Agricultural and Applied Economics, M.S.

The department’s traditional master’s degree programs presume prior courses in intermediate-level microeconomic and macroeconomic theory, the equivalent of two semesters of calculus, and introductory statistics. The 30-credit master of science program emphasizes research and involves writing a thesis.

The Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics offers graduate degree programs leading to the master of arts, master of science, and doctor of philosophy. Long recognized as one of the top programs in the nation, the department is an active center of research and graduate training in environmental and natural resource economics, the economic development of low-income countries, agricultural economics, community economics, and more recently, resource and energy demand analysis.

Graduate students select courses from among the department’s advanced offerings in these areas. Active department seminar and workshop series complement formal classroom instruction. In addition, nearly all students work as graduate research assistants on projects with individual faculty members. Faculty and students carry out research in virtually every region of the globe, with Latin America, Southeast Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa as the areas of strongest geographical concentration. More details on the structure of the graduate programs can be found in the department’s graduate student handbooks (http://www.aae.wisc.edu/gradprogram/handbook).

While members of the faculty define themselves professionally in terms of the areas of applied economics within which they work, the graduate programs are predicated on the notion that good applied economic analysis requires rigorous and thorough training in economic theory and econometrics. Both the master’s and the Ph.D. curricula are grounded in comprehensive training in economic theory and econometrics. The Ph.D. curriculum relies on the doctoral core in theory and econometrics offered by Wisconsin's outstanding economics program. When matched with the department’s applied courses, which teach students how to use advanced methods to conceptualize and answer contemporary economic problems, this strong core training prepares students for a variety of challenging careers. Wisconsin graduates have taken positions in academic research and teaching; economic consulting in the private sector; and economic staffing in public agencies and nongovernmental organizations at the local, state, national, or international level. A majority of the department’s Ph.D. graduates take faculty positions at universities and colleges.

Department faculty are affiliated with a broad range of institutes and centers across the campus, including the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, the University Center for Cooperatives, the Renk Agribusiness Institute, Center for Community Economic Development, and the area studies centers across the campus, including the Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, the University Center for Cooperatives, the Renk Agribusiness Institute, Center for Community Economic Development, and the area studies.

The department provides office space, a lounge, and IT support for its approximately 60 graduate students. The Taylor—Hibbard Club, the department’s graduate student organization, serves as a link between graduate students and the faculty, elects student representatives to department committees, and promotes academic and social activities for its members.

Requirements

Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress (http://www.aae.wisc.edu/gradprogram/handbook) in addition to the requirements of the program.

Master’s Degrees

M.A. (non-thesis track), M.S. (thesis track), M.A. with available named option in Resource and Energy Demand Analysis (REDA)Minimum

Graduate Degree Credit Requirement

30 credits

Minimum Graduate Residence Credit Requirement

16 credits

Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement

M.A. and M.S.: Half of degree coursework (15 credits out of 30 total credits) must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university's Course Guide. M.A. with REDA named option: all credits in the curriculum are in graduate-level coursework. For more information see "Program-Specific Courses Required," below.

Prior Coursework Requirements: Graduate Work from Other Institutions

M.A. and M.S.: With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 6 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

M.A. with REDA named option: No credits of graduate coursework from other institutions may count toward the program requirements.

Prior Coursework Requirements: UW–Madison Undergraduate

M.A. and M.S.: Up to 7 credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree numbered 300 or above are allowed to count toward the degree, with petition from student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

M.A. with REDA named option: No credits from a UW–Madison undergraduate degree may be applied toward the program requirements.
PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENT: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

M.A. and M.S.: With program approval, students are allowed to count no more than 15 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison University Special student. Coursework earned five or more years prior to admission to a master’s degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

M.A. with REDA named option: No credits earned as a UW–Madison University Special student may be applied toward the program requirements.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED


M.A. with REDA named option: The program’s lock-step curriculum of 30 credits is described on the program website (http://reda.aae.wisc.edu/about).

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

3.00 GPA required.

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS

Students holding research assistantships are required to maintain an overall 3.2 GPA; grades of B or above in all core curriculum coursework.

PROBATION POLICY

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor. An advisor is a faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

ASSESSMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

M.S.: The thesis track requires a thesis on an approved research topic that is defended in an oral examination.

TIME CONSTRAINTS

Master’s degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

No language requirements.

ADMISSIONS

Students may be admitted for graduate work upon meeting the requirements for admission to the Graduate School. The department requires the minimum scores determined by the Graduate School on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). In addition, the department requires that applicants provide test score results from the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) general test (verbal, quantitative, analytical writing).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

• Articulates and critiques theories and research methods commonly used in agricultural and applied economics.
• Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions in agricultural, environmental, development, or community economics.
• Demonstrates understanding of the principle theories of agricultural, environmental, development, or community economics.
• Selects and applies the most appropriate methodologies and practices to answer questions within their selected field.
• Synthesizes information pertaining to questions in their selected field.
• Clearly communicates research results using both oral and written strategies.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

• Recognizes and applies principles of ethical and professional conduct.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Coxhead (chair), Barham, Chavas, Cox, Deller, Foltz, Gould, Harris, Jones, Klemme, Phaneuf, Provencher, Rutherford, Stiegert; Associate Professors Alik-Garcia, Hueth, Mitchell, Schechter, Shi; Assistant Professors Du, Grainger, Parker