



HORTICULTURAL SCIENCES
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Distance Plant Breeding Handbook

**Revised:
April 2018**

This policy manual primarily pertains to Plant Breeding graduate students in Horticulture. If you are not a Plant Breeding Horticulture major, please visit your program's academic advisor for questions pertaining to course work, degree plan, etc.

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Introduction and Overview

The Plant Breeding Distance Education Program in the Department of Horticultural Sciences is designed to provide students with an understanding of the sciences of plant breeding and genetics, and to prepare the student for a career in improving food, feed, fiber, biostock, and recreation/aesthetic plant production across the globe. This program seeks to provide quality plant breeding education and research training to people employed in related agriculture industries while accommodating their demanding lifestyles. The objective of this program is to provide the opportunity to gain advanced degrees in plant breeding for:

1. Industry professionals within the U.S., who cannot come to campus for classes but wish to continue their education and professional development while remaining employed;
2. International industry professionals and non-governmental organizational (NGO) professional individuals who wish to continue their education in the field of plant breeding but who cannot come to campus or cannot come for extended periods of time;
3. Industry leaders who want to improve their knowledge of plant breeding and genetics.
4. Full time employees of Texas AgriLife Research or Texas AgriLife Extension who are not located on the College Station campus.

All distance learning students will be enrolled in the same classes as on-campus students and all classes will be taught by the same professors with identical course material, homework, exams, etc. Student research can be completed at the student's location under the supervision of an on-site Ph.D. scientist, educator, or supervisor who qualifies as an adjunct member of the Texas A&M graduate faculty.

Plant breeding programs in Horticultural Sciences seek to alter the genetic composition of plants to improve their characteristics. Our plant breeding and genetics faculty members rely on conventional and molecular breeding techniques to modify specific targets such as yield potential, crop quality, biotic and abiotic stress resistance, and/or reduced crop production costs. Our plant breeding faculty work with various ornamental, fruit and vegetable crops. We have plant breeding faculty located at the College Station campus as well as several of our off-campus research and extension centers.

The faculty and staff of the Department of Horticultural Sciences will make every effort to ensure that your experience as a graduate student in our department is challenging, rewarding, and preparatory for a career in plant breeding. Additional graduate information, along with the forms necessary for the various aspects of your graduate career can be found at the Office of Graduate Studies (OGAPS) website <http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>.

Contacts:

Dr. Daniel Lineberger, *Professor and Department Head*

202 HFSB (979)845-5278 dan-lineberger@tamu.edu

Dr. Patricia Klein, *Professor, Associate Head of Graduate Programs*

154A Borlaug Center (979)862-6308 pklein@tamu.edu

Ms. Megan Teel, *Academic Advisor III for Graduate and Undergraduate Education*

204C HFSB (979)845-5343 megan_teel@tamu.edu

Ms. LeAnn Hague, *Program Coordinator—Plant Breeding Distance Education*

217D Heep (979)845-6148 leann.hague@tamu.edu

Instructional Technology Services Help

Holdenfels Hall (979)458-3417 itshelp@tamu.edu

Help Desk Central (24 hour service)

Computing Services Center (979)845-8300 helpdesk@tamu.edu
<http://hdc.tamu.edu>

International Student Services

Bizell East (979)845-1824 <http://international.tamu.edu/iss/>

Sponsored Student Programs

352 Bizell Hall West (979)845-2550 ssp@tamu.edu

Graduate Admissions

1601 General Services Complex (979)845-1044 <http://admissions.tamu.edu>

International Admissions

<http://admissions.tamu.edu> (979)845-1043 international-admission@tamu.edu

Office of Graduate Studies

302 Jack Williams Administration (979)845-3631 <http://ogaps.tamu.edu>

Thesis Office, *Submit thesis/dissertations*

Evans Library (979)845-2225

Important Web Addresses:

HORT Home Page:

<http://hortsciences.tamu.edu/>

SCSC Home Page:

<http://soilcrop.tamu.edu/>

Howdy:

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Office of Graduate Studies:

<http://ogaps.tamu.edu/>

Help Desk Central:

<http://hdc.tamu.edu>

TAMU Financial Aid

<http://financialaid.tamu.edu/>

Plant Breeding Distance Graduate Degrees Available

M.S. Non-thesis Option – requires completion of a 3 month internship activity and professional paper

MS Thesis Option – requires a thesis dealing with original research

Ph.D. – requires a dissertation dealing with original research

Scholastic Requirements

This document summarizes policies and procedures to be followed by graduate students in Horticultural Sciences. Students should consult the Graduate Catalog or the Office of Graduate Studies as the final authority on all matters discussed in the handbook.

Grade Point Average

Graduate students must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (4.0 scale) for all courses which are listed on the degree plan; as well as for all graded graduate and advanced undergraduate course work (300 and 400 level) completed at Texas A&M and eligible for application toward a graduate degree. Graduate students will not receive graduate degree credit for undergraduate courses taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. Graduate courses on the degree plan may not be taken S/U, except for 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 693, 695, and 697. Graduate courses not on the degree plan may be taken S/U.

If either a student's cumulative GPA or the GPA for courses listed on the degree plan fall below 3.0, he or she will be considered scholastically deficient and may be dropped from the University unless the minimum GPA is attained by the end of the next long semester. Various scholarships have varying requirements for minimum GPA in order to retain the scholarship.

Additional information can be found in the Texas A&M University Graduate Catalog, which can be found on-line at <http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/>

Requirements Leading to the Master of Science Plant Breeding Distance Degree – Non-Thesis Option

**36 graduate credit hours beyond the B.S. degree; general requirements are:*

- a. 30-32 course hours approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee and the Office of Graduate Studies.
- b. Statistics 651 or equivalent.
- c. Graduate seminar (1 hr).
- d. 3-4 hours of HORT 684 (Professional Internship).
- e. 1 hour of HORT 693 (Professional Study).
- f. No more than 9 hours of upper level (300 or 400) undergraduate courses.
- g. See Graduate Catalog for additional requirements, <http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/>.
- h. A final exam/defense of the internship experience as described in the professional paper and/or coursework taken while at TAMU as directed by student's Graduate Advisory Committee.

**A 3-month internship and a professional paper describing the internship experience.*

Requirements Leading to the Master of Science Plant Breeding Distance Degree – Thesis Option

**32 graduate credit hours beyond the B.S. degree; general requirements are:*

- a. 23 course hours approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee and the Office of Graduate Studies.
- b. Statistics 651 or equivalent.
- c. Graduate seminar (1 hr).
- d. No more than 8 hours of HORT 691 (Research) or HORT 685 (Directed Studies).
- e. No more than 9 hours of upper level (300 or 400) undergraduate courses.
- f. An approved thesis proposal.
- g. See Graduate Catalog for additional requirements,
<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/>.

**A thesis written on original research as directed by student's Graduate Advisory Committee.*

Requirements Leading to the Doctor of Philosophy Plant Breeding Distance Degree

**64 graduate credit hours beyond the M.S. degree; general requirements are:*

- a. No set number of course hours is required; however, most Committee Chairs and Graduate Advisory Committees demand from 24 to 32 semester hours of classroom study, which usually includes courses in fields other than plant breeding.
- b. Two graduate level graded statistics courses such as STAT 651 and STAT 652, or equivalent.
- c. Two graduate level seminars (1 hr. each).
- d. Students who accumulate more than 99 semester credit hours may be required to pay out-of-state tuition on any additional hours.
- e. An approved dissertation proposal.
- f. See Graduate Catalog for additional requirements,
<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/>.

**A dissertation written on original research as directed by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee.*

International Admission

International students enrolled in distance education are required to submit documentation to International Student Services (ISS) based on their location. For specific requirements please visit <http://iss.tamu.edu/Prospective-Students/Distance-Learners>. ISS works with the Department to make sure all immigration issues are resolved fairly and quickly.

Language Requirement

Foreign nationals whose native language is not English are required to show English language proficiency. This is accomplished by [1] scoring at least 213 on the computer generated Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), 550 on the paper generated TOEFL, or 80 on the Internet Based form (iBT); or [2] scoring 6.0 on the IELTS; or [3] scoring 146 (400 old scale) or better on the verbal portion of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE); or [4] completing all 4 years of a B.S. degree at a U.S. university or college.

Continuous Registration

All students in graduate degree programs requiring a thesis, dissertation, internship, or record of study (i.e., all graduate students within the Horticultural Sciences Department, regardless of

degree) must be in continuous registration. This continuous registration includes graduate students who have completed all course work on their degree plans [other than HORT 691 (Research) or HORT 684 (Internship)]. Once all formal course work is completed **and the student is not on assistantship/fellowship** continuous registration is satisfied by registration for at least 1 credit hour during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

Graduate students receiving financial assistance from Federal Financial Aid should work with the Office of Financial Aid to be sure they meet minimal enrollment requirements to qualify for whatever aid they are receiving. <http://financialaid.tamu.edu/>

NOTE: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS may have additional requirements and should consult with International Student Services (979-845-1824) to ensure that they are in compliance with immigration requirements and enrollment status.

Graduate Student Assistantships

Students who are compensated as Graduate Assistant Research (GAR), Graduate Assistant Teaching (GAT), Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT), or through any scholarship/fellowship funding and associated with the Texas AgriLife entities in any capacity less than full time employment are not eligible for this Distance Plant Breeding program.

Progress Towards the Degree

All distance education students enrolled in a degree program in the Horticultural Sciences Department are required to complete 9 semester credit hours per academic year (total of fall, spring, and summer semesters) until all coursework is completed [other than HORT 691 (Research) or HORT 684 (Internship)] to ensure they are making adequate progress towards their degree.

Steps Leading to a Distance Education Master of Science Degree (Non-Thesis Option) in Plant Breeding

There are several steps that must be successfully completed to fulfill the requirements for the M.S.- NTO Plant Breeding degree in Horticultural Sciences.

TO APPLY:

Communicate with Academic Advisor III, Megan Teel at megan_teel@tamu.edu or 1-979-845-5343. Submit pre-screening application materials *directly to Megan*.

- A statement providing sufficient background information to demonstrate the student's aptitude for and interest in plant breeding.
- Overview of expected internship location and responsibilities. This will typically be at the student's current employer. Students are required to secure their own internship appointment.

After pre-screening materials are received students can apply to formal admission to Texas A&M University at www.applytexas.org. Once a student has applied for admission to Texas A&M University, the Office of Graduate Admissions converts all information to electronic format and notifies the Department of the application. Students should submit transcripts from all universities attended, official GRE and TOEFL scores (if required), 3 letters of recommendation, a resume, and a statement of purpose with the formal application. Once the student's application and letters of recommendation are received, the student's information is circulated to the appropriate faculty. A student is accepted for graduate study only if a faculty member can be identified who will serve as the student's Graduate Advisory Committee on-campus Chair.

GRE

All prospective students are required to have taken the GRE within the last five years.

English Language Requirements

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS must score 213 (computer) on the TOEFL or 80 on the Internet Based form (iBT), 6.0 on the IELTS, or 146 on the verbal portion of the GRE to be accepted into the Distance Plant Breeding and Genetics Program.

AFTER BEING ADMITTED (IN ADDITION TO REQUIRED COURSEWORK):

Establish Advisory Committee

Students should, in consultation with their committee Chair, identify appropriate faculty in both Horticultural Sciences and other departments to serve as members of their Graduate Advisory Committee. This should be accomplished as soon as possible, preferably in the student's first long semester, as the committee will aid in planning the student's internship and course work leading to their degree. One member of the advisory committee must be from a department other than Horticultural Sciences. A minimum of 3 committee members is required for the Master of Science. All members must be on the TAMU Graduate Faculty.

Submit a Degree Plan

In consultation with their advisory committee, students **MUST** submit a degree plan that identifies the courses leading to the M.S. degree. The degree plan (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>)

must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee, the Department of Horticultural Science Associate Head for Graduate Programs, Dr. Patricia Klein, and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS). The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's second long semester. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. Submission of the degree plan is an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their advisory committee.

Complete Internship

Upon completion of the internship the student will enroll in HORT 693 under the Associate Head for Graduate Programs, Dr. Patricia Klein, to prepare a professional paper describing the internship experience and accomplishments and submit that paper to their Graduate Advisory Committee. Concurrently, the student will petition OGAPS for permission to hold a final defense and upon gaining approval will meet with their committee and discuss the professional paper. A report of results will be submitted to OGAPS.

Apply for Degree and Pay Graduation Fees

These items must be accomplished during the first week of the student's final semester. Students should note this and all deadlines on the OGAPS (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) calendar.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam

The request to schedule the student's exit defense must be submitted to OGAPS (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) at least **10 working days** prior to the exam. There may be additional time requirements posted on the OGAPS calendar. The request must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee Chair and Dr. Patricia Klein – Associate Head for Graduate Programs.

The exam results must be returned to OGAPS within 10 working days of the scheduled date of the exam.

Steps Leading to a Distance Education Master of Science Degree (Thesis Option) in Plant Breeding

There are several steps that must be successfully completed to fulfill the requirements for the distance M.S. (TO) degree in Plant Breeding in Horticultural Sciences. These include:

TO APPLY:

Communicate with Academic Advisor III, Megan Teel at megan_teel@tamu.edu or 1-979-845-5343. Submit pre-screening application materials *directly to Megan*.

- A statement providing sufficient background information to demonstrate the student's aptitude to conduct plant breeding research;
- Identification of the area of plant breeding research to be pursued and its importance to the horticultural industry;
- A one or two page letter of support from the prospective distance Co-chair indicating commitment of facilities and time for the conduct of the proposed research.

After pre-screening materials are received students can apply to formal admission to Texas A&M University at www.applytexas.org. Once a student has applied for admission to Texas A&M University, the Office of Graduate Admissions converts all information to electronic format and notifies the Department of the application. Students should submit transcripts from all universities attended, official GRE and TOEFL (if required) scores, 3 letters of recommendation, a resume, and a statement of purpose with the formal application. Once the student's application and letters of recommendation are received, the student's information is circulated to the appropriate faculty. A student is accepted for graduate study only if a faculty member can be identified who will serve as the student's on-campus Graduate Advisory Committee Chair. The off-campus Co-chair who will direct the student's research at the off-campus location must be able to attain graduate faculty status at Texas A&M University.

GRE

All prospective students are required to have taken the GRE within the last five years.

English Language Requirements

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS must score 213 (computer) on the TOEFL or 80 on the Internet Based form (iBT), 6.0 on the IELTS, or 146 on the verbal portion of the GRE to be accepted into the Distance Plant Breeding and Genetics Program.

AFTER ADMITTED (IN ADDITION TO REQUIRED COURSEWORK):

Establish Advisory Committee

Students should, in consultation with their committee Chair and Co-chair, identify appropriate faculty in both Horticulture and other departments to serve as members of their Graduate Advisory Committee. This should be accomplished as soon as possible, preferably in the student's first long semester, as the committee will aid in planning the student's research and course work leading to their degree. One member of the advisory committee must be from outside the Department of Horticultural Sciences. All members must be members of the TAMU Graduate Faculty.

Submit a Degree Plan

In consultation with their Graduate Advisory Committee, students **MUST** submit a degree plan that identifies the courses leading to the M.S. degree. The degree plan (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's committee, the Department of Horticultural Science Associate Head for Graduate Programs Dr. Patricia Klein, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's second long semester. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. Submission of the degree plan is an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their advisory committee.

Submit a Thesis Proposal

In consultation with their Graduate Advisory Committee, students **MUST** submit a thesis proposal that identifies the research problem which the student has been assigned, a partial literature review of the problem, objectives of the research, and the student's approach to the research. A cover page for the proposal and the guidelines for preparing the proposal can be obtained from the OGAPS website. If the research involves human or animal subjects, an approved protocol number from the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects or The University Laboratory Animal Care Committee for animal use must be included on the proposal approval page. If the research involves the use of recombinant DNA, pathogens of humans, plants or animals or other biohazards, an approved Institutional Biosafety Committee permit number must be included on the proposal approval page. The thesis proposal (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee, Dr. Dan Lineberger, Department Head, or Dr. Wayne Smith, Plant Breeding Faculty Chair and the Office of Graduate Studies.

Apply for Degree and Pay Graduation Fees

These items must be accomplished during the first week of the student's final semester. Students should note this and all deadlines on the OGAPS (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) calendar.

Submit Thesis to Advisory Committee (Thesis Option Only)

Well before submitting a request to schedule the thesis defense, students should meet with their committee Chair and confirm that all course work is completed or will be complete in an appropriate manner. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS should confirm with their committee Chair that all English language requirements have been completed. When all course work and English language requirements are satisfied, the student may submit his/her thesis to their Chair/Co-chair and then on to the full committee.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam

The request to schedule the student's thesis defense must be submitted to OGAPS (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) at least **10 working days** prior to the exam. There may be additional time requirements posted on the OGAPS calendar. The request must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee Chair and Co-chair. A copy of the announcement should be provided to Dr. Patricia Klein, Associate Head for Graduate Programs at least 10 days prior to the final exam.

The final exam will/may be conducted by any appropriate Internet program or conference call. The exam results must be returned to OGAPS within 10 working days of the scheduled date of

the exam. The results of the final exam should be signed by the distance Co-chair and then forwarded by the fastest means to the campus Chair to obtain the remaining signatures and submit to OGAPS within the 10 working day limit.

Submit Thesis

Upload one approved final copy of the thesis as a single .PDF file (thesis.tamu.edu) and submit a signed approval page to the Thesis Office (Evans Library, 845-2225). Students should check the OGAPS calendar for semester deadlines relative to submission and graduation. The thesis must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee and Dr. Dan Lineberger, Department Head or Dr. Wayne Smith, Plant Breeding Faculty Chair.

Steps Leading to a Doctor of Philosophy in the Plant Breeding Distance Program

There are several steps that must be successfully completed to fulfill the requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Horticultural Sciences Department. These include:

TO APPLY:

Communicate with Academic Advisor III, Megan Teel at megan_teel@tamu.edu or 1-979-845-5343. Submit pre-screening application materials *directly to Megan*.

- A statement providing sufficient background information to demonstrate the student's aptitude to conduct plant breeding research;
- Identification of the area of plant breeding research to be pursued and its importance to the horticultural industry;
- A one or two page letter of support from the prospective distance Co-chair indicating commitment of facilities and time for the conduct of proposed research.

After pre-screening materials are received students can apply to formal admission to Texas A&M University at www.applytexas.org. Once a student has applied for admission to Texas A&M University, the Office of Graduate Admissions converts all information to electronic format and notifies the Department of the application. Students should submit transcripts from all universities attended, official GRE and TOEFL (if required) scores, 3 letters of recommendation, a resume, and a statement of purpose with the formal application. Once the student's application and letters of recommendation are received, the student's information is circulated to the appropriate faculty. A student is accepted for graduate study only if a faculty member can be identified who will serve as the student's on-campus Graduate Advisory Committee Chair. The off-campus Co-chair who will direct the student's research at the off-campus location must be able to attain graduate faculty status at Texas A&M University.

GRE

All prospective students are required to have taken the GRE within the last five years.

English Language Requirements

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS must score 213 (computer) on the TOEFL or 80 on the Internet Based form (iBT), 6.0 on the IELTS, or 146 on the verbal portion of the GRE to be accepted into the Distance Plant Breeding and Genetics Program.

AFTER ADMITTED (IN ADDITION TO REQUIRED COURSEWORK):

Establish Graduate Advisory Committee

Students should, in consultation with their committee Chair and Co-chair, identify appropriate faculty in both Horticultural Sciences and other departments to serve as members of their graduate advisory committee. This should be accomplished as soon as possible as the committee will aid in planning the student's research and course work leading to their degree. A Ph.D. graduate advisory committee requires 4 members and 1 member of the advisory committee must be from outside the Department of Horticultural Sciences. All members must be members of the TAMU Graduate Faculty.

Submit a Degree Plan

In consultation with their Graduate Advisory Committee, students **MUST** submit a degree plan that identifies the courses leading to the Ph.D. degree. The degree plan (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's committee, Department of Horticultural Sciences Associate Head for Graduate Programs, Dr. Patricia Klein, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's fourth long semester. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. Submission of the degree plan is an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their Chair/Co-chair and their Graduate Advisory Committee.

Submit a Dissertation Proposal

In consultation with their advisory committee, the student **MUST** submit a dissertation proposal that identifies the plant breeding problem which the student will research, a partial literature review of the problem, objectives of the research, and the student's approach to the research. A cover page for the proposal and the guidelines for preparing the proposal can be obtained from the OGS website. If the research involves human or animal subjects, an approved protocol number from the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects or The University Laboratory Animal Care Committee for animal use must be included on the proposal approval page. If the research involves the use of recombinant DNA, pathogens of humans, plants or animals or other biohazards, an approved Institutional Biosafety Committee permit number must be included on the proposal approval page. The dissertation proposal (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee, Dr. Dan Lineberger, Department Head, or Dr. Wayne Smith, Plant Breeding Faculty Chair and the Office of Graduate Studies.

Review Prelim Eligibility Requirements

About the end of their fourth or fifth long semester and several weeks before they anticipate taking their prelims, students should review the eligibility requirements for the preliminary exam. Students should obtain the preliminary exam checklist form from the OGAPS homepage (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>). This checklist must be approved by the student's advisory committee Chair, and Dr. Dan Lineberger, Department Head or Dr. Wayne Smith, Plant Breeding Faculty Chair. **The checklist must be attached to the "report of exam results" and forwarded to OGAPS after completion of the preliminary exams.**

Announce Prelim Schedule

Once the student's advisory Chair and Co-chair are satisfied that all prelim eligibility requirements have been met, the preliminary exam should be announced. The time frame from the first written exam until the oral exam should be approximately 3 weeks. Additional time requirements and deadlines are posted on the OGAPS calendar or in the graduate catalog. The announcement must be approved by the student's committee Chair and Co-chair. A copy of the announcement should be provided to Dr. Patricia Klein, Associate Head for Graduate Programs.

Complete Prelims *

The results of the preliminary exams, written and oral, (see OGAPS homepage for the proper form - <http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be returned to OGAPS within **10 working days** of the oral examination. The Preliminary Exam Checklist must be attached. The results must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee. All prelim exams, including the oral prelim, **MUST** be completed at least 14 weeks prior to the student's dissertation defense.

Prelims can be completed via distance technology such as Skype, GoToMeeting, teleconference, etc. The forms must carry original signatures and thus should be signed by the Distance Co-chair and forwarded by the fastest means to the campus chair and other committee members to sign and submit to OGAPS.

Apply for Degree and Pay Graduation Fees

These items must be accomplished during the first week of the student's final semester. Students should note this and all deadlines on the OGAPS calendar.

Submit Dissertation to Advisory Committee

Well before submitting a request to schedule the final exam, the student should meet with their committee Chair/Co-chair and confirm that all course work is completed, or will be completed in an appropriate time frame. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS should confirm with their committee Chair that all English language requirements have been completed. When all course work and English language requirements are satisfied, the student may submit his/her dissertation to their Chair/Co-chair and then to the full Graduate Advisory Committee.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam *

The request to announce and schedule the student's final exam must be submitted to OGAPS (see OGAPS homepage for proper form—<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) at least **10 working days** prior to the exam. There may be additional time requirements posted on the OGAPS calendar. The request must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee Chair/Co-chair and Dr. Patricia Klein, Associate Head for Graduate Programs. *The results of the exam must be returned to OGAPS within 10 working days of the scheduled date of the exam.*

The final exam will/may be conducted by any appropriate Internet program or conference call. The results of the final exam should be signed by the distance Co-chair and then forwarded by the fastest means to the campus Chair to obtain the remaining signatures and submit to OGAPS within the 10 working day limit.

Submit Dissertation

Upload one approved final copy of the dissertation as a single .PDF file (thesis.tamu.edu) and submit a signed approval page to the Thesis Office. Students should check the OGAPS calendar for semester deadlines relative to submission and graduation. The dissertation must be approved by the Graduate Advisory Committee and Dr. Dan Lineberger, Department Head, or Dr. Wayne Smith, Plant Breeding Faculty Chair.

Forms

All necessary forms for your graduate program can be found on the Internet at <http://ogaps.tamu.edu>.

Forms available on this site include:

Degree Plan Fact Sheet
Online Degree Plan Submission System
Written Thesis (M.S.) Approval Form
Written Dissertation (Ph.D.) Approval Form
Letter of Intent to Pursue Another Graduate Degree
Preliminary Examination Checklist
Request and Announcement of the Final Examination
Proposal Approval Page for Thesis, Dissertation, or Record of Study
OGAPS Calendars

Degree Plans and Petitions are submitted online via the Degree Plan Submission System.
<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>

PLEASE USE OGAPS.TAMU.EDU FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE FORMS AND CALENDARS.

Committee Structure

All distance graduate students will know their Graduate Advisory Committee on-campus Chair and off-campus Co-Chair at the time they are admitted to the Department. In their first semester, students should consult with their Chair/Co-Chair and establish their committee members. All committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Texas A&M University or be able to obtain Graduate Faculty membership. Faculty and other additional members can be appointed who are not members of the Graduate Faculty as Special Appointments. These Special Appointments can come from other universities, government agencies, or private industry. Special Appointments should bring specific expertise to the committee structure that will be advantageous to the student's training and research. Special Appointees are "extra" non-voting members and do not count against the required number of committee members. Students should communicate with Dr. Patricia Klein for further information regarding special or "extra" committee appointments, if questions arise.

Master of Science committees are composed of the on-campus Chair, an off-campus Co-chair and at least one additional voting member. The on-campus Chair must be a Horticultural Sciences Plant Breeding faculty member located at College Station. At least one of the remaining members must be from another TAMU Department. Adjunct faculty from USDA or other agencies may serve as committee members representing the department to which they are adjunct if they are members of the Graduate Faculty.

Doctor of Philosophy committees are composed of an on-campus Chair, an off-campus Co-chair and at least two additional members. The on-campus Chair must be a Horticultural Sciences Plant Breeding faculty member located at College Station. At least one of the remaining members must be from another TAMU Department. Adjunct faculty from USDA or other agencies may serve as committee members representing the department to which they are adjunct if they are members of the Graduate Faculty.

Students Located at Off-Campus Research and Extension Centers

Numerous graduate faculty within the Department reside at off-campus Research and Extension Centers across the state. These faculty members are allowed to chair graduate student committees as long as they have an on-campus co-chair who can mentor the student while on the College Station campus taking classes. Most MS students who intend to conduct their research at an off-campus location will spend a minimum of 2 long semesters taking classes on the College Station campus before moving to their off-campus location, while most PhD students will spend a minimum of 3 long semesters on the College Station campus. If an international student intends to move to an off-campus location to conduct their thesis or dissertation research, they must comply with all visa requirements. Before moving to the off-campus location the international student must notify International Student Services and obtain approval for moving to the off-campus location. ISS will provide the student with the necessary documents to obtain approval.

Tuition and Applicable Fees

The list of current tuition and fees can be found at: <http://sbs.tamu.edu/accounts-billing/tuition-fees/>.

Students should be aware that distance courses with a 7XX section number are assessed a

distance fee that can range from \$600-700/course. This fee is the student's responsibility to pay and will not be covered by those whose tuition is covered by the Department or College. If a student's advisor has agreed to pay their standard program fees for full time enrollment, they should consult with their advisor before registering for distance courses to determine if they will be responsible for this additional fee.

Miscellaneous

Activating your Texas A&M Email Accounts:

Texas A&M Gmail is the official email system for students.

<http://gateway.tamu.edu>

Choose: Login for current campus members if you are a current campus member and need to make changes to your email or password setting, directory entry or email subscription.

Choose: Claim Your NetID if you are new to Texas A&M.

Enter UIN and Date of Birth and click LOGIN.

Enter your NetID and click SUBMIT.

Enter a password, confirm, and click SUBMIT.

*If you have any questions or problems, call the Help Desk at 979.845.8300 or visit their website at <http://hdc.tamu.edu>. Computing Services is open 8am-midnight and located in the Computing Services Center, room 1112.

*It is your job as a graduate student to check your email. If you are not receiving emails from the department, please let us know.

On line catalogs: <http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/>

How to Register:

1. Update your distance education location in HOWDY under My Record. This must be done EACH semester.
2. LeAnn Hague will complete your registration for all Soil and Crop Sciences classes (those with an SCSC prefix.) Email any registration request for those classes to LeAnn (leann.hague@tamu.edu)
3. All distance students should only be enrolled in section numbers with a “7” at the beginning. For example – 700,710,713, etc.

For all other classes, you will complete your registration by using the following steps in

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Select: My Record Tab

Select: TAMU Registration

Select: I agree

Select: Drop/Add Courses

Type: CRN number in box

*You must research the course and find the CRN number to register.

**Only register for courses with a “7” as the first digit in the section number. i.e. 700, 701. 715

If you have trouble registering for any Soil and Crop Sciences course, please email LeAnn Hague. For all other registration related questions, please email Megan Teel.

To Research Courses:

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Select: My Record Tab

Select: TAMU Registration

Select: I agree

Select: Look Up Classes

Search by Term, Select: Semester 20XX, College Station (i.e. fall 2017 College Station)

Subject, Select: SCSC

Scroll to bottom and select: Class Search

*CRN number is listed to the right of the course

How to Print your Statement:

<http://howdy.tamu.edu>

Select: My record tab

Scroll down to: Billing Services

Select: My Account

Login using your Net ID and password

The first screen is your current status

To get a detailed statement:

Select: Recent account activity (you will see a summary screen of current activity)

At the top of the page under 'View Transactions by Term' select: TAMU Semester 20XX \$\$\$ and click 'go'.

Emergency Tuition Loans:

<http://financialaid.tamu.edu>

Eligibility

- Must be enrolled at least 1 hour
- Active GMAIL account
- Must be clear of ALL financial blocks
- Meet GPA requirements: Grad Students 3.0 minimum GPA

Interest Rate & Origination

- 5% simple interest rate
- A \$10 origination fee is assessed on each loan. The fee will be added to the amount of the loan you request.

Repayment:

Repayment is contingent upon the semester in which the loan is requested. All payments will be due on the 15th day of the month.

- Fall/Spring loans are due approximately 90 days after the loan is applied to your account.
- Summer loans are due approximately 30 days after the loan is applied to your account.

If the loan is not paid in full by the due date, both transcripts and registration will be blocked until the account is paid in full.

Installment Plan Information:

<http://finance.tamu.edu/sbs/tuition/installments.asp>

The installment plan is an option students must select each semester. If you were on the installment plan last semester and you wish to remain on the installment plan for this semester, you will have to select the installment plan option again. Installment due dates vary each semester. The referenced WEB site will provide all deadlines

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