Key resources

- Graduate Catalog: http://catalog.tamu.edu
  - details about all the steps you must take towards finishing your degree
- Office of Graduate and Professional Studies: OGAPS.tamu.edu, 979.845.3631
  - academic process, forms, dates and deadlines, Thesis Office
- International Student Services:
  - http://iss.tamu.edu
- Registrar: http://registrar.tamu.edu
  - academic calendar, registration details
- Howdy portal
  - course schedules, class registration, your record, eCampus access
  - http://howdy.tamu.edu
- Computers & plotter
  - Two graduate student computing labs: Nagle 306, Heep 114
    - Contact Linda Causey (see below) for access to the labs
  - wide-format plotter to print posters for professional meetings: BRTC
    - Contact Heather Prestridge to arrange printing (see below)
- Library: Dr. Rob McGeachin, r-mcgeachin@library.tamu.edu
- Writing Center: http://writingcenter.tamu.edu
- Career Center: http://careercenter.tamu.edu
  - CV writing, job postings, career/job search, graduate student workshops
- Student Counseling Services: http://scs.tamu.edu
  - Career counseling, stress management, crisis intervention, etc.
- Adult, graduate and off-campus student services: http://studentlife.tamu.edu/agoss
  - graduate mentor program (http://gradmentors.tamu.edu)

Academic Calendar

- The general academic calendar for each semester is posted online at registrar.tamu.edu/General/Calendar.aspx.
  - Check this for the dates of registration; add/drop deadlines, finals, graduation and holidays.
- The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies calendar for each semester is posted online at http://OGAPS.tamu.edu/current-students/dates-and-deadlines.
  - Check this for the deadlines of academic process steps, such as filing your degree plan, scheduling your preliminary exams, requesting your final oral exam/defense and applying for graduation.
### Key People

#### Academic Process, Resources, Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Delbert Gatlin</td>
<td>Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies</td>
<td><a href="mailto:d-gatlin@tamu.edu">d-gatlin@tamu.edu</a> 979-847-9333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrea Dottavio</td>
<td>Graduate Advisor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adottavio@tamu.edu">adottavio@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-5768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royce Robinson</td>
<td>Computing resources</td>
<td><a href="mailto:royce-robinson@tamu.edu">royce-robinson@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-5795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Causey</td>
<td>Website Designer &amp; Key Access</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lcausey@tamu.edu">lcausey@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-5708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Michael Masser</td>
<td>Department Head</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawn Miles</td>
<td>Asst. to the Department Head</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dmiles@tamu.edu">dmiles@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-6295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Nova Silvy</td>
<td>Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Studies</td>
<td><a href="mailto:n-silvy@tamu.edu">n-silvy@tamu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley Konecny</td>
<td>General information, purchasing, gas cards</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s-konecny@tamu.edu">s-konecny@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-5777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomi Johnson</td>
<td>Payroll, human resources, tuition &amp; fees</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Tomi.johnson@tamu.edu">Tomi.johnson@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-3648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristi Smith</td>
<td>Business Associate</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kjsmith@tamu.edu">kjsmith@tamu.edu</a> 979-845-5749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry Strickland</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Lexi08@tamu.edu">Lexi08@tamu.edu</a> 979-458-0477</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Facilities

**Buildings**
- Nagle Hall (NGLE)
- Heep Laboratory Building (HLB)
- Old State Chemist Building (STCH)

**Research Facilities**
- Aquacultural Research and Teaching Facility (ARTF)
  - Aquatic Facility Drive (off FM 60 W)
- Biodiversity Research and Teaching Collections (BRTC), University Services Building (USB)
  - 3380 University Dr. East
- NSF Biosystematics and Biodiversity Center
  - Heep 311
Biodiversity Research and Teaching Collections

Dr. Lee Fitzgerald  
Faculty Curator of Amphibians and Reptiles  
lfitzgerald@tamu.edu  
979-862-7480

Dr. Toby Hibbitts  
Curator of Amphibians and Reptiles  
thibbitts@tamu.edu  
979-845-5783

Dr. Kevin Conway  
Faculty Curator of Fishes  
kevin.conway@tamu.edu  
979-845-2620

Heather Prestridge  
Assistant Curator of Fishes  
hlprestridge@tamu.edu  
979-845-5783

Dr. Jessica Light  
Faculty Curator of Mammals  
jlight2@tamu.edu  
979-458-4357

Dr. Mary Wicksten  
Curator of Marine Invertebrates  
wicksten@mail.bio.tamu.edu  
979-845-3388

Dr. Gary Voelker  
Faculty Curator of Birds  
gvoelker@tamu.edu  
979-845-5288

Dr. Norman Dronen  
Faculty Curator of Parasites  
n-dronen@tamu.edu  
979-845-1057
Introduction

This document has been developed for the guidance of faculty members and graduate students associated with WFSC and its affiliated programs. Students associated with WFSC and participating in Genetics, Nutrition, and Toxicology interdisciplinary degree programs are expected to follow these departmental guidelines and procedures along with any others specific to those programs. Specific policies and procedures pertaining to faculty and students located away from the College Station campus or associated with collaborative degree programs are provided in separate sections at the end of this document.

It is the student’s responsibility to make sure all deadlines are met and the necessary paperwork turned in on time. Please check the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) semester calendars for deadlines for each degree. It is recommended for students to know the dates and deadlines of the required steps and documents for graduation at least a year before the anticipated semester of graduation to ensure all requirements are met. All information and rules not covered in this document can be found in the current Graduate Student Catalog or the OGAPS website.

Communications from the department will be provided by email. Please make sure you are receiving departmental emails which are usually sent to your university email account unless otherwise requested. A reminder email regarding university and departmental deadlines will be sent out multiple times each year. This email is continuously updated with changes in departmental deadlines, tips, suggestions, and reminders. Please make sure this email is read in its entirety each time it is distributed.

Academic Process

Advisory Committee

The student's advisory committee must be selected before the end of the second regular semester for Master’s students or before the end of the fourth regular semester for Ph.D. students. Student’s not meeting this deadline will have a hold placed on their account by the OGAPS, and that hold can only be removed by submitting a degree plan and having it approved by their advisory committee, the department, and OGAPS. Composition and size of the committee should reflect the scope of the intended graduate program and should be developed with substantial input from the student's advisor(s). Interdisciplinary research efforts normally require larger committees. The advisor(s) will serve as chair(s) of the committee. The committee must be selected from members of the TAMU Graduate Faculty. Recognized scholars who are not Faculty of TAMU may serve as Adjunct Members of the Graduate Faculty following nomination and approval by WFSC, COALS, and OGAPS. Members of the Graduate Faculty not located at College Station or Galveston and Adjunct Members of the Graduate Faculty may serve as members of advisory committees and may co-chair committees with a member located at College Station or Galveston.

To assure that the student receives necessary guidance regarding University academic matters; all advisory committees must include at least one tenure-track faculty member. Students whose advisor is off-campus must have an on-campus committee member from WFSC. Additional committee members (those who are not members of the TAMU Graduate Faculty) may be added as “Special Appointments” by submitting a completed “Graduate Faculty and Personal Record Form” which can be found at the OGAPS website (http://OGAPS.tamu.edu/forms) along with the individual's curriculum vitae to the department’s Graduate Advisor. Special appointments will not count towards the required minimum committee composition.

For the Master of Science (M.S.), Master of Wildlife Science (MWS), and Master of Natural Resource Development, (MNRD) degrees, the committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Graduate Faculty representing the student's field of study, including the major advisor(s). A chair/co-chair must be from within the WFSC tenure-track faculty, with at least one member from a department other than WFSC. All Adjunct Graduate Faculty members, nominated through WFSC, will count as an inside committee member, unless nominated by another department.
Doctoral degree (Ph.D.) committees must include at least four members of the Graduate Faculty, including the major advisor(s), and at least one of the members must be from a department other than the student's major department; the remaining members can be from either inside or outside the department. The student’s advisory committee will evaluate the student's past coursework and experience to determine whether additional coursework is prerequisite to the graduate program, and will identify the courses necessary for the degree plan. Remedial coursework not applicable to the graduate program will be required for students without proper graduate preparation in the chosen discipline, and should precede major coursework and research when possible. Although the student and advisor play the major roles in determining the research project and approaches, project identification and evaluation should incorporate continuing input from the entire advisory committee.

Degree Plan

The student, in consultation with the student's advisory committee, will develop the proposed degree plan no later than the beginning of the second regular semester (Fall/Spring) for Master's students and fourth regular semester for Ph.D. students. The plan must be submitted online at https://OGAPSdpss.tamu.edu/ and approved by the student's advisory committee, department, and OGAPS. The advisor and/or committee may require additional coursework over the minimum requirements described below based on the student's previous experience, intended areas of study or other factors.

**Deadline:** Master’s students must submit the degree plan no later than the beginning of your second regular semester.

**Deadline:** Ph.D. students must submit the degree plan no later than the beginning of their fourth regular semester.

**NOTE:** If you do not submit your degree plan by this deadline, OGAPS will place a hold on your record, blocking you from registration.

Masters Degrees

The M.S. degree requires a thesis to be written based on original research. At least 32 credit hours of approved courses are required on the degree plan. The MWS and MNRD degrees are non-thesis degrees but require the writing of a professional paper. At least 36 credit hours of approved courses are required on the degree plan for these non-thesis degrees.

All Master’s degrees require at least 18 hours of regular graded (non-research, non-variable credit) coursework, taken at TAMU, on the degree plan. A Master’s degree can have no more than a combination of 8 hours of 691 (Research) and 684 (Professional Internship) or a combination of 12 hours from 684, 685 (Directed Studies), 690 (Theory of Research), 691, 693 (Professional Paper), or 695 (Frontiers of Research). In addition to the combination requirements stated above, degrees are also limited to 8 hours of 685, 3 hours of 690, 6 hours of 693, 3 hours of 695, 2 hours of 681 (Seminar), and 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300 or 400 level). Up to 4 hours of 684 can be counted on a non-thesis degree but not 691 hours. The maximum number of transfer credits cannot exceed 12 hours, with approval of the committee, department, and OGAPS. Master's students are also required to take 2 seminar courses and have a maximum of 7 years to complete their degree.

Graduate students are not permitted to use correspondence, continuing education, or extension courses on their degree plan. All graduate students, with the exception of those pursuing the non-thesis Master’s degrees must be continuously enrolled with at least 1 hour each Fall and Spring semester until graduation. Summer enrollment is only necessary for August graduation. Students admitted into a degree-seeking program will not be allowed to use more than 12 hours earned while under non-degree seeking status.
## Doctoral Degree

The Ph.D. degree plan requires at least 64 hours of coursework for students who have completed an approved Master’s or other advanced degree. Students without a Master’s degree require 96 hours of coursework on the degree plan. The department requires a minimum of 18 credit hours (for students with an M.S. degree) or 36 credit hours (for students without an M.S.) of regular graded coursework taken at TAMU on the Ph.D. degree plan. Justification for exception to this rule should be prepared by the student and advisor(s), endorsed by the student’s advisory committee and included when submitting the degree plan. Ph.D. students also are required to take a minimum of 2 seminar courses, but are not bound by the same degree plan combination or transfer limitations as described above for Master’s students. Ph.D. students have 10 consecutive calendar years to complete their degree. Once a Ph.D. student reaches 99 hours and/or 21 semesters (including summers), they will be charged out-of-state tuition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Minimum credit hours</th>
<th>Course requirements/limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
<td>64 credit hours beyond a master’s degree</td>
<td>&gt; 2 credit hours of graduate seminar are REQUIRED (WFSC 681)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96 credit hours beyond a bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>&gt; At least 18 hours a graded courses with a master’s degree; at least 36 hours of graded courses with a bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science &gt;thesis option</td>
<td>32 credit hours</td>
<td>&gt;2 credit hours of graduate seminar are Required (WFSC 681)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Students typically take around 22 hours of graded course work plus directed studies, seminar, and research hours.)</td>
<td>&gt; No more than a combination of 12 hours from directed studies (WFSC 685) and research (WFSC 691)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Maximum 8 hours of 685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Maximum 8 hours of 691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; Maximum 9 hours of 300- or 400-level undergraduate courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Natural Resource Development &gt;non-thesis (online or on campus)</td>
<td>36 credit hours</td>
<td>&gt; Maximum 2 hours of seminar (681)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Students typically take at least 30 hours of graded courses plus directed studies (for the professional paper) and seminar hours. Of these hours, no more than 12 can be outside your degree plan.)</td>
<td>&gt; Total 684 and 685 hours may not exceed 6 combined hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Check the distance program web page for potential distance-based courses: <a href="http://wfsc.tamu.edu/students/masters-by-distance-education/">http://wfsc.tamu.edu/students/masters-by-distance-education/</a>)</td>
<td>&gt;No research (691) hours are allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;Maximum 9 hours of 300- or 400-level undergraduate courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Wildlife Science &gt;non-thesis (online or on campus)</td>
<td>36 credit hours</td>
<td>&gt; Maximum 2 hours of seminar (681)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Students typically take at least 30 hours of graded courses plus directed studies (for the professional paper) and seminar hours. Of these hours, no more than 12 can be outside your degree plan.)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;Maximum 9 hours of 300- or 400-level undergraduate courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Registration Guidelines

All students are required to maintain continuous registration until such time as they complete all requirements for graduation, unless a specific leave of absence is granted (in writing) by the department. Summer registration is not required by the university, but may be required by the advisory committee or to meet assistantship/fellowship/scholarship or other requirements. To be considered for financial aid, a student must be enrolled at least half-time (5 hours fall/spring, 3 hours summer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Support</th>
<th>Fall/Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsupported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Residence (on-campus and off-campus)</td>
<td>1 h*</td>
<td>1h (10-week)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Absentia</td>
<td>1 h*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Assistantship</td>
<td>9 h*</td>
<td>3 h each 5-wk session or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUGCO Fellowship</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 h 10-week session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welder Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merit Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regents’ Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Slick Fellowship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Univ. Marine Fellowship</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*These are the minimum hours required by WFSC, COALS, and OGAPS. Individual advisors may require more hours depending on the amount of time or other resources they must commit to a student's research and/or thesis/dissertation.

**NOTE:** A student must be registered in the semester(s) prelims, final defense of the thesis/dissertation, and graduation are scheduled.

If final thesis/dissertation corrections have been cleared by the thesis clerk before the last day to register in a particular term, registration is not required.

Students participating in a non-thesis degree program are not required to maintain continuous enrollment once course work is complete, but must be registered in the semester they want to graduate.

Research Proposal: Doctoral & Master of Science (thesis) Students

Students pursuing the thesis-based M.S. or dissertation-based Ph.D. degrees must develop a detailed research proposal. This research proposal, consisting of a maximum of ten pages of narrative, should review pertinent literature and summarize methods to be used in the proposed research. The proposal should optimally be submitted and approved before the research starts. At the latest, the proposal should be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the second long semester (Fall or Spring) for M.S. students and before the end of the fourth long semester for Ph.D. Students. The Research Proposal form must also be attached to the proposal for submission. The proposal should include:

a. **Justification and rationale** (summarize previous research on the subject, providing specific literature citations; identify particular problems that the study will help resolve).

b. **Statement of hypothesis** (or specify questions the research is designed to answer).

c. **Objectives** (specify what hypotheses will be tested; define the limits of the proposed study).

d. **Procedures** (identify methods to be used to accomplish objectives, including data analysis).

e. **Budget** (prepared for experience, where practical; do not include in OGAPS copy).
A student’s research project should be designed to produce a publishable product for a refereed journal. It is in the best interest of the student and the committee to ensure the proposal is approved prior to the start of the research. The student should report regularly on research progress to the advisor and the advisory committee, to prevent unexpected surprises or misunderstandings, and to gain approval of any redirection.

**Preliminary Exams: Doctoral Students**

A formal Preliminary Examination (Prelim) for the Ph.D. may be given by the student's advisory committee if the student is within 6 hours of completing formal degree plan coursework (i.e., except 681, 684, 690, and 691) but must be given before the end of the semester following completion of regular coursework on the degree plan. A student must have at least a 3.0 GPR, met all English language requirements, be registered during the semester, and previously submitted a degree plan at least 12 weeks prior to the date of the exam. Prelims will cover all areas within the scope of the student's doctoral program, and usually will involve written exams from each advisory committee member, followed by an oral exam administered by the committee as a whole. The results have to be reported to OGAPS no later than 10 working days after the scheduled oral examination date and within 14 weeks prior to the final exam.

Prelims are scheduled by submitting the appropriate paperwork to the Graduate Advisor. The student is responsible for completing the ‘Preliminary Examination Checklist’ before the preliminary exam is scheduled. Written and oral examinations must be held on the College Station campus; however, students may request by petition, well in advance of scheduling the exam, that it be held off campus. Examinations by Skype or other electronic means must also be requested in advance with a statement indicating location of each member and the student. No substitutions can be made for the Chair of the advisory committee and the examination must be rescheduled if two or more members cannot attend. Not more than one dissenting vote is allowed for the student to pass the Prelim.

After passing the required Prelim examination, the student must complete all remaining requirements within four calendar years. If this is not done, the Prelims will have to be retaken. An extension of time-limits can be requested by submitting a “Time Limit Petition” to OGAPS.

**Seminars**

All students in residence are required to register for 2 credits of WFSC 681 (or other approved 681) during the course of their degree program. All students are strongly encouraged to present a Thesis or Dissertation Proposal Seminar to fellow students and their advisory committee prior to conducting much of their research. This will clarify objectives, justification, methods, logic, and provide project orientation. The timing, location, and format of this presentation will be cooperatively planned by the student and the advisor, but with a public announcement to allow interested persons to attend.

All students will present a Final Thesis or Dissertation Research Seminar prior to the final examination. This too will be cooperatively planned and advertised to the academic community. The final defense/seminar must be approved by the Department Head, at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled date.

**Thesis/Dissertation**

All students completing a M.S. or Ph.D. in WFSC must complete a thesis/dissertation. Specific information on paper format and style as well as submission deadlines can be found at the Thesis Clerk’s website (http://thesis.tamu.edu/). Master’s students may receive up to 9 hours of 691 credits for research, while Ph.D. students do not have such a limit. In addition to meeting all requirements of the Thesis Clerk, students must provide a copy of their thesis/dissertation (in final form) to the Department in the form of a labeled CD and to each member of their committee.

The thesis/dissertation should be in a proper format for publication, and should be "tightened" to a readiness for submittal by use of appendixes for non-essential information. The major role of the student's advisory committee is to offer guidance on study design and interpretation of results. It is not the committee’s responsibility to edit careless writing. A polished draft (including all manuscript components and page
numbers) **must be** delivered to the advisory committee for review after the student and major advisor have agreed upon editorial changes; this should occur well before the anticipated date of the final examination. It is the student's and advisor(s)’ responsibility to make certain that the document is in good form both in terms of grammar and scientific style. Committee members have the right to reject documents that fail to meet these guidelines. Committee members should be given at least 2 weeks to review the draft before the student attempts to schedule the final exam/defense. The final exam is to be scheduled only after the advisory committee agrees that the thesis or dissertation is ready for defense.

Committee members should return the corrected thesis/dissertation to the student 2 weeks after receipt. Thus, the student should check with committee members to ensure they have the time to review the document. If the student delivers the final draft to the committee one month prior to the exam, that would allow two weeks before the scheduled exam/defense date for the student to make recommended changes.

**Final Oral Examination**

Although the final oral exam tends to focus on the thesis/dissertation/ or MWS/MNRD report, additional issues may be addressed on the basis of the prelims, or as an outgrowth of the normal discussion of the student's research or professional activities. Requests to schedule final oral exams/defenses must be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduled date requested, and only after approval to schedule has been received from all advisory committee members. If the request for scheduling includes a petition for changes to the degree plan or advisory committee, then the request must be submitted at least 5 weeks ahead of the scheduled date. The final examination is scheduled by submitting the “Request and Announcement of Final Exam” form to OGAPS via the Graduate Advisor. The thesis/dissertation does not have to be signed at the final exam. Signatures may be obtained when the changes recommended by the committee have been made. Final oral examinations must be held on the College Station campus; however, students may request by petition, well in advance of scheduling the exam, that it be held off campus. Examinations via Skype must also be requested in advance with a statement indicating location of each member and the student.

**Professional Papers**

All students completing the MWS or MNRD degrees must complete a professional paper. Students may receive up to 6 hours of 693 credits for the professional paper. Specific information on paper content and style may vary considerably and is typically decided by each student’s graduate committee. Full-time non-employed students will be encouraged to complete an off-campus internship. Students may receive up to 4 hours of 684 credits for an internship. Students must provide a copy of their professional paper (in final form) to the department in the form of a labeled CD and to each member of their committee. Students are also encouraged to submit a copy to the library to keep in a digital repository. The repository and the permission form can be found at [http://repository.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/148727](http://repository.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/148727).

**Final Approval of Proposals, Theses, Dissertations, and Professional Papers**

Final approval of style and content for graduate student documents (proposals, theses, dissertations, professional papers) is the responsibility of each student and their graduate committee.

Students are required to submit a copy of the thesis/dissertation to the Department. The copy must be on a CD. The CD cover must include the following information: Name, Degree, Title, Advisor, Graduation date. All copies must be submitted to the Graduate Advisor. The student is also required to provide a final copy of their thesis/dissertation/report to each member of their advisory committee in whatever form they require.

**Summary of Deadlines**

Due to the size of this department, faculty members normally serve on a number of graduate committees, both as advisors and as committee members. Thus, faculty members often have multiple
proposals, theses and dissertations to review each semester, typically near the end of the semester. It is in the best interest of the student to allow adequate time for review of these documents and adequate time for corrections to be made.

**Specific guidelines are as follows:**

a. Degree plan should be submitted by the beginning of the second regular semester of enrollment for Master’s students and beginning of the fourth regular semester for Ph.D. students.

b. Research proposal must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the second long semester for M.S. students and before the end of the fourth long semester for Ph.D. students.

c. Proposals, theses and dissertations will not be sent to committee members until the advisor has verified that all necessary corrections have been made. Committee members will be given at least 1 week to review proposals and 2 weeks to review theses or dissertations (before approval to schedule a final exam is requested). It is in the best interest of the student to allow time after committee review to make corrections before the document goes to OGAPS.

NOTE: All Petitions, waivers, proposals, and other forms must be submitted on the correct document with original signatures of all committee members accompanied with all required attachments (if needed) to the Graduate Advisor for Department Head approval and submission to OGAPS.

**Certificate Program**

Certificate in Military Lands Sustainability

In conjunction with The Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources’, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences offers the Military Sustainability Program supports the testing and training activities on Defense Department lands through land management and regional planning, research and policy innovations, and education and outreach efforts. These efforts support the twin imperatives of military readiness and land conservation stewardship.

The Certificate in Military Lands Sustainability is a unique web-based graduate program (non-thesis) that provides students with an understanding of the interrelationships among ecology, economics, policy and culture, as factors that influence natural resource conservation and management on military lands. Acceptance into the Certificate in Military Lands Sustainability program is competitive. Applicants must hold a B.S. or B.A. degree from an accredited institution, preferably in science, agriculture, engineering, or education. A minimum of 3.0 GPA in the last 60 undergraduate hours is expected but individual exceptions can be made based on professional training and achievements beyond undergraduate study.

The program is comprised of coursework in three integrated, multidisciplinary thematic areas of emphasis: land management, policy analysis and development, and cultural competencies and conflict management. The Certificate in Military Lands Sustainability requires the completion of 14 graduate credit hours, and serves to complement existing professional graduate degrees offered in the Departments of Ecosystem Sciences and Management (ESSM) and Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences (WFSC). The certificate program and associated graduate degrees employ full use of cyber-learning strategies to afford the greatest flexibility to prospective students, allowing them to pursue a graduate degree without having to be physically located on-campus.

The Certificate in Military Lands Sustainability requires completion of 14 graduate credit hours. For students wishing to pursue one of the professional Master's degree programs in conjunction with the graduate certificate, an additional 22 graduate hours are required (Total of 36 credit hours) that includes 6 hours from a professional paper. Coursework will be determined through consultation between the student and the student's advisory committee based on the academic needs. Up to 12 credit hours (of the required 36) with a grade of B or better from another accredited U.S. institution may be transferred for credit.
Once the requirements are completed students will need to contact the Graduate Advisor to verify the requirements have been met and to have the certificate added to their transcript. This must be done before graduation.

**Registration Blocks and Block Removal**

Students who fail to submit a degree plan and forms signed by their advisory committee prior to departmental and University deadlines will be blocked from future registrations until documents have been submitted and approved. Blocks placed on registration by OGAPS for failure to submit a degree plan, by the specified date will not be removed until the proper documents are turned in and approved.

Other registration blocks, excluding those for failure to submit a degree plan, placed on a student’s account can be removed by contacting the Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will then draft a memo to be signed by the Department Head and send to OGAPS. OGAPS will allow the removal of a block only once, before the requirement must be met. The student and/or their advisor should provide the Graduate Advisor with appropriate documentation or reasoning behind the deadline not being met.

**Forms and Petitions**

Beginning in the spring of 2013, any student whose degree plan was approved after February 1, 2013 will need to submit all forms and documents through the Document Processing System administered by OGAPS. The system allows for students to submit their degree plan, make changes to their committee, degree plan (once approved), change majors/departments/degrees, and all other petitions. Paper copies of all Thesis/Dissertation approval and proposals must still be submitted via a paper copy which can be found by following the information below. To access the Document Processing System please go to [http://repository.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/148727](http://repository.tamu.edu/handle/1969.1/148727).

For student’s whose degree plan was approved before February 1, 2013, the following applies: All forms and petitions required to complete or change degree requirements can be found at the OGAPS website [http://OGAPS.tamu.edu/](http://OGAPS.tamu.edu/) under the Current Student Tab, Forms and Documents. All forms require original faculty and student signatures and must be typed. If a faculty member is not available to sign, a faxed signature will be acceptable, but must be obtained before any other signatures on the form. Forms which are turned into the Thesis Office require all original signatures, there is no exception. All submission dates can be found at the OGAPS website and are strictly enforced.

**Duration and Time Limits**

**Doctoral students:**
- A doctoral degree generally requires at least 4 years of full-time work beyond a master’s degree, or 5 to 6 years of full time work beyond a bachelor’s degree.
- You must complete all degree requirements within 10 years. Course work over 10 calendar years old may not be applied toward your degree.
- You have 1 calendar year after your final exam to submit your dissertation to and clear the Thesis Office. (If you hit up against the 7- or 10-year time limit before this 1 year is out, the 7- or 10-year time limit takes precedence.)

**Master’s students:**
- A master’s of science degree generally requires at least 2 years of full time work beyond a bachelor’s degree.
- The non-thesis master’s option typically requires at least 3 years of part time work beyond a bachelor’s degree.
- You must complete all degree requirements within 7 years. Course work over 7 calendar years old may not be applied toward the degree.
Residency Requirements

To meet residency requirements, which are decided by the university, a master’s student must be enrolled full-time (9 hours) for one semester, while a Ph.D. student with an approved graduate degree must be enrolled full-time for two consecutive semesters. Ph.D. students without a master’s degree are required to be registered full-time for a third semester. These semesters must be Fall, Spring or the 10-week summer term. If a student will not be able to meet this requirement, a petition for waivers and exemptions can be submitted to OGAPS through the departmental Graduate Advisor. The waiver is only granted for those students who hold a full-time job and must provide with the petition a letter from their employer stating they are employed. No student will be allowed to leave campus for longer than one semester (Fall/Spring) until the requirement is met.

English Language Requirements for International Students

English language requirements must be met before a student is eligible to graduate, complete preliminary examination, or hold a final defense. To meet graduation requirements an international student must score at least a 550 on TOEFL, 213 on the TOFLC, or 80 on the TOFI. The other ways to meet these requirements are to score at least a 146 on the GRE verbal section, 22 on the GMAT verbal section or 6 on the IELTS. All scores must be official before the requirement will be shown as met. Students who do not meet these requirements will not be allowed to teach or interact with undergraduate students in any form, when representing the department or any organization or affiliate of the department.

A student wishing to hold a teaching assistantship must meet additional requirements to be certified by the State of Texas and Texas A&M University. No exceptions can be made to this rule. To be eligible to teach, an international student must take the English Language Proficiency Examination (ELPE) and score at least an 80 on each of the four sections. Other ways to obtain this certification are to obtain grades of A or B in English Language Institute (ELI) courses at the 300 level or higher or have received a baccalaureate degree following 4 years of study at an accredited U.S. institution. To make such a request, please see the departmental Graduate Advisor.

Any international graduate student not meeting the English language requirements when admitted must take the ELPE. If the student fails to meet the ELPE requirements, they must take ELI courses in deficient areas and receive a grade of A or B in all 300 level courses they are required to take. Language requirements can be postponed the first semester, but the ELPE must be taken at the end of that first semester. Students who postpone these requirements will not be allowed to teach. If they fail to pass the four sections of the ELPE, then they must register for ELI courses their second semester.

Students may take a combination of graduate and ELI courses up to a total of 15 hours per semester. ELI courses do not count for credit nor can they be used to satisfy registration or any other requirement, but will be counted towards billed hours. These requirements should be met early in a student’s program, and must be met before scheduling the final exam for master’s students or the preliminary exam for Ph.D. students. The department and OGAPS will allow for the removal of only one registration block due to not meeting these requirements. Students must fulfill this requirement while on campus at the same time the residency requirement is met. No student will be allowed to leave the country or conduct research for longer than one semester (Fall/Spring) until both the residency and language requirements are met.

The ELPE is offered at the beginning and end of each semester and ELI courses are offered each semester. For more information on language requirements and rules for international students please contact International Student Services at 979-845-1151.

Research Compliance

The Office of Research Compliance (http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu) is a unit of the Division of Research and Graduate Studies at Texas A&M University responsible for providing training and support to faculty, students and staff in regulatory requirements for scientific research. Before a proposal involving research with vertebrate animals will be approved by OGAPS, an Animal Use Protocol (AUP) that encompasses research described in the proposal must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use
Committee (IACUC). A copy of the form entitled, “Research Proposals Involving Animal Subjects”, approved by IACUC, must be submitted to OGAPS along with the proposal. Students should consult with their Graduate Advisor(s) concerning the status of an AUP related to their research. Research involving human subjects is overseen by the Human Subjects’ Protection Program (HSPP) within the Office of Research Compliance.

Student Travel

All students who will be leaving the country must register with the Study Abroad Office for any reason other than vacation. This even applies to international students who are returning to their home country to conduct research. If a student will be leaving the country or continental United States for anything except a vacation, please contact the Study Abroad Office (http://studyabroad.tamu.edu/). International student you will also need to contact International Student Services.

For those students doing research off-campus, but remaining in the continental United States you must register for CIRT (Critical Incident Response Team) at http://studentaffairs.tamu.edu/CIRT. There are similar rules in place for faculty as well.

Potential Scholarships, Fellowships and Awards

The scholarships/fellowships/awards listed below are announced through the department as it becomes aware of them as advertised by the funding sources. In addition, the Department of Scholarships and Financial Aid has eight scholarship search computers which are located on the second floor of the Pavilion.

- Graduate Student Mini-grants - (OGAPS)
- Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) - (WFSC)
- Tom Slick Graduate Fellowships - (TAMU)
- Graduate Excellence Awards/Graduate Tuition and Fee Awards/Graduate Book Awards - (TAMU)
- Graduate Student Fellowship Awards (Environmental Protection Agency)
- Teaching and Research Assistantships (WFSC)
- Graduate Fellowships and Awards (COALS)
- Graduate Funding for Unfunded Students (COALS)

Students Based in Galveston

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences is the home department for graduate students and graduate faculty members who are located in Galveston and whose primary research activities take place away from the College Station campus. Graduate Faculty members of WFSC located at Galveston may solely chair graduate committees but at least one faculty member of WFSC at College Station must serve on those committees. Adjunct Graduate Faculty of WFSC located in Galveston may serve as members of student’s advisory committees or as co-chairs with a WFSC graduate faculty member. At least one WFSC faculty member at College Station must serve on the graduate committee. The same privileges pertain to graduate faculty members in Galveston not affiliated with WFSC.

Each student and their major advisor are responsible for adhering to all departmental requirements and processing all documents associated with their graduate program. This includes registration, payment of fees, and acquisition of signatures on degree plans and proposals before submission to the department, as well as compiling and submitting all relevant documents for experimental animal use to the University Laboratory Animal Care Committee.

Galveston-based students have the same residency requirement as other students in WFSC. For the M.S. degree, students must complete, on the campus at College Station, 9 credit hours during one regular semester or one 10-week summer semester. For the Ph.D. degree, students who enter with a baccalaureate degree must spend two academic years in resident study on the College Station campus. Students with a master's degree must spend one academic year in resident study at College Station. In either case, one academic year beyond the first year of graduate study must be in residence on the College Station campus. One academic year may
include two adjacent regular semesters or one regular semester and one 10-week summer semester. In all semesters, at least 9 credit hours must be taken to satisfy residency requirements.

**Readmission**

Students who fail to remain continuously enrolled or who are dismissed from the university and/or department must apply for readmission. A returning degree seeking graduate student who has attended TAMU within the last 12 months will not have to submit a readmit application. A readmit application is required for all students who have not attended TAMU within the last year and require departmental approval, beyond that of your advisory committee, before being allowed to return to the department.

**Probation**

All students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. If the GPA falls below a 3.0 the student will be placed on probation for one semester. If, after being placed on probation for one semester, the GPA is brought to at least a 3.0, the student will be allowed to continue, if not the student will be dismissed. An appeal to continue can be made through the student's advisor to the Department's Graduate Affairs Committee, Department Head, College, and OGAPS.

**Student Life**

**Departmental Activities**

- Association of Graduate Wildlife and Fisheries Scientists (AGWAFS)
- Ecological Integration Symposium (EIS)
- TAMU Graduate Student Council
- Texas Master Naturalists
- Professional Societies
  - TAMU Chapter of the Wildlife Society
  - TAMU Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

**Professional Development**

**Opportunities to present research on campus**

- Ecological Integration Symposium, [http://theeis.tamu.edu](http://theeis.tamu.edu): March
- Student Research Week, [http://srw.tamu.edu](http://srw.tamu.edu): March

**Opportunities to present in Texas**

- Annual meeting of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society
- Annual meeting of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

**Graduate Teaching Academy:** [http://gta.tamu.edu](http://gta.tamu.edu)

- Professional development opportunities in the area of college teaching
- GTA seminars and workshops are FREE for graduate students
- Fall and Spring seminar series presentations
- One-year GTA Fellows program: You may enter at the beginning of either the Fall or the Spring semester. Those who successfully complete the 1-year program obtain a Certificate of Completion from the GTA and receive the designation of “Graduate Teaching Academy Fellow.”

**Office of Graduate Studies**

- Graduate Student Professional Development Portal: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/profdev/](http://ogs.tamu.edu/profdev/)
Graduate Certificate Programs
- Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems: http://sll.tamu.edu/education/graduate-certificate-program
- Graduate Certificate in Remote Sensing: http://ssl.tamu.edu/education/graduate-certificate-program
- International Agriculture and Resource Management Graduate Certificate Program: http://borlaug.tamu.edu/programs/academic/iarm
- Bush School of Government and Public Service Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management: http://bush.tamu.edu/extended/admissions

On Campus Courses
- Short courses from Help Desk Central: http://shortcourses.tamu.edu
  - Free
  - SAS, EndNote, Access, Photoshop, etc.

Organizations
- Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences: http://manrs.tamu.edu

Student Activities
- MSC Fall Open House: http://mscopenhouse.tamu.edu
- Student Activities: http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/app/search.index
- Off Campus Aggies: http://ocatamu.weebly.com/

Suggestions for Success
- Develop a strong and close personal relationship with your faculty advisor (major professor).
- Find a mentor.
- Develop and strong and close personal relationship with other professors and with your fellow graduate students.
- Participate in AGWAFS and other student organizations.
- Use your office. This creates opportunities for departmental interactions.
- Become a member of a professional society, attend their annual meetings, and present research/submit a poster. This will facilitate development of your professional network.
- Keep up with the new literature in your fields of interest. Science changes rapidly and you need to be at the forefront of knowledge.
- Make your degree program your top priority. It is a very demanding undertaking to handle your courses, maintain your research program, and keep up with the new literature in your field.
- Make it a goal to become a leader in your field.
- Take on leadership responsibilities.
- Make friends outside of your lab/department.
- Participate in events.
- If you want to teach, please serve as a TA and attend various trainings and workshops to improve your skills.

Summary: key steps & milestones during your graduate program
- Develop your research plan.
- Construct your graduate advisory committee.
- Build a network of contacts.
- Develop a degree plan itemizing all classes you will take.
- Develop a research proposal.
• If in Ph.D. program, complete preliminary exams.  
• Complete proposed lab and field work to collect data.  
• Statistically evaluate your data.  
• Attend professional meetings to present your research.  
• Submit manuscripts to journals for publication.  
• Write you thesis/dissertation.  

• Defend your thesis/dissertation to your graduate committee.

Check Lists

Master’s Students

☐ Meet with you major profession before registering for your first semester. (it is also a good idea to check in with your academic advisor before you register in any semester.)
☐ Meet regularly with your major professor to develop your research plan (thesis option) or project for your professional paper (non-thesis option).
☐ Establish your graduate advisory committee.
☐ Develop a degree plan by the beginning of your second regular semester (i.e. spring or fall semester) itemizing all classes you will take and submit it OGAPS.
☐ Submit proposed research topic and proposal to IRB for approval.
☐ Follow all research guidelines set forth by the university in regards to animals, people, and materials.
☐ Develop your research proposal (thesis option) in consultation with your major professor and advisory committee and submit it to OGAPS.
☐ Complete proposed lab and field work to collect data (thesis option) or complete your project tasks (non-thesis option).
☐ Statistically evaluate your data.
☐ Write your thesis (thesis option) or professional paper (non-thesis option).
☐ International students: Confirm that you have met English language proficiency requirements.
☐ Meet the residency requirement.
☐ Early in your last semester, apply for graduation online through the Howdy Portal.
☐ Confirm that all your degree plan requirements (courses, residency, GPA, etc.) are up-to-date with your academic advisor, major professor, and advisory committee.
☐ Submit any needed paperwork to OGAPS to meet graduation requirements.
☐ Attend a pre-submittal conference offered through the Thesis Office or review the online pre-submittal conference.
☐ Submit your thesis or professional paper to your advisory committee (give them at least a few weeks to a month to review it).
☐ Schedule your final exam with your advisory committee and submit to OGAPS the final exam request and announcement form, following all university deadlines.
☐ Distribute to WFSC faculty and students an announcement of your defense presentation by sending the information to Shirley Konecny.
☐ Present and defend your thesis or professional paper.
☐ Make any changes required by your advisor committee.
☐ Non-thesis option students: submit the permission letter to store your paper in the online repository and upload your paper.
☐ Thesis option students: Deliver to the Thesis Office the thesis approval form, any other forms (copy right, journal hold, etc.), and upload your thesis online to the Thesis Office.
☐ Make any corrections the Thesis Office requires.
☐ Clear the Thesis Office.
☐ Arrange for a graduate cap and gown.
☐ Graduate!

Doctoral Students
Meet with your major profession before registering for your first semester. (It is also a good idea to check in with your academic advisor before you register in any semester.)
Meet regularly with your major professor to develop your research plan.
Establish your graduate advisory committee.
Develop a degree plan by the beginning of your fourth regular semester (i.e. Spring or Fall semester) itemizing all classes you will take and submit it OGAPS.
Submit proposed research topic and proposal to IRB for approval.
Follow all research guidelines set forth by the university in regards to animals, people, and materials.
Develop your research proposal in consultation with your major professor and advisory committee and submit it to OGAPS.
Complete proposed lab and field work to collect data.
Statistically evaluate your data.
Schedule and complete your preliminary exams.
Write your dissertation.
International students: Confirm that you have met English language proficiency requirements.
Meet the residency requirement.
Early in your last semester, apply for graduation online through the Howdy Portal.
Confirm that all your degree plan requirements (courses, residency, GPA, etc.) are up-to-date with your academic advisor, major professor, and advisory committee.
Submit any needed paperwork to OGAPS to meet graduation requirements.
Attend a pre-submittal conference offered through the Thesis Office or review the online pre-submittal conference.
Submit your dissertation to your advisory committee (give them at least a few weeks to a month to review it).
Schedule your final exam with your advisory committee and submit to OGAPS the final exam request and announcement form, following all university deadlines.
Distribute to WFSC faculty and students an announcement of your defense presentation by sending the information to Shirley Konecny.
Present and defend your dissertation.
Make any changes required by your advisor committee.
Deliver to the Thesis Office the thesis approval form, any other forms (copyright, journal hold, etc.) and upload your thesis online to the Thesis Office.
Make any corrections the Thesis Office requires.
Clear the Thesis Office.
Arrange for a graduate cap and gown.
Graduate!

WEBSITES
Dept. Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences
http://wfsc.tamu.edu

Teaching Assistantship Application Form
http://wfsc.tamu.edu/ta.html

Office of Graduate Studies
http://OGAPS.tamu.edu

Office of Graduate Studies Calendar
http://OGAPS.tamu.edu/OGAPS/currentCalendars.htm

Animal Use Forms
http://animal.tamu.edu/

International Student Services
http://international.tamu.edu/iss/

Texas A&M University-Galveston
http://www.tamug.tamu.edu/

Thesis Manual
http://thesis.tamu.edu/

Distant Education Degrees
http://distance.tamu.edu/

Graduate Catalog
http://tamu.edu/admissions/catalOGAPS

Research Compliance
http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu/