

GRADUATE HANDBOOK
FOR
AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE MAJORS



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

Revised Fall, 2014

GRADUATE STUDENT CONTRACT

I, _____ have received a copy of the Graduate Student Handbook from the Department of Agricultural Sciences and Engineering Technology. 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 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that any financial assistance provided by the Department of Agricultural Sciences and Engineering Technology may be withdrawn should it be found that I have not followed these policies in good faith.

Signed: _____ Date _____

Expected Graduation (Semester, Year): _____

Contact Information:

Student ID: _____

Email: _____ Local Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____ Permanent Phone Number: _____

Permanent Address: _____

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

APPLICATION / ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES

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

I. Program Admission Requirements

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. MS Program in Agricultural Sciences

1. An undergraduate degree in agriculture or related field. Those applicants having an undergraduate degree in a discipline other than agriculture must successfully complete AGRI 2317 or 2389, AGRI 3310, AGRI 3440 and AGRI 3373 with a grade of B or better.
2. Two letters of recommendation from faculty in the undergraduate major field of study, or endorsement from SHSU faculty if an SHSU graduate.
3. Applicants from non-English speaking countries must present a score of at least 550 on the paper version, 213 on the computer version, or 79 on the internet-based version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

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 Sciences. 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 two grades of C in any combination of 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 three grades of C or one grade of F will be terminated. Any appeal for a review of termination should be directed in writing to the appropriate academic dean.

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:

1. Assistant instructors funded by HLS&R: Maximum academic load is 12 credit hours per semester for fall and spring and 6 credit hours per summer session with a minimum of 9 and 3 hours, respectfully.
2. University assistant instructors and research assistants: The required academic load is 9 credit hours per semester for fall and spring with 3 credit hours per summer session if on summer assistantship.

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. Stanley F. Kelley, Thomason 222, 936.294.1189, sfkelley@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 Masters program may be tailored to fit the needs and interests of each individual student with a minimum of 18 hours in Agriculture. 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.

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 Sciences 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	April 1	September 15
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 Sciences
SPECIAL GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
 NOMINATION / APPLICATION FORM

The Special Graduate Scholarship is a prestigious scholarship from Sam Houston State University. It is awarded to selected graduate students whose academic accomplishments and university or community citizenship are excellent in every respect.

To be considered for a Special Graduate Scholarship, a Sam Houston State University student must be enrolled as a full-time, on-campus graduate student in the College of Sciences. To be competitive for the Special Graduate Scholarship, applicants should have a cumulative undergraduate/graduate GPA of at least 3.2 and have GRE Verbal and Quantitative scores of 50% rank or higher. An international student applying for this scholarship must have an established Sam Houston State University GPA or a formal transcript evaluation on file.

Students who have completed all required coursework for the graduate degree, as well as students under any disciplinary, probationary, or suspension period, are not eligible for the scholarship.

Name:	Last	First	Middle
Mailing Address			
	Street	City	State Zip Code
Home Telephone No. ()			GRE Verbal % Rank _____
			GRE Quantitative % Rank _____
SAM ID Number			Grade Point Average _____
Major			Minor _____
Semester for which you are applying: Fall / Spring 20____			

Mailing Instructions: Applications should be mailed directly to Ms. Tammy Gray, College of Sciences, P. O. Box 2209 SHSU, Huntsville, Texas 77341.

Signature of Applicant or Person Making Nomination _____

Date of Application _____

The deadline of application for the fall semester is **April 1st**; the deadline of application for the spring semester is **November 1st**.

Revised 2/14/12

PLEASE USE THIS APPLICATION ONLY FOR THE SPECIAL GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

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: _____

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION APPLICATION

Submit to the Graduate Coordinator by October 1st, March 1st, or July 1st
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 Comprehensive Exam: _____

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

	Task	Date	Signature
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.	<u>Non-Thesis Students:</u>		
	Comprehensive Exam scheduled	_____	_____
	Comprehensive Exam completed	_____	_____
12.	<u>Thesis Students:</u>		
	IACUC or IRB Forms submitted (for animal/human research only)	_____	_____
	Thesis Proposal submitted	_____	_____
	Thesis Proposal approved	_____	_____
	Thesis Defense Scheduled	_____	_____
	Thesis submitted	_____	_____
12.	File for graduation	_____	_____