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Introduction and Overview

The Plant Breeding Distance Education Program in the Department of Soil and Crop 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.

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.

Departmental Mission

The mission of the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences (hereafter referred to as the Department) is:

- To prepare students for careers in soil-, plant-, and environmentally related disciplines;
- To discover scientific knowledge and to develop technologies to sustain environmentally sound and profitable production systems;
- To ensure that technology development and transfer to user clientele and society in general is effective and timely;
- To promote wise use, management and stewardship of soil, plant, and water resources.

Graduate education is essential to meeting this mission. Graduate students are an extension of professorial research efforts which in turn provides the necessary practical training for the next generation of research scientists. Courses are designed to provide a logical progression of learning the technical aspects within each of the Department's disciplines. In addition to the Agronomy, Plant Breeding, and Soil Science programs, the Department is home for the Molecular and Environmental Plant Sciences (MEPS) program. The Department also houses faculty who are members of the Food Science and Technology, Genetics, and Water Management and Hydrological Science programs intercollegiate faculty.

Plant breeding programs in Soil and Crop Sciences seek to alter the genetic composition of plants to improve crop 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. Breeders of grain crops such as corn, wheat, sorghum, and rice have developed varieties that have improved grain yield, resist diseases and insect pests, resist lodging, and possess improved nutrition or processing quality. Our faculty have developed genotypes of bioenergy crops such as sweet sorghums, sugar cane, forage sorghums, and perennial grasses with exceptional sugar production per unit land area for ethanol production or biomass for cellulosic ethanol production. Cotton breeders and geneticists in Soil and Crop Sciences have developed unique interspecies lines through hybridization of different species of cotton as well as developed strains with exceptional fiber quality and drought tolerance. Our plant breeding faculty work with sugar cane, rice, cotton, corn, wheat, oat, sorghum, perennial grasses, turf grasses, forage legumes, and peanut.

The faculty and staff of the Department of Soil and Crop 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 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. David Baltensperger, *Professor and Department Head*

434 Heep (979)845-3041 dbaltensperger@ag.tamu.edu

Dr. Wayne Smith, *Professor, Associate Department Head and Graduate Coordinator*

217 Heep (979)845-3450 cwsmith@tamu.edu

Ms. Glenda Kurten, *Administrative Coordinator—Instruction—Academic Program Mgmt.*

217 Heep (979)845-3342 g-kurten@tamu.edu

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

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

Ms. Amanda Ray, *Administrative Assistant—Instruction—Student & Advisor Support*

217E Heep (979)845-4620 amanda.ray@ag.tamu.edu

Instructional Technology Services Help

Heidenfels 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:

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 internship activity

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 Soil and Crop 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 www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalOGAPS/.

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. 32 course hours approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee and the Office of Graduate Studies.
- b. Statistics 651 or equivalent
- c. Graduate Soil and Crop Sciences seminar (1 hr).
- d. 4 hours of SCSC 684 (Professional Internship)
- e. No more than 9 hours of upper level (300 or 400) undergraduate courses and no graduate credit for the following courses required for a B.S. degree:
 - SCSC 101
 - SCSC 105
 - SCSC 301
- f. See Graduate Catalog for additional requirements, www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalOGAPS/.
- g. **A final exam/defense of scholarly activity or internship as directed by student's Graduate Advisory Committee. Students electing not to conduct an internship will be required to demonstrate an understanding of plant breeding through a scholarly activity.*

These activities can take the form of a literature review, teaching or training materials, or other activities that represent scholarly contribution to the field of plant breeding. These activities must be approved in advance by the student's graduate committee and will be presented in written and oral form during the student's final exam with the committee prior to graduation.

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 Soil and Crop Sciences seminar (1 hr).
- d. No more than 8 hours of SCSC 691 (Research) or SCSC 685 (Directed Studies).
- e. No more than 9 hours of upper level (300 or 400) undergraduate courses and no graduate credit for the following courses required for a B.S. degree:
 - SCSC 101
 - SCSC 105
 - SCSC 301
- f. See Graduate Catalog for additional requirements, www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogAPS/.

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

Requirements Leading to the Doctor of Philosophy 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 32 to 40 semester hours of classroom study, which usually includes courses in fields other than plant breeding.
- b. Graduate Agronomy seminar (1 hr).
- c. Students who accumulate more than 99 semester credit hours may be required to pay out-of-state tuition on any additional hours.
- d. See Graduate Catalog for additional comments: www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogAPS/.

**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 Soil and Crop Sciences graduate students) must be in continuous registration. This continuous registration includes graduate students who have completed all course work on their degree plans [other than SCSC 691 (Research) or SCSC 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 and Spring semesters. Summer semester registration is **ONLY** required if the student plans to take examinations or otherwise use University resources or facilities, or defend their thesis or dissertation.

Graduate students receiving financial assistance from the Department, the University or 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.

Progress Towards Degree

All distance education students enrolled in a degree program in the Soil and Crop Sciences Department are required to complete 9 semester credit hours per academic year (total of Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters) 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 Soil and Crop Sciences.

TO APPLY:

Communicate with Distance Education Coordinator, LeAnn Hague at leann.hague@tamu.edu or 1-979-845-6148 Submit pre-screening application materials directly to LeAnn.

- 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.
- Students electing not to conduct an internship will be required to demonstrate an understanding of plant breeding through a scholarly activity. These activities can take the form of a literature review, teaching or training materials, or other activities that represent scholarly contribution to the field of plant breeding. These activities must be approved in advance by the student's graduate committee and will be presented in written and oral form during the student's final exam with the committee prior to graduation.

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, 2 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 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 ADMITTED (IN ADDITION TO REQUIRED COURSEWORK):

Establish Advisory Committee

Students should, in consultation with their committee chair, identify appropriate faculty in both Soil and Crop 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 major other than those awarded in the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences. All members must be members of the 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, Dr. Wayne Smith, 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 and no later than 90 days prior to final oral or thesis defense. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. This is an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their advisory committee.

Complete Internship or Scholarly Activity

Upon completion of the internship or scholarly activity the student will develop a written report of activities and accomplishments and submit that report 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 written document. 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.

The steps leading to an M.S. NTO degree are illustrated on the following page.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam

The request to schedule the student's thesis defense must be submitted to the 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, co-chair, and Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

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

Summary of Steps to Fulfill Distance Education Master of Science in Plant Breeding (Non-Thesis Option)

NOTE: student must be continuously registered until all degree requirements are met.

Item	Description
Communicate with Departmental Graduate Coordinator	<i>When:</i> Before first semester registration
Establish Graduate Advisory Committee	<i>When:</i> During student's first semester
Submit Degree Plan	<i>When: Before the end of student's second long semester</i> and no later than 90 days prior to final oral or thesis defense. (OGAPS will block registration for the following semester). <i>Approval:</i> On-line process after consultation with advisory committee.
Complete Internship	<i>When:</i> Prior to Last Semester <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator
Apply for Degree; Pay Graduation Fees	<i>When:</i> During the first week of students final semester (see OGAPS calendar)
Submit Internship Report to Graduate Advisory Committee; confirm all Degree plan courses are completed.	<i>When:</i> Well before submitting request to schedule defense of internship report.
Submit request for permission to schedule defense of Internship report	<i>When: Must be received by OGAPS at least 10 WORKING DAYS prior to the defense of the internship. Additional time requirements are on the OGAPS calendar for deadlines.</i> NOTE: Results are to be submitted to OGAPS within 10 working days of the exam. <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, Office of Graduate and Professional Studies

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 Soil and Crop Sciences. These include:

TO APPLY:

Communicate with Distance Education Coordinator, LeAnn Hague at leann.hague@tamu.edu or 1-979-845-6148 Submit pre-screening application materials directly to LeAnn.

- 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 agricultural 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, 2 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 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 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 Soil and Crop 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 research and course work leading to their degree. One member of the advisory committee must be from a major other than those awarded by the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences. All members must be members of the 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, Dr. Wayne Smith, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's second long semester and no later than 90 days prior to their thesis defense. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. This 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. The thesis proposal (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's committee, Dr. Wayne Smith, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The document **MUST** be submitted no less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

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 committee.

Submit Request to Schedule Final Exam

The request to schedule the student's thesis defense must be submitted to the 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, co-chair, and Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

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

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. Wayne Smith.

Summary of Steps to Fulfill Distance Education Master of Science (Thesis Option) Degree in Plant Breeding distance in Soil and Crop Sciences

NOTE: student must be continuously registered until all degree requirements are met.

Item	Description
Communicate with Departmental Graduate Coordinator Identify a Distance Co-chair	<i>When:</i> Before first semester registration
Establish Graduate Advisory Committee	<i>When:</i> During student's first semester
Submit Degree Plan	<i>When:</i> Before the end of student's second long semester and no later than 90 days prior to final oral or thesis defense. (OGAPS will block registration for the following semester). <i>Approval:</i> On-line process after consultation with advisory committee.
Submit Thesis Proposal	<i>When:</i> No less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for Final Examination <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, Office of Graduate Studies
Apply for Degree; Pay Graduation Fees	<i>When:</i> During the first week of students final semester (see OGAPS calendar)
Submit Thesis to Graduate Advisory Committee Confirm all degree plan courses are complete. Confirm ELPE, if applicable	<i>When:</i> Well before submitting request to schedule final exam.
Submit request for permission to schedule final exam	<i>When:</i> Must be received by OGAPS at least 10 WORKING DAYS prior to the exam. Additional time requirements are on the OGAPS calendar for deadlines. NOTE: Results are to be submitted to OGAPS within 10 working days of the exam. <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, Office of Graduate Studies
Submit Thesis Single .PDF file Signed approval page	<i>NOTE:</i> See Thesis Manual for format <i>When:</i> See OGAPS calendar for each semester deadline. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator
If required, submit Research Focus and Benefits Form	<i>NOTE:</i> See Thesis Manual for format. <i>When:</i> See OGAPS calendar for each semester deadline. <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator

Steps Leading to a Doctor of Philosophy

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

TO APPLY:

Communicate with Distance Education Coordinator, LeAnn Hague at leann.hague@tamu.edu or 1-979-845-6148 Submit pre-screening application materials directly to LeAnn.

- 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 agricultural 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, 2 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 chair.

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 co-chairs, identify appropriate faculty in both Soil and Crop 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. One member of the advisory committee must be from a major other than those of the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences. All members must be members of the 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, Dr. Wayne Smith, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The degree plan must be submitted to OGAPS before the end of the student's fourth long semester and no later than 90 days prior to preliminary examination. Failure to do so will result in a registration block being placed on the student by OGAPS. This is

an on-line process initiated by the student after consultation with their co-chairs and their Graduate Advisory Committee.

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. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator . **The checklist must be attached to the "report of exam results" and forwarded to the OGAPS after completion of the preliminary exams.**

Announce Prelim Schedule

Once the student's advisory co-chairs 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 co-chairs. A copy of the announcement should be provided to Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

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 Co-chair and other committee members to sign and submit to OGAPS.

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. The dissertation proposal (<http://OGAPS.tamu.edu>) must be approved by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee, Dr. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator, and the Office of Graduate Studies. The document **MUST** be submitted no less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

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 co-chairs and confirm that all course work is completed, or will be completed in an appropriate time frame. When all course work is satisfied, the student may submit his/her dissertation to their co-chairs 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 the 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 co-chairs and Dr. Wayne Smith-Graduate Coordinator. *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 should be signed by the distant co-chair and then forwarded by the fastest means to the campus co-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. Wayne Smith - Graduate Coordinator.

These steps leading to a Ph.D. degree are illustrated on the following page.

Summary of Steps to Fulfill Distance Education Doctoral Degree in Plant Breeding in the Department of Soil & Crop Sciences

NOTE: Student must be continuously registered until all degree requirements are met

Item	Description
Communicate with Departmental Graduate Coordinator	<i>When:</i> Before first semester registration
Identify a Distant Co-chair Establish Advisory Committee	<i>When:</i> During student's first semester
Submit Degree Plan	<i>When:</i> Before the end of student's fourth long semester and no later than 90 days prior to preliminary examination (OGAPS will block registration following semester) <i>Approval:</i> On-line process after consultation with advisory committee.
Complete English language proficiency requirements, if applicable	<i>When:</i> Before preliminary exams (see Graduate Handbook page 12 for requirements)
Review Preliminary Eligibility Requirements (see OGAPS homepage forms link for checklist)	<i>When:</i> End of fourth or fifth long semester and several weeks before the proposed date of the preliminary exams. Checklist must be signed by Graduate Advisory Committee co-chairs, Department Graduate Coordinator. The checklist is held and submitted to OGAPS with the results of the preliminary exam(s)
Prepare and submit any petitions found necessary by the review of the eligibility requirements (checklist)	<i>When:</i> At least 3 weeks before the expected date of the preliminary examination <i>Approval:</i> Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, OGAPS
Determine date(s) of the preliminary exam(s) Announce schedule to committee and Departmental Graduate Coordinator	<i>When:</i> Student must be within 6 credit hours of completion of all formal course work (excluding 681, 684, 690, and 691) or no later than the end of the semester following completion of all formal course work on the degree plan, AND at least 14 weeks prior to the student's final defense. <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator (Note that OGAPS does not approve the exam date nor is OGAPS notified of the prelim)
Complete preliminary exams and submit the Report of the Preliminary Examination and the Preliminary Examination Checklist to OGAPS	<i>When:</i> No later than the semester following completion of formal course work. Complete exams within 3 week time frame and report results to OGAPS within 10 working days. <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee <i>Provide copy of results to:</i> Department Graduate Coordinator
OGAPS notifies the student and chair of deficiencies/problems	<i>When:</i> Following the review of the Report of the Preliminary Examination and the Preliminary Examination Checklist
Submit dissertation proposal	<i>When:</i> No less than 15 days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination <i>Approval:</i> Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator
Apply for degree, pay graduation fees	<i>When:</i> During the first week of the final semester (see OGAPS calendar for deadlines) <i>Approval:</i> OGAPS
Confirm with Graduate Advisory Committee that all degree plan courses are complete; submit dissertation to advisory committee	<i>When:</i> Well before submitting request to schedule final exam

Submit request for permission to hold and announce final oral exam	<p><i>When: Must be received by OGAPS at least 10 working days prior to the exam (see OGAPS calendar for deadlines)</i></p> <p><i>Approval: Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator, OGAPS</i></p> <p><i>NOTE: Results are to be submitted OGAPS within 10 workings days of the exam</i></p>
Submit Dissertation Single .PDF file Signed approval form	<p><i>NOTE: See Thesis Manual for format</i></p> <p><i>When: See OGAPS calendar for each semesters deadline</i></p> <p><i>Approval: Graduate Advisory Committee, Department Graduate Coordinator</i></p>
If required, submit Research Focus and Benefits form	<i>Same as above</i>

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://ogsdpss.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 co-chairs at the time they are admitted to the Department. In their first semester, students should consult with their co-chairs and establish their committee members. All committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Texas A&M University. 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" appointments and do not count against the required number of committee members. Students should communicate with Dr. Wayne Smith for further information

regarding special or “extra” committee appointments, if questions arise.

Master of Science committees are composed of the co-chairs and at least one additional voting member. One of the co-chairs must be a Soil and Crop Sciences Plant Breeding faculty member located at College Station. At least one of the remaining members must be from another TAMU major other than those awarded by Soil and Crop Sciences. 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 the co-chairs and at least two additional members. One of the co-chairs must be a Soil and Crop Sciences Plant Breeding faculty member located at College Station. At least one of the remaining members must be from another TAMU major other than those awarded by Soil and Crop Sciences. 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.

Tuition and Applicable Fees

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

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: www.tamu.edu/admissions/catalogs/

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, ect.

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

<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.

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 2014 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