture.

After the exam is completed, the candidate is excused from the room. Under the guidance of the Chair of the Preliminary Examination, the committee discusses the candidate's performance during the exam and recommends one of the following: 1) Pass 2) Conditional Pass 3) Fail

Candidates who receive a 'Conditional Pass' will be given specific goals that must be met and a timeline by which those goals must be met. Failure to meet those goals in the specified time will result in the student failing the prelim. At any time, failure to achieve satisfactory progress may lead to dismissal from the program.

If the committee recommends failure or a conditional pass, the committee must summarize the reasons for this recommendation in writing and present it to the student.

Candidates who fail their exam have nine months to repeat the exam. If a candidate fails the Preliminary Examination twice, they cannot continue in the Horticulture PhD Program

Dissertator Status. Dissertator is a unique fee status for students who have completed all requirements for a doctoral degree except for the dissertation. To be eligible for dissertator fee status, a student must:

- Pass the preliminary examination(s);
- Satisfy the doctoral minimum graduate residence credit requirement;
- Complete all minor requirements, if the major program requires a minor;
- Complete all program requirements except the dissertation;
- Clear all Incomplete grades or Progress grades in non-research courses (progress grades in 990 research may remain);
- Earn at least a 3.0 cumulative graduate GPA;
- Return the signed and dated preliminary exam warrant to the Graduate School

Dissertator status is effective at the start of the semester following completion of all dissertator requirements for the doctoral degree except for the dissertation. In order to initiate the change to dissertator status, the prelim warrant must be sent to the Graduate School in a timely fashion. Students can check on dissertator status by contacting the graduate program coordinator. <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/dissertator-status/>

Final Oral Exam/Defense

- Guide to Preparing Your Doctoral Dissertation - Visit this website to learn about the final steps of completing your degree: <https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide/> . Degree deadlines can be found here: <https://grad.wisc.edu/deadlines/>
- PhD Warrant - At least one month prior to the anticipated Final Oral Exam date, the student must contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to request a warrant. A warrant is a document issued to your program by the Graduate School at your program's request after you have met all degree requirements. Warrants are valid for one semester, and are signed by the program chair, advisor, or your

committee. By signing the warrant, programs indicate that all program degree requirements have been met. If the Graduate School does not have your warrant with appropriate signature(s), you will not graduate. **NOTE:** If your program has signed and returned your warrant to the Graduate School, and you receive an Incomplete or Progress grade at the end of the semester, or you deposit your thesis after the degree deadline, you will receive your degree during the following semester when your grade is cleared or your thesis is deposited.

- Dissertation - Students are expected to carry out significant, original research project during the entire period of their PhD training and to write a dissertation based on research. The dissertation must be formatted according to the guidelines of the Graduate School, present evidence of a substantial experimental effort by the student, and reflect a strong intellectual contribution that meets all standards set by the student's PhD Committee. If the work is the result of collaborative enterprises, the writing must clearly define those portions representing the student's own contribution. The dissertation must also include a substantive review of literature relevant to the project. It should be written with a high level of literary skill, such as would be found in leading journals in that research area.

The dissertation must be completed and distributed to the members of the student's PhD Committee ***not less than two weeks*** before the date of the Final Oral Examination.

After successful completion of the Final Oral Exam, a fully corrected and complete copy of your dissertation must be deposited with the Graduate School. Students are responsible for all costs associated with depositing their dissertation. Students are also responsible for knowing and meeting all dissertation filing deadlines for degree completion. The Graduate School web site provides clear instructions for preparing your dissertation for deposit.

Information about preparing your Doctoral Dissertation can be found here:
<https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide/>

- Final Oral Exam - The final oral examination deals primarily with the dissertation content. A student takes the final exam only after all other degree requirements have been satisfied.

Within Horticulture, students traditionally begin their oral exam with a public seminar summarizing their research accomplishments. The seminar should

consist of a 40 minute lecture and a 10 minute public question/answer period. The seminar is not graded. Afterwards, the student meets with their PhD Committee and responds to oral questions. The Major Professor can take part in the questioning, but should not actively steer the discussion or defend the research. The oral examination usually lasts at least 2 hours, or until the committee is satisfied with their individual evaluations. The student is then excused, and after deliberation, the committee members decide whether or not to endorse the degree completion by signing the PhD Warrant.

To pass the final examination, a student must receive no more than one dissenting vote from their PhD Committee. A missing signature on the Warrant is considered a dissent. At the discretion of the student's PhD Committee, a student may repeat a failed final exam once. Failure of the final examination two times will result in the student being dropped from the Program

Doctoral Degree Checklist: Timeline & Deadlines

First Year	Coursework/Research, Form PhD Committee, Certification Meeting
Second Year	Coursework/Research, Research Proposal Presentation,
Third Year	Research, Preliminary Exam (between 3 rd and 4 th year)
Fourth Year	Complete research & dissertation; Exit seminar and final defense

The Graduate School maintains a list of steps to complete your master's degree, including deadlines and important things to know as you progress toward graduation: grad.wisc.edu/current-students/doctoral-guide.

Enrollment Requirements

You are responsible for following Graduate School policies related to course enrollment requirements and limitations:

Adding / Dropping Courses

grad.wisc.edu/documents/add-drop

Auditing Courses

policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1224

Canceling Enrollment

grad.wisc.edu/documents/canceling-enrollment

Continuous Enrollment Requirement for Dissertators

policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1204

Enrollment Accountability

grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-accountability

Minimum Enrollment Requirements

policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1208

Academic Exception Petitions

The student may petition the Horticulture Graduate Program Committee for a waiver of any required course. The basis for such a waiver shall be evidence of previous work of the same level and content to be determined by the committee in consultation with the faculty member currently responsible for the course concerned. A requirement which is completed by waiver carries no credit toward the Graduate School's credit requirements nor toward the program's credit requirement for the degree.

The Horticulture Graduate Program Committee procedures are designed to encourage a student to work closely with an advisor and other faculty, who will be aware of the student's work and personal circumstances. A student petitioning for a deadline extension or waiver of any type must obtain an endorsement from his or her advisor, and/or members of the graduate committee. Advisors may petition the Exceptions Committee on behalf of their advisees. The Exceptions Committee may ask the advisor for further information beyond that written on the petition.

Students may ask the Director of Graduate Studies or other faculty members to advise them, to speak to the Exceptions Committee on their behalf, or to endorse their petitions. Students may consult with the chair of the Horticulture Graduate Program Committee or with the graduate advisor about Exceptions Committee procedures and standards, but the Horticulture Graduate Program Committee cannot substitute for an advising relationship.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Your continuation as a graduate student at UW-Madison is at the discretion of your program, the Graduate School, and your faculty advisor. Any student may be placed on probation or dismissed from the Graduate School for not maintaining satisfactory academic progress, and this can impact your academic standing (detailed below), financial aid (see this policy page: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1040), or funding (consult your sources of funding, as applicable). Our program has its own definition of satisfactory academic progress and related procedures that supplement Graduate School policy, as described in this section.

Definition

Information about how the Graduate School determines satisfactory academic progress can be found at this policy page: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1218. In addition to the Graduate School's monitoring of satisfactory academic progress, this program regularly reviews the satisfactory academic progress of its students, defined as the following:

All graduate students are expected to make satisfactory progress towards their degree each semester. Graduate students are expected to maintain a minimum graduate GPA of 3.00 in all graduate-level work (300 or above, excluding research, audit, credit/no credit, and pass/fail courses) taken as a graduate student unless probationary admission conditions require higher grades.

Not Meeting Academic Expectations

If a student does not make satisfactory progress, then they may be placed on probation or suspended from the Graduate School for low grades or for failing to resolve incompletes in a timely fashion. (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/probation/>). In special cases the Graduate School permits students who do not meet these minimum standards to continue on probation upon recommendation and support of their advisor.

Personal Conduct Expectations

Professional Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards maintains detailed guidance on student rights and responsibilities related to learning in a community that is safe and

fosters integrity and accountability. You are responsible for keeping aware of their policies and procedures, found at the following page: conduct.students.wisc.edu

All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behavior and ethics. Students should avoid even an appearance of improper behavior or lack of ethical standards while in Graduate School at UW-Madison, in all professional settings, and in their personal lives. Students should conduct themselves according to the standards expected of members of the profession to which the student aspires. Concerns about infractions of Professional Conduct may be effectively handled informally between the instructor/advisor and the student. If a resolution is not achieved, a graduate program representative may be included in the discussion. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Students are responsible for reading the information here as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

1. Professional Ethics: Students shall show respect for a diversity of opinions, perspectives and cultures; accurately represent their work and acknowledge the contributions of others; participate in and commit to related opportunities; aim to gain knowledge and contribute to the knowledge base of others; understand the UW Student Code of Conduct; represent their profession and the program; and strive to incorporate and practice disciplinary ideals in their daily lives. Resumes/CVs must reflect accurate information.
2. Honesty and Integrity: Students shall demonstrate honesty and integrity as shown by their challenging of themselves in academic pursuits; honesty and ethics in research and IRB applications—including honesty in interpretation of data, commitment to an unbiased interpretation of academic and professional endeavors; and the need to document research activities, protect subject/client confidentiality and HIPPA regulations. Students shall follow-through and pull their weight in group activities and understand where collaboration among students is or is not allowed; not plagiarize others or past work (self-plagiarism), cheat, or purposefully undermine the work of others; and avoid conflicts of interest for the duration of their time in the program. As a professional, honesty and integrity also extends to personal behavior in life outside of the academic setting by realizing that students are representatives of the program, UW-Madison, and the profession as a whole.
3. Interpersonal and Workplace Relationships: Students shall interact with peers, faculty, staff and those they encounter in their professional capacity in a manner that is respectful, considerate, and professional. This includes and is not limited to attending all scheduled meetings, honoring agreed upon work schedules, being on-time and prepared for work/meetings, contributing collaboratively to the team, keeping the lines of communication open, offering prompt response to inquiries, and employing respectful use of available equipment/technology/resources. Chronic or unexplained absences are

unprofessional in the workplace and could be grounds for termination or removal of funding. To facilitate the free and open exchange of ideas, any criticism shall be offered in a constructive manner, and the right of others to hold different opinions shall be respected.

4. **Commitment to Learning:** Students are expected to meet their educational responsibilities at all times. Be actively prepared for class and be ready for questions and answers. Be on time for every class and always show courtesy during class or if you have to leave class early. If possible, students should notify the instructor at least one day in advance of a planned absence. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for finding out what occurred that day and should not expect instructors to give them individual instruction. Recognizing that the pursuit of knowledge is a continuous process, students shall show commitment to learning by persevering despite adversity and seeking guidance in order to adapt to change. Students shall strive for academic excellence and pursue and incorporate all critique, both positive and negative, in the acquisition of knowledge in order to understand and respect the community in which they work.
5. **Professional Appearance:** Students shall convey a positive, professional appearance in order to represent the program in a dignified manner. Appearance includes a person's dress, hygiene, and appropriate etiquette/protocols for the environment (including safety protocols and protective clothing in environments that require them).

This graduate program, the Graduate School, and the Division of Student Life all uphold the UW-System policies and procedures in place for academic and non-academic misconduct. In addition, graduate students are held to the same standards of responsible conduct of research as faculty and staff. Furthermore, unprofessional behavior towards clients/subjects, faculty, staff, peers and public are significant issues in the evaluation and promotion of students. In turn, we hold expectations for the highest level of academic integrity and expect professional, ethical, and respectful conduct in all interactions. Students may be disciplined or dismissed from the graduate program for misconduct or disregard for professional conduct expectations regardless of their academic standing in the program. Separate and apart from a violation of Professional Conduct, a student may face University disciplinary action with regard to the same action. Students are responsible for reading the information here as well as the information published on all the relevant web sites. Lack of knowledge of this information does not excuse any infraction.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is governed by state law, UW System Administration Code Chapter 14. For further information on this law, what constitutes academic misconduct, and procedures related to academic misconduct, see:

The Graduate School

Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Academic
grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-academic

Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards

Academic Misconduct Website
conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct

Student Resources for Academic Integrity
<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/student-resources-for-academic-integrity/>

University of Wisconsin System (UWS)
Chapter 14: Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures
https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14

Non-Academic Misconduct

Non-academic misconduct is governed by state law, UW System Administration Code Chapters 17 and 18. For further information on these laws, what constitutes non-academic misconduct, and procedures related to non-academic misconduct, see:

The Graduate School

Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Non-Academic
grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-nonacademic

Office for Student Conduct and Community Standards

Non-Academic Misconduct Website
conduct.students.wisc.edu/nonacademic-misconduct

University of Wisconsin System (UWS)

Chapter 17: Student Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures
docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17

Chapter 18: Conduct on University Lands

docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/18

Research Misconduct

Trust in the accuracy and veracity of the scholarly record are fundamental to science. When that record is tainted, whole fields of study can be set back or questioned. Moreover, when scientists have been found to engage in misconduct, partners and the public lose faith in the ability of all scientists to address society's grand challenges.

Per the UW-Madison policy, *“research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.”* The policy applies to all those involved in the research process including graduate students.

For more information, please visit the [Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research research misconduct page](#).

If you have questions or concerns about research misconduct or integrity, this can be discussed confidentially with the Research Integrity Officer (rio@research.wisc.edu).

Hostile and Intimidating Behavior (Bullying)

Hostile and intimidating behavior (HIB), sometimes referred to as “bullying,” is prohibited by university policy applicable to faculty, academic staff, and university staff. For further definition, policy, and procedures related to HIB see: hr.wisc.edu/hib. Students who feel they have been subject to HIB are encouraged to review the [informal](#) and [formal](#) options on the [“Addressing HIB”](#) tab of this website.

Grievance Process

The College of Agricultural and Life Sciences has a grievance process that students can use to address other concerns regarding their experience in either the Horticulture MS or PhD program. This program's grievance process can be found detailed at:

<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/plant-agroecosystem-sciences/horticulture-ms/#policiestext>

<https://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/plant-agroecosystem-sciences/horticulture-phd/#policiestext>

Process and Sanctions for Violations of Conduct Standards

The Horticulture Graduate Programs Committee (HGPC) administers the regulations established by the faculty for the Horticulture Graduate programs. It makes sure students are meeting the program expectations and imposes sanctions when appropriate. Students who are falling behind academically or not meeting conduct expectations are first warned, then put on probation, and then dropped from the program if they cannot complete the requirements or remedy their conduct. Within boundaries set by the faculty, the HGPC is authorized to take account of individual circumstances and problems, and to grant extensions of deadlines and waivers of requirements.

Disciplinary Actions

- Written reprimand
- Denial of specified privilege(s)
- Imposition of reasonable terms and conditions on continued student status
- Removal of funding
- Probation
- Restitution
- Removal of the student from the course(s) in progress
- Failure to promote
- Withdrawal of an offer of admission
- Placement on Leave of Absence for a determined amount of time
- Suspension from the program for up to one year with the stipulation that remedial activities may be prescribed as a condition of later readmission. Students who meet the readmission condition must apply for readmission and the student will be admitted only on a space available basis. See the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Readmission to Graduate School: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/readmission/>
- Suspension from the program. The suspensions may range from one semester to four years.
- Dismissal from the program
- Denial of a degree

In addition to the program's disciplinary actions, the Office of Student Assistance and Support may also have grounds to issue one or more of the following:

- Reprimand
- Probation

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Restitution
- A zero or failing grade on an assignment/exam
- A lower grade or failure in the course
- Removal from course
- Enrollment restrictions in a course/program
- Conditions/terms of continuing as a student

Incident Reporting (Hate, Bias, Sexual Assault, Hazing, Students of Concern, Bullying)

The Office of Student Assistance and Support maintains a portal to report incidents of hate, bias, sexual assault, hazing, dating/domestic violence, stalking, missing students, and students displaying other concerning behaviors at UW-Madison:

Office of Student Assistance and Support Incident Reporting

osas.wisc.edu/report-an-issue/

As noted above in “Personal Conduct Expectations,” students who feel they have been subject to hostile and/or intimidating behavior (i.e., bullying) are encouraged to review the informal and formal options for addressing this behavior (including filing complaints when desired) at:

Human Resources Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Website

hr.wisc.edu/hib

Funding, Employment, and Finances

“Funding” is a term used to describe university employment or support to cover some or all of your costs of graduate education. It varies in kind, amount, and level of guarantee.

Majority of the graduate students in the Horticulture MS or PhD programs are funded on 50% research assistantships (RA) . A 50% RA provides tuition remission, health benefits, and a monthly salary. We also have students funded on teaching assistantships, fellowships, or external funding from a variety of sources including:

foreign government sponsorship, industry sponsorship, and independent fellowships (e.g., Fulbright Scholars).

The Graduate School maintains policies related to graduate student funding/employment:

Maximum Levels of Appointments

grad.wisc.edu/documents/maximum-levels-of-appointments

Concurrent Appointments for Fellows/Trainees

grad.wisc.edu/documents/concurrent-appointments

Enrollment Requirements for Graduate Assistants

policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1208

Eligibility for Summer RA, TA, PA, and LSA Appointments

policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-5089

Finding Funding Without a Guaranteed Appointment

Campus-Wide and External Sources

To help you find resources to pay for costs related to graduate education, the Graduate School provides a comprehensive overview of the funding process on campus as well as descriptions of the types of funding available, sources of funding, minimum stipend rates and benefits, and links to applicable human resources policies (e.g. GAPP) at:

Graduate School: Funding and Financial Aid

grad.wisc.edu/funding

Fellowships Resource (see “External Funding Opportunities” for external fellowships)

<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/fellowships/>

UW-Madison Libraries Grants Information Collection

library.wisc.edu/memorial/collections/grants-information-collection

Additional Policies & Resources

Graduate School Policy: Residence for Tuition Purposes

grad.wisc.edu/documents/residence-for-tuition-purposes

Employee Disability Resources

employeedisabilities.wisc.edu

Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (GAPP)

hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp

Professional Development

When you participate in professional development, you build skills needed to succeed academically and thrive in your career. The following are professional development activities that we recommend for your consideration. Required professional development will be detailed in “Degree Requirements” above.

On Campus

The Graduate School develops and curates a wide variety of resources for professional development, including a tool to assess your skills, set goals, and create a plan with recommended activities on campus (e.g., the popular “Individual Development Plan” or IDP) as well as programming to help you explore careers, prepare for a job search, build your network and learn from alumni, manage projects, communicate about your research, and much more.

DiscoverPD helps master’s and doctoral students at UW-Madison advance their academic and professional goals with customized recommendations based on a skills self-assessment. The 400+ professional development recommendations available in the DiscoverPD database are available in a range of formats to best meet your diverse needs, including in-person, virtual, asynchronous, and synchronous opportunities. All of this can be found at:

Professional Development from the Graduate School

grad.wisc.edu/professional-development

The Graduate School communicates professional development opportunities through an e-newsletter, *GradConnections*, that all graduate students receive at their wisc.edu email. Graduate students in traditional graduate degree programs receive the newsletter

weekly during the academic year and every other week in the summer. Graduate students in online degree programs receive the newsletter every other week during the academic year and monthly during the summer.

In Our Program/Department

Plant Sciences Graduate Student Council (PSGSC) – a student organization that typically organizes once-per-semester professional development opportunities. They also host an annual symposium in the fall. To learn more about them, visit their website - <https://psgsc.wisc.edu/>.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and well-being resources for students can be found here:

<https://students.wisc.edu/guides/health-and-wellness/>

Students who pay segregated fees are eligible for University Health Services (<https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/>).

There is no charge to students for many basic services including counseling sessions, because services are paid through tuition and fees. Personal health and wellness services are also available in addition to medical services.

Securing Health Insurance Coverage

Graduate students who hold an appointment as an assistant of 33.33% or more or who have a fellowship may be eligible for health insurance and other benefits beyond University Health Services. Contact Tricia Check, tlcheck@wisc.edu if you have any questions about your coverage.

Graduate students without an assistantship or fellowship who are currently enrolled can use the services of University Health Services (UHS), the campus health clinic. Many services are provided at no extra cost, including outpatient medical care during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. UHS is located in the Student Services Tower at 333 East Campus Mall, 608-265-5000. For more info, visit the UHS web site at uhs.wisc.edu.

Prescription medications, emergency room visits and hospitalization are not included in UHS benefits. Therefore, supplemental insurance covering these drugs and services is recommended for all students and is required for international students. The UHS

Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) is an excellent option for many students. Contact the SHIP office at 608-265-5600 for more information.

Disability Information

Students with disabilities have access to disability resources through UW-Madison's McBurney Disability Resource Center. As an admitted student, you should first go through the steps to "Become a McBurney Client" at <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/apply-for-accommodations/>

Mental Health Resources On and Off Campus

University Health Services (UHS) is the primary mental health provider for students on campus. UHS Counseling and Consultation Services offers a wide range of services to the diverse student population of UW-Madison. They offer immediate crisis counseling, same day appointments and ongoing treatment. Go to <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/> or call 608-265-5600. UHS service costs are covered for students through tuition and fees.

Graduate students of color and first-generation graduate students who want to be part of a support group specifically for that population are also encouraged to connect with Office of Access, Engagement and Funding - <https://grad.wisc.edu/diversity/inclusion-and-engagement/>

There are many mental health resources throughout the Madison community, but UHS Counseling and Consultation Services is the best resource for referrals to off-campus providers. Call 608-265-5600 for assistance in finding an off-campus provider.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student Services (ISS)

International Student Services (ISS) is your main resource on campus and has advisors who can assist you with visa, social and employment issues. Visit their website for more information at iss.wisc.edu or to schedule an appointment.

Becoming a Global Badger

Check out the following steps here to prepare for your time as a Badger - <https://iss.wisc.edu/becoming-a-global-badger/>

Funding for International Students

International students are eligible for Teaching, Project, and Research Assistantships on campus as well as university fellowships through the Graduate School. They may not be employed more than 20 hours per week on campus while enrolled full-time.

New international students with assistantships should work with International Students Services to obtain a social security number (iss.wisc.edu/employment/social-security/). New students with fellowships and no other appointment types are not considered employees and are not eligible for social security numbers. These students should work with ISS to obtain an International Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN, <https://iss.wisc.edu/employment/individual-taxpayer-identification-number-itin/>).