

# SOIL SCIENCE, PHD

## POLICIES

### GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### PRIOR COURSEWORK

##### Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students are allowed to count up to 12 credits of graduate coursework taken during graduate study at other institutions. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. Students may petition the department for an appeal of the ten-year limit on a case-by-case basis.

##### Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

With program approval, students are allowed to count up to 7 credits of graduate coursework numbered 300 or above from a UW-Madison undergraduate degree. The coursework may also count toward the 50% graduate coursework requirement if the courses are numbered 700 or above. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. Students may petition the department for an appeal of the ten-year limit on a case-by-case basis.

##### Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

Refer to the Graduate School: Transfer Credits for Prior Coursework (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>) policy.

##### Credits Earned as a University Special student at UW-Madison

With program approval, students are allowed to count up to 15 credits of coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW-Madison University Special student. The coursework may also count toward the 50% graduate coursework requirement if the courses are numbered 700 or above. Coursework earned ten or more years prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements. Students may petition the department for an appeal of the ten-year limit on a case-by-case basis.

#### PROBATION

Refer to the Graduate School: Probation (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/>) policy.

#### ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

The Doctoral Committee, chosen by the student and major professor, is a committee of four or more members representing more than one graduate program, three of whom must be UW-Madison graduate faculty or former UW-Madison graduate faculty up to one year after resignation or retirement. At least one of the four members must be from outside of

the student's major program or major field (often the minor field) and approved by the Certification Committee. A minimum of two must be from the Soil Science faculty. At least three committee members must be designated as readers. Representation of the Minor Department (see Graduate Minor Requirements in the handbook) is at the option of the Minor Department, but the Department of Soil Science recommends that the Minor Professor be on the Committee.

The required fourth member of the Doctoral Committee, as well as any additional members, all retain voting rights. They may be from any of the following categories, as approved by the executive committee: graduate faculty, faculty from a department without a graduate program, academic staff (including emeritus faculty), visiting faculty, faculty from other institutions, scientists, research associates, and other individuals deemed qualified by the Executive Committee (or its equivalent) provided the individual has a PhD degree or its equivalent.

It is the responsibility of the student and the Major Professor to form a Doctoral Committee and schedule a meeting before the end of the second semester (not including summer sessions) of PhD graduate work.

A student who does not meet deadline requirements in this document will not be allowed to register in the subsequent semester until a written plan for meeting the requirements has been approved by their major advisor and the department Certification Committee.

#### CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

#### TIME LIMITS

Prospectus: The written prospectus and the prospectus seminar must be completed by the end of the third semester (not including summer sessions).

Preliminary exam: Students who obtain their MS degree in the department and who continue in the department for their doctorate must take the preliminary examination by the end of the fourth semester (not including summer sessions) of PhD graduate work. Candidates who are approved to retake a failed examination must have passed by the end of the fifth semester.

Candidates for the PhD degree who obtained an MS or MA degree elsewhere, must take the Preliminary Examination by the end of the fourth semester (not including summer sessions) of PhD graduate work. Candidates who are approved to retake a failed examination must have passed by the end of the fifth semester.

Candidates who do not adhere to this deadline must show justification for the delay to the department certification committee.

Final oral exam and deposit of dissertation: A candidate for a doctoral degree who fails to take the final oral examination and deposit the dissertation within five years after passing the preliminary examination may be required to take another preliminary examination and to be admitted to candidacy a second time.

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>) policy.

#### GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)

- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employee disabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (<https://osas.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

## College of Agricultural and Life Sciences: Grievance Policy

In the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs), any student who feels unfairly treated by a member of the CALs faculty or staff has the right to complain about the treatment and to receive a prompt hearing. Some complaints may arise from misunderstandings or communication breakdowns and be easily resolved; others may require formal action. Complaints may concern any matter of perceived unfairness.

To ensure a prompt and fair hearing of any complaint, and to protect the rights of both the person complaining and the person at whom the complaint is directed, the following procedures are used in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. Any student, undergraduate or graduate, may use these procedures, except employees whose complaints are covered under other campus policies.

1. The student should first talk with the person at whom the complaint is directed. Most issues can be settled at this level. Others may be resolved by established departmental procedures.
2. If the student is unsatisfied, and the complaint involves any unit outside CALs, the student should seek the advice of the dean or director of that unit to determine how to proceed.
  - a. If the complaint involves an academic department in CALs the student should proceed in accordance with item 3 below.
  - b. If the grievance involves a unit in CALs that is not an academic department, the student should proceed in accordance with item 4 below.
3. The student should contact the department's grievance advisor within 120 calendar days of the alleged unfair treatment. The departmental

administrator can provide this person's name. The grievance advisor will attempt to resolve the problem informally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint, in discussions with the student and the person at whom the complaint is directed.

- a. If informal mediation fails, the student can submit the grievance in writing to the grievance advisor within 10 working days of the date the student is informed of the failure of the mediation attempt by the grievance advisor. The grievance advisor will provide a copy to the person at whom the grievance is directed.
  - b. The grievance advisor will refer the complaint to a department committee that will obtain a written response from the person at whom the complaint is directed, providing a copy to the student. Either party may request a hearing before the committee. The grievance advisor will provide both parties a written decision within 20 working days from the date of receipt of the written complaint.
  - c. If the grievance involves the department chairperson, the grievance advisor or a member of the grievance committee, these persons may not participate in the review.
  - d. If not satisfied with departmental action, either party has 10 working days from the date of notification of the departmental committee action to file a written appeal to the CALs Equity and Diversity Committee. A subcommittee of this committee will make a preliminary judgement as to whether the case merits further investigation and review. If the subcommittee unanimously determines that the case does not merit further investigation and review, its decision is final. If one or more members of the subcommittee determine that the case does merit further investigation and review, the subcommittee will investigate and seek to resolve the dispute through mediation. If this mediation attempt fails, the subcommittee will bring the case to the full committee. The committee may seek additional information from the parties or hold a hearing. The committee will present a written recommendation to the dean who will provide a final decision within 20 working days of receipt of the committee recommendation.
4. If the alleged unfair treatment occurs in a CALs unit that is not an academic department, the student should, within 120 calendar days of the alleged incident, take his/her grievance directly to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The dean will attempt to resolve the problem informally within 10 working days of receiving the complaint. If this mediation attempt does not succeed the student may file a written complaint with the dean who will refer it to the CALs Equity and Diversity Committee. The committee will seek a written response from the person at whom the complaint is directed, subsequently following other steps delineated in item 3d above.

## OTHER

Financial support is available to qualified MS and PhD students in the form of research assistantships. Most assistantships are funded through research grants, and the final decision rests with the professor(s) supervising the research. A research assistantship for at least one-third time qualifies a student for remission of all tuition. The department offers a limited number of teaching assistantships. Graduate School fellowships are also available.