Ph.D. in Natural Resource Ecology & Management
Degree requirements

The original Plan of Study for the Doctoral degree must be submitted to the Graduate College prior to the end of your third semester (not including summer semester) of enrollment in the doctoral program. You should develop the plan of study with your advisor using the online plan of study application (planofstudy.okstate.edu). The online submission requires approval by the advisory committee, NREM department, and then the Graduate College for final approval.

For NREM Departmental approval, our departmental requirements state that you must also submit a research proposal approved by your committee (Submit form http://nrem.okstate.edu/academics/graduate/graduate-department-forms to Liz Condit), submit your Responsible Conduct of Research module from Institutional Review Board (IRB), and include 1 hour of NREM 5020 (Departmental Seminar: Research and Presentation) on your Plan of Study. Failure to file the Plan of Study results in being locked out of enrolling in classes. Credit for all courses on a graduate Plan of Study must have been awarded within 10 years of completion of all degree requirements.

Doctor of Philosophy: Credit Hour Requirements

PhD following a MS degree requires a minimum of 60 credit hours and a maximum of 66 consisting of:
1. All graduate credit hours must be at the 5000 or 6000 level or approved for graduate credit and
2. 1 hour of seminar (NREM 5020 Seminar Research & Presentation) and
3. At least 15 and no more than 45 credit hours of dissertation (NREM 6000)

PhD following a bachelor’s degree requires a minimum of 90 credit hours consisting of:
1. All graduate credit hours must be at the 5000 or 6000 level or approved for graduate credit and
2. 1 hour of seminar (NREM 5020 Seminar Research & Presentation) and
3. A minimum of 24 credit hours and a maximum of 48 credit hours of dissertation (NREM 6000)

Advisory Committee: Students must select an advisory committee with the help of the major advisor during the first semester of study. The purpose of the advisory committee is to support your research endeavors, help you select appropriate course work; act as mentors during your graduate program, and to ensure high quality research and Extension programs. You should plan on meeting with your committee in a formal setting at least once a year but should communicate with them on a one-to-one level throughout your program. Ph.D. students: Your advisory committee must be comprised of at least 4 members, one of whom must be from outside the NREM department. The Graduate College does not count Adjunct faculty as outside committee members.

Dissertation Requirement: A research proposal must be accepted by the Advisory Committee and approval forms must be submitted prior to the completion of the third semester (excluding summer semesters). Final dissertation requires the completion of an original research project that is worthy of publication in a refereed journal.

Qualifying Examination: Doctoral students must also complete comprehensive, or qualifying, exams consisting of both written and oral exams conducted by the advisory committee. The comprehensive exams are necessary to enter candidacy in the PhD program and must be completed at least 6 months prior to the final dissertation defense. Since admission to candidacy may occur at various times related to the academic calendar, the student will need to be admitted to candidacy prior to the first day of Fall semester to be eligible to schedule their final defense and graduate in the Spring; prior to the first day of Spring for Summer; and, prior to the first day of Summer for Fall graduation. Doctoral students who have completed the requirements for admission to doctoral candidacy and had their “Admission to Doctoral Candidacy” form accepted by the
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Graduate College may enroll for a minimum of two credit hours and be considered full-time. Continuous enrollment post-candidacy is required of all students. See NREM Graduate Handbook for additional information.

Public Seminar and Final Defense: Students must present results of their dissertation research and respond to questions at a public presentation. Students must pass a final examination that is mainly a defense of the dissertation administered by the Advisory Committee.

Responsibilities: It is the student's responsibility to meet deadlines of both the Department and Graduate College. Students are advised to check with the Graduate College for additional requirements (e.g., changes to the Plan of Study, thesis and report format, scheduling of the final examinations) and the NREM Graduate Student Handbook. Students are expected to participate in departmental activities (e.g., weekly, lunchtime, and NREM Graduate Student Seminar).