

GRADUATE HANDBOOK  
FOR  
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE MAJORS



**Master of Science in Agriculture**

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES  
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE  
AND ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

# GRADUATE STUDENT CONTRACT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have received a copy of the Graduate Student Handbook from the Department of Agricultural Sciences. I understand that I am expected to abide by all policies, deadlines, and time lines set forth both in this handbook and those found in the Graduate Catalogue, Guidelines for Admission to Candidacy, Schedule of Classes, and Course and Thesis Requirements. I also acknowledge that it is **my** responsibility, and not the Graduate Coordinator nor members of my graduate committee, to see that I meet these obligations and deadlines. Additionally, I agree that any financial assistance provided by the Department of Agricultural Sciences may be withdrawn should it be found that I have not followed these policies in good faith.

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Admission (Semester, Year): \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation (Semester, Year): \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Information:

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_ SHSU Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

## APPLICATION / ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES

**Regular Admission.** Suggested guidelines for regular admission to graduate school are set forth in the Graduate Catalogue and are summarized below:

- I. Program Admission Guidelines**
  - A.** A minimum undergraduate GPA, from the baccalaureate granting institution, of 2.5 (on a 4-point scale) or an advanced hours GPA of at least 2.8.
  - B.** GRE score of 286 or higher (verbal + math components).
  - C.** An undergraduate degree in agriculture or related field. Those applicants having an undergraduate degree in a discipline other than agriculture must successfully complete AGBU 2317 or 2389, AGET 2303, PLSC 3440 and ANSC 3373 with a grade of B or better.
  - D.** Two letters of recommendation from faculty in the undergraduate major field of study, this requirement is waived if an SHSU graduate.
  - E.** Applicants from non-English speaking countries must present a score of at least 550 on the paper version, or 79 on the internet-based version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or successful completion of the English Language Institute (ELI) program at SHSU.
  - F.** Application deadlines: Fall admission – Mid July; Spring admission – Mid November; Summer admission – Mid April

**Conditional Admission.** An applicant whose records are incomplete may be granted conditional admission and be classified as a conditional graduate student until all records are complete and all regular admission requirements are fulfilled. Conditional admission allows for the completion of **no more than six hours** of graduate credit and is valid for only **one semester**. All requirements for regular admission must be met prior to enrollment for more than six hours graduate credit.

**Probationary Admission.** An applicant whose records are complete but did not qualify for regular admission can be granted **probationary admission** with department recommendation and approval from the Dean of College of Science and Engineering Technology. Regular admission is not guaranteed once deficiencies are met.

**Post Baccalaureate Admission or Non-Degree Admission.** **Post baccalaureate classification** is assigned to students possessing a baccalaureate degree and that have not been regularly admitted or conditionally admitted into a graduate program, and could be classified as non-degree seeking. **Non-degree admission** may be granted to a student

who does not intend to pursue a graduate degree but who wishes to take courses for professional advancement, licensure, certification, or self-education purposes, and who holds a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited university.

**International students** must meet the same requirements for admission and candidacy as students from the United States, including GRE or GMAT scores. In addition, prospective students must demonstrate their ability to speak, write, and understand the English language.

**Transfer Credit.** A total of six (6) credit hours may be transferred to SHSU from another accredited graduate program. Exceptions to this require approval by the department chair and the academic dean.

**Correspondence Course Study.** Credit toward a graduate degree may not be obtained by correspondence course study. This does not apply to on-line courses.

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

### Grading System.

- A Academic Excellence
- B Acceptable Performance
- C Passing, yet Insufficient Performance
- F Failure

**Scholastic Expectations.** A minimum cumulative grade point of 3.0 (4.0 scale) is required. When the grade of C is earned in any course, it must be balanced by a grade of A in an equivalent course taken in the same academic program. (A grade of A earned at another institution may not be used to remove a grade deficiency earned in residency at Sam Houston State University. Transfer course grades (A or B, only) will be recorded as received and apply to degree plan but will not be utilized to compute grade point average.

**Academic Probation and Suspension.** For a student to remain in academic good standing at Sam Houston State University and graduate, a graduate student must maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 (B) on all graduate course work attempted.

A student who falls below a 3.0 overall grade point average at the end of any semester or completion of the summer session (both sessions) during which one or more semester hours are attempted will be placed on probation. If a probationary student does not achieve a minimum 3.0 overall grade point average at the close of the next semester or summer session, the student will be suspended.

A student who earns a total of one grades of C in any courses during their degree program will have his or her graduate status reviewed by a committee of the department and/or college Graduate Faculty. The committee will consider the status of the student as probation or suspension. A student who earns a total of two grades of C or one grade of F in any combination of courses during their degree program will be terminated. Any appeal for a review of termination should be directed in writing to the appropriate academic dean.

## TEACHING, RESEARCH AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Funding for students fully admitted into the MS degree are qualified to apply for Teaching, Research and Graduate Assistantships. Funding for these positions vary depending on budget allotments, grants stipulations and position availability. Application for assistantships is available at: <http://www.shsu.edu/academics/agriculture/graduate-Programs.html>. The teaching assistantship application, three professional letters of reference, and a resume are required with each application along with official transcripts. References supplied for graduate admission may also be used for the assistantship application.

## CREDIT HOUR RESTRICTIONS

**The normal course load** is 9-12 credit hours per full semester and 3-6 credit hours per summer session. Increased academic loads must be approved by the academic dean.

Other limitations include:

**Teaching, Research or Graduate Assistants** funded by the College of Science and Engineering Technology: Maximum academic load is 9 credit hours per semester for fall and spring with 3 credit hours per summer session if on summer assistantship with a minimum of 6 and 3 hours, respectfully.

## AGRICULTURE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE

**Program Recommendation.** Students seeking this degree should complete a graduate statistics course within their first two semesters of course work.

**Graduate Coordinator.** Dr. Mark J. Anderson, Pirkle Engineering Technology Center 450E, 936.294.3367, [mjanderson@shsu.edu](mailto:mjanderson@shsu.edu), serves as the graduate coordinator for all graduate students seeking a MS degree in Agricultural Sciences.

The coordinator oversees the official academic records of all graduate students with in their specific program area. The coordinator will be the contact person for graduate students submitting any official paperwork and to assist you with course selection until you have chosen your graduate advisor and committee.

**Graduate Advisor.** Each student is to choose a faculty member as an advisor prior to registering for their second semester, to guide him or her in their graduate program. This graduate advisor will serve as the chairperson of their graduate advisory committee and will be responsible for advising the student on course choices and research efforts.

**Degree Plan.** A degree plan should be on file within the second semester of their degree program and can be completed by the Graduate Coordinator or Committee Chairperson and file with the graduate coordinator.

**Course Requirements for Agriculture.** A suggested list of required courses is found in the Graduate Catalogue. However, each Master's program may be tailored to fit the needs and interests of each individual student. The degree requires 37 hours of course work for the non-thesis option and 31 hours of course work for the thesis option, plus 6 hours of thesis credit.

## **I. Outline and Stipulations of Degree Options**

### **A. Non-Thesis: 37-hour program**

#### 7 Required hours:

3 hrs – Statistics – STAT 5375

3 hrs – Research Design – AGRI 6350

1 hr – Seminar – AGRI 6140

#### 30 Elective hours in the area of student's interest or emphasis of which:

15 hrs may be taken from another department

6 hrs may be internship or directed study

12 hrs may be AGRI 5369

### **B. Thesis: 37-hour program**

#### 13 Required hours:

3 hrs – Statistics – STAT 5375

3 hrs – Research Design – AGRI 6350

1 hr – Seminar – AGRI 6140

3 hrs – Thesis (Prospectus) – AGRI 6398 – CR/NC

3 hrs/1 hr – Thesis (Thesis) – AGRI 6099 – CR/NC.

#### 24 Elective hours in the area of student's interest or emphasis of which:

15 hrs may be taken from another department

6 hrs may be internship or directed study

12 hrs may be AGRI 5369

*\*Selected teacher certification hours can apply to either Thesis or Non-Thesis Options*

*\*No more than 18 hours can be taken via an online delivery method*

**Examination of Completion.** All Master of Science degree candidates must pass a comprehensive exam, written and/or oral, over the graduate course work of their degree program. Candidates completing a thesis will be required to give an oral thesis defense and will be subject to an oral examination over related subjects and course material.

**Documentation.** Each student is responsible for submitting necessary paperwork to the graduate coordinator in a timely manner. The attached time-table and checklist are used for reference, but the deadlines in the Graduate Catalog, Schedule of Classes, academic dean's office, etc. supersede any deadlines listed herein. The official checklist will be kept in each student's graduate folder. Should the student's graduate committee change, a revised Graduate Committee Application should be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator.

## TIME TABLE OF PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM

**Prior to the second semester of degree program.** The graduate student must submit his/her graduate advisor and committee member selections to the Graduate Coordinator for review and approval. The student's advisor's or coordinator's signature will be required on all further course registration forms and other official paperwork. With the assistance of the graduate advisor, the student will select a minimum of two other faculty members to comprise their advisory committee. It is the role of the committee, working in concert with the student, to establish an appropriate course sequence to attain the student's goals. A thesis or non-thesis option must be chosen as a minor. Thesis guidelines are available from the University Office of Graduate Studies in the Administration Building, Room 203, respective dean's office, or from the web at <http://library.shsu.edu/research/ThesisDirections.pdf>. The student must meet with their committee and prepare a formal degree plan that is submitted to the graduate coordinator, the department chair, and the academic dean for approval. Changes to the degree plan may be made only when deemed appropriate by the graduate committee, and approved by the department chair and the academic dean.

**Prior to the submission of a prospectus and conducting research.** For research projects that involve animal or human subjects, forms should be completed and approved by the IACUC (animal research) or IRB (human subject) Committee prior to beginning the research project. Forms and information may be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator.

**After the completion of 6 semester hours.** All non-fully admitted students must apply for full admission and must have removed all conditional requirements.

**Two semesters before expected graduation.** The student must file a degree application in the Registrar's Office (see current Academic Calendar for the specific deadline). If the thesis option is chosen, the thesis proposal/prospectus must be submitted for approval by the graduate committee, Department Chair, and academic dean. This may be completed as early as the first semester of enrollment.

**During the semester in which graduation is expected.** Non-thesis students must successfully complete their written and/or oral comprehensive exam and either have completed or be currently enrolled in AGRI 6140. Students must sign up for the comprehensive examination with the Graduate Coordinator. Exams will be written by the student's graduate committee and approved by the coordinator and department chair. The student will have 48 hours to complete the exam and return the typed responses to the graduate coordinator or committee chairperson. The exam must be completed no later than the third week of November, April, or July unless otherwise scheduled and approved by the graduate coordinator and committee.

Students completing a thesis must be enrolled in AGRI 6099 and must submit 3 approved final copies of their thesis to the Dean of the College of Science and Engineering Technology by the date specified by the college. The student's graduate committee and the department chair must approve the thesis prior to submission to the dean. Additional deadlines may be put in place by each committee chair so that adequate time is available for review and corrections.

Students participating in commencement ceremonies must arrange for a cap and gown at the University Bookstore at least 2 months before expected graduation.

### **SUGGESTED TIME SCHEDULE FOR DEGREE PROGRAM**

	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
Application for Admission	August 1	December 1
College Graduate Scholarship	Early-Mid July	December 1
Application for Graduation	Mid October of semester prior to graduation	Early March of semester prior to graduation
Thesis Defense	Early November	Early April
Approved Thesis to Dean	Mid November	Early April
Thesis Prospectus	Mid September of semester prior to graduation	Mid February of semester prior to graduation
Comprehensive Exam	No later than the third week of November	No later than the third week of April
Final Thesis Corrections	Early December	Late April





**SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**A Member of The Texas State University System**  
**College of Science and Engineering Technology**  
**GRADUATE RECRUITMENT SCHOLARSHIP FALL 2020**  
 NOMINATION / APPLICATION FORM

The College of Science and Engineering Technology (COSET) Graduate Recruitment Scholarship is a \$1000 competitive scholarship awarded to outstanding students entering their first semester of a COSET master's program at SHSU and who have not been awarded a graduate assistantship.

To be considered for the COSET Graduate Recruitment Scholarship, a student must be accepted into a master's program in the College of Science and Engineering Technology, be entering their first semester in the program, and plan to be a full-time student. Nominations for the scholarship will be accepted from SHSU faculty, or students may self-nominate. An international student applying for the scholarship must have a transcript evaluation on file with the COSET Dean's office (transcript evaluations by qualified SHSU faculty are acceptable). Applicants will be evaluated by their cumulative GPA and GRE scores.

Name:	Last	First	Middle
Mailing Address _____			
	Street	City	State      Zip Code
Home Telephone No. ( _____ )		GRE Verbal % Rank	_____
		GRE Quantitative % Rank	_____
SAM ID Number _____		Cumulative GPA	_____
Degree Program _____			

**Applications must be scanned and emailed to Ms. Shellie Armstrong at [sda006@shsu.edu](mailto:sda006@shsu.edu) by 5:00 pm on July 15, 2020. Paper applications will not be accepted.**

Name of Person Making the Nomination (if not the applicant) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant or Person Making Nomination \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_

**College of Science and Engineering Technology**  
**Graduate Achievement Scholarship**  
**Academic Year 2020-2021**

The College of Science and Engineering Technology (COSET) Graduate Achievement Scholarship is a \$1000 competitive scholarship awarded to students demonstrating outstanding academic progress in a COSET master's program.

To be considered for the COSET Graduate Achievement Scholarship, a student must be enrolled full-time in a master's program in the College of Science and Engineering Technology and have an SHSU graduate GPA. Students in their first year of a COSET graduate program and who have been awarded a graduate assistantship are not eligible for the scholarship.

Complete applications require:

- 1) a personal statement from the applicant describing their academic progress toward the degree, including planned graduation date, and progress on the thesis or capstone project (where applicable), and
- 2) a letter of evaluation from the applicant's major advisor or graduate program coordinator describing the applicant's progress toward the degree and overall performance in the graduate program.

***Applicants must email their personal statement to Anne Gaillard ([argaillard@shsu.edu](mailto:argaillard@shsu.edu)) with Graduate Achievement Scholarship in the subject line by 5:00 pm on the day of the deadline.***

***The letter of evaluation must be emailed directly from the applicant's major advisor or graduate program coordinator to Anne Gaillard ([argaillard@shsu.edu](mailto:argaillard@shsu.edu)) by 5:00 pm on the day of the deadline.***

The application deadline for the Fall scholarship is **July 1<sup>st</sup>**, and the application deadline for the Spring scholarship is **December 1<sup>st</sup>**.

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby submit the names of the following faculty as advisory committee members. I attest that I have met and discussed with each of them my degree plan and they have agreed to serve on my committee.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Sam ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member Printed Name

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Committee Chair)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Committee Member)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Committee Member)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Committee Member)

\_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Office Use Only

All committee members have appropriate graduate faculty status?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**THESIS DEFENSE/COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION APPLICATION**

Submit to the Graduate Coordinator by October 1<sup>st</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup>, or July 1<sup>st</sup>  
of the semester of graduation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Student ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a degree plan on file? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Committee Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

List your committee members (please print names):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Thesis Defense/Comprehensive Exam: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Title of Thesis (If Applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This form is not an official request until signed by the applicant.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# CHECKLIST FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE CANDIDATES IN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

	<b>Task</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Signature</b>
1.	Obtain copy of departmental graduate handbook	_____	_____
2.	Application for admission	_____	_____
3.	Admission exam scores received	_____	_____
4.	Initial meeting with graduate coordinator	_____	_____
5.	Graduate Advisor selected	_____	_____
6.	Graduate Advisory Committee established	_____	_____
7.	Degree Plan submitted	_____	_____
8.	Degree Plan approved	_____	_____
9.	File Degree Application for graduation	_____	_____
10.	<b><u>Non-Thesis Students:</u></b>		
	Comprehensive Exam scheduled	_____	_____
	Comprehensive Exam completed	_____	_____
11.	<b><u>Thesis Students:</u></b>		
	IACUC or IRB Forms submitted (for animal/human research only)	_____	_____
	Thesis Proposal submitted	_____	_____
	Thesis Proposal approved	_____	_____
	Thesis Defense Scheduled	_____	_____
	Thesis submitted	_____	_____