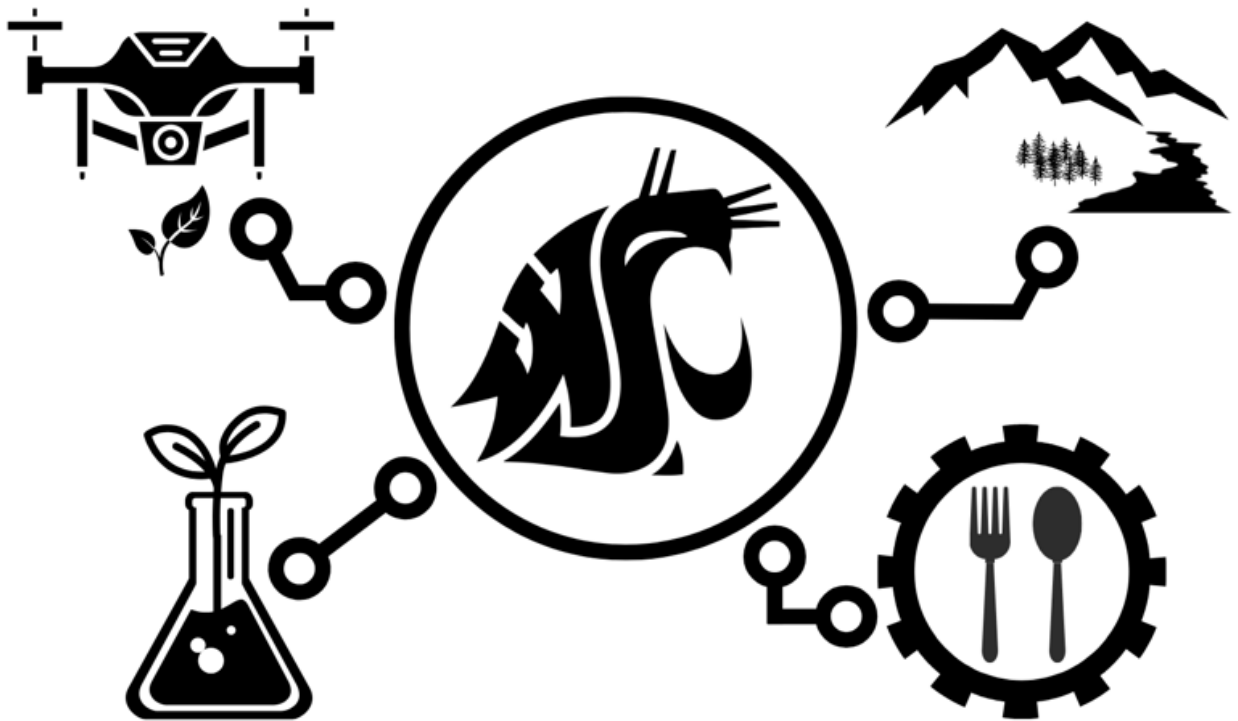


# **Graduate Program Student Handbook for New and Current Students Biological and Agricultural Engineering**



**2025 - 2026**

**Washington State University  
Department of Biological Systems Engineering  
L.J. Smith Hall 213  
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Pullman, WA 99164-6120**

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# Program Manual (Student Handbook) for New and Current Students Biological and Agricultural Engineering (BAE) Graduate Degree Program

## Introduction

Welcome to Washington State University (WSU), Department of Biological Systems Engineering (BSE). BSE is an Academic Unit of the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS).

Biological and Agricultural Engineering (BAE) is a multidisciplinary graduate program that offers students the flexibility to accommodate a blend of engineering and science in their programs. Graduate Students apply engineering and biological principles and conduct high-quality research to develop and disseminate knowledge and technologies in the areas of agriculture, food, energy, and natural resource systems.

BSE offers the PhD and MS degrees in Biological and Agricultural Engineering with four areas of emphasis:

- **Agricultural Automation Engineering:** Develop instrumentation and automation engineering solutions for processes and equipment in specialty crop production. [\[Learn more about Agricultural Automation Engineering\]](#)
- **Bioenergy and Bioproducts Engineering:** Develop engineering processes to produce useful, high-value products from the byproducts of agricultural operations and other sources of plant biomass. [\[Learn more about Bioenergy and Bioproducts Engineering\]](#)
- **Food Engineering:** The application of engineering to the production of safe, nutritious food. [\[Learn more about Food Engineering\]](#)
- **Land, Air, Water Resources and Environmental Engineering (LAWREE):** Engineering applications related to hydrologic processes at the field level or at the scale of large watersheds. Application of engineering and biological principles to the study the environmental impact of managed biological systems, including agriculture, confined animal operations, aquaculture, and natural resources. [\[Learn more about Land, Air, Water Resources and Environmental Engineering\]](#)

From solar drying and pasteurization research in the 1970's to today's emphasis on biological waste analysis and treatment, chemical transport through soils, food engineering, bioenergy, bioproducts, and more, our department has a long history of technical environmental stewardship, research, and education.

The researchers and graduate students of this department come from all corners of the United States and the world. Because of this diversity, our students leave our program

with global awareness, advanced education, and technical expertise to become the key players in the economic, technical, and environmental challenges that face us all.

*These are exciting and challenging times for engineering professionals. These can be exciting and challenging times for you! We wish our graduate students a successful and enlightening journey through our graduate program!*

## **Objective of This Manual**

The objective of this manual is to provide information and guidelines to students and faculty members associated with the graduate program at the Department of Biological Systems Engineering. It is the student's responsibility to refer to this guide throughout the program. This manual is organized in several sections covering a variety of topics including application to the departmental graduate program, making the transition to Washington State University, responsibilities of students appointed to graduate research assistantships, academics, semester evaluation, and overall program requirements and regulations.

Students preparing to join the program as well as current students should carefully read these guidelines and be aware of University and Departmental regulations that apply during their studies. The Manual will be available on the BSE Student Resources page: <https://bsyse.wsu.edu/graduate-program/current-students/>. Students and faculty members are encouraged to provide input and feedback to improve the clarity, quality, and usefulness of these guidelines.

## **Expectations for Ph.D. and Master's Students**

### ***Role of Advisors***

WSU's Graduate Student code details the expectations of Faculty Advisors.

High quality graduate programs are those with notable faculty and systems for advising and mentoring graduate students who need sound advice during their early experiences in graduate school. These students deserve guidance from faculty whose interest goes beyond the mere advisor-director role to one of a mentor. Departments and programs are responsible for encouraging effective advising and for ensuring effective mentorship for graduate students during the course of their studies.

A mentor assists in scholarly development, contributes to intellectual stimulation, and fosters professionally enriching relationships with graduate students. A faculty mentor is a peer-to-be, one who encourages and supports independent development; one who, through insightful guidance, trust, and mutual respect, nurtures a rapid transition from graduate student to colleague. Students should expect that mentors will interact with them on a regular basis, providing the guidance, advice, and intellectual challenge necessary to

help students complete their degree programs. You may also change advisors at any time, without fear of reprisal, but there may be implications in terms of financial support.

Graduate students should expect that advisor and mentors will do the following:

- Interact in a professional and civil manner consistent with University policies governing nondiscrimination and sexual harassment
- Create an ethos of collegiality in classroom, laboratory, or studio supervisory relations that stimulates and encourages students to learn creatively and independently.
- Develop clear understandings about specific research expectations and responsibilities, including timelines for completion of theses or dissertations
- Provide verbal or written comments and evaluations of students' work in a timely manner.
- Discuss laboratory, studio, or departmental authorship policy with graduate students in advance of entering into collaborative projects.
- Acknowledge student contributions to research presented at conferences, in professional publications, or in applications for copyrights and patents.

### ***Role of the Graduate Student***

Graduate students in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering shall assume the following responsibilities:

1. To conduct themselves in a mature, professional, and civil manner in all interactions with faculty, staff, other graduate students, and undergraduates.
2. To follow the Graduate School's policies and procedures, see the Graduate School Policies and Procedures manual [Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#), specific program requirements as delineated by academic departments, and standards of performance established by faculty and their respective professional groups.
3. To follow Graduate School's deadlines and procedures (as outlined in the Graduate School Current Students Section: [Deadlines | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#))
4. To maintain integrity in learning, independent scholarship, and professional development.
5. To communicate regularly with faculty advisors on matters related to progress within their graduate programs.
6. To acknowledge contributions of faculty advisors and others in work leading to conference presentations and publications.
7. To respect time constraints of faculty members.
8. To respect the responsibilities of faculty advisors to evaluate your coursework and overall academic progress. Faculty mentors, in turn, are responsible for monitoring the validity and quality of your research, teaching, and other scholarly activities.
9. To fulfill, in a timely manner, the requirements of their programs, as prescribed by departments or programs.
10. To assume the initiative in selecting committee members for thesis, dissertation, and qualifying exams.
11. To contribute positively to a collegial environment within the department or program.

12. To adhere to federal, state, University, and departmental rules and regulations regarding the use of animals, human subjects, dangerous and hazardous chemicals, biohazardous and radioactive materials or radiation in research.

## **Learning Outcomes**

During their training in our graduate program, we expect students to grow professionally and acquire skills for successful careers. Alumni who are successful in their careers will exhibit most, if not all, of these features.

### **Academia**

1. Possess a national and international reputation for excellence in their area
2. Value the significance of quality scholarly work
3. Are creative and innovative
4. Contribute to the knowledge base within their discipline
5. Attract funding for their research
6. Provide leadership to professional organizations
7. Enable undergraduate and graduate engineering students to be successful in their careers

### **Industry**

1. Effectively manage engineering research and/or development research teams
2. Provide leadership in developing industry standards of practice
3. Are creative and innovative
4. Develop profitable products or revenue saving manufacturing procedures
5. Provide vision for future direction of their companies and for the industry

### **Government Service**

1. Provide expert technical knowledge in decision-making processes
2. Provide leadership within their technical and professional societies
3. Contribute to the development of public policies
4. Provide global perspective in the use of technical knowledge

## **Moving to Pullman/Richland/Puyallup**

### **Living in the State of Washington**

All students on assistantships must reside in the State of Washington. Otherwise, students will be required to pay out-of-state tuition. BSE Department faculty are located in Pullman, Richland (Tri-Cities Campus), and at the Puyallup and Prosser Research Stations.

Domestic students who have residency outside of WA state are required to apply for residency immediately after arriving in WA state. Please review [Establishing Residency](#) for more information and to ensure a successful residency application. The questionnaire and supporting documents must be received by the Graduate

School by the 30th day of classes of the term for which student is seeking residency.

## **Housing**

There are three common housing options in Pullman: on campus dormitory rooms, on campus apartments, and off campus housing.

Information about Pullman on-campus housing can be found at: [Campus Housing | Pullman Campus | Washington State University](#)

Information about Pullman off campus housing can be found at: [Off-Campus Housing Marketplace](#)

Information about Richland Housing: [Housing Archives - WSU Tri-Cities](#)

Students located in Prosser and Puyallup will receive the most up-to-date housing info from their advisors.

## **Local documents**

Students who you have never been employed at WSU will need these documents before they can be hired/be paid:

### ***Social Security Number / Card***

International Students: Students who do not have a Social Security Number, will need to apply for a number as soon as possible upon arrival so BSE staff can initiate your assistantship appointment in WSU Workday system.

Students must **secure individual appointments** directly by calling the SSA office at 1-877-405-9796. Students will need to travel to Lewiston, Idaho (1617 19th Avenue, Lewiston, ID 83501), which is 30 miles south of Pullman. Note: there is no public transportation between Pullman and Lewiston. Students should work with their advisor/current graduate students to arrange transportation.

The following documents will be required for the in-person appointment at the Social Security office:

1. Social Security Application: Submit online: [Social Security number & card | SSA](#) and record/save the reference number.
2. The Assistantship Appointment Offer letter from BSE Department.
3. The “social security letter” verifying student’s employment, signed by BSE Chair and signed and stamped by International Programs Office.
4. Valid Passport / Valid Visa.
5. The I-94 form stamped or stapled in student’s passport.
6. I-20 or the DS2019, depending on type of visa.

Students will need to obtain a receipt during the application process and then bring this receipt to the main office staff, LJ Smith Hall 213. Office staff will request the TPPN that will allow department to initiate the student’s assistantship appointment in the system. Once student receives the social security card in the

mail, student should present it to the Payroll Office staff in person: 236 French Admin, Pullman. Please DO NOT copy, scan, or email the social security card.

**I-9** All new employees to the university must complete an I-9 form (and sign it) showing that they are eligible for employment in the United States. In order to complete the form, student needs to provide a document proving their identity (a passport for non-citizens or usually driver's license for citizens) and a document allowing legal employment in the United States (a DS2019 or I-20 for non-citizens or an original Social Security card for citizens). All documents must be originals.

**W-4** All new employees need to complete a W-4 form for tax purposes.

**Driver's License:** To drive a vehicle in the United States, students must have a valid US or International driver's license.

To operate a WSU vehicle, students must:

1. have a valid US or International license
2. be at least 18 years old
3. have at least 3 years of experience operating a motor vehicle

To operate a WSU van, students must have a current Van Driver Training II certificate.

**Office Space:** The office staff will assign offices for new and continuing students and issue office/lab/building keys.

**Mywsu:** Approximately 2-5 days after the successful application submission, students will receive an email from the Graduate School, which will include unique WSU ID number. Please use this number each time you interact with the WSU Graduate School's Admissions office. This number enables the student to create a Network ID (NID) to access your account.

Follow the steps in the account creation email sent to the email address provided on the admission application.

**WSU Email Account/Network ID:** The university's Information Technology manages electronic mail. The e-mail account, Network ID (NID) and WSU e-mail address are set up when students are admitted to WSU. Students will receive an email with instructions to create NID soon after submitting an application to the Graduate School (through GradCAS).

Keep a record of your Network ID and password, because it will be used throughout your time at WSU.

Please contact the WSU Crimson Service Desk with any questions during the

Network ID/Okta account creation process, or any other IT related questions, Monday-Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (PST) at 509-335-4357 or email [CrimsonServiceDesk@wsu.edu](mailto:CrimsonServiceDesk@wsu.edu).

Note: Please check the Junk mail and Spam folders often.

**To Update student's information in myWSU:**

1. Log in to your [myWSU](#) account.
2. From the homepage, select the Profile tile.
3. Select the address type to be changed, or one of the other options available.

**Mail Box:** Mailboxes are located in the department's work room (213B LJ Smith Hall). The office staff will assign mailboxes to new students. Your address at the university is:

[Student's Name]  
Department of Biological Systems Engineering  
Washington State University  
P.O. Box 646120  
Pullman, WA 99164-6120

It is not appropriate to use the university's mailing system for personal mail (for example, bank statements, personal letters or magazine subscriptions). Students cannot use the university's mailing system to send personal mail.

## **ACADEMIC STUDENT EMPLOYMENT AND PROCEDURES**

### **WSU/UAW Union Affiliation/Collective Bargaining Agreement**

Graduate students at WSU who are appointed on Graduate Research Assistant (RA) positions during the fall and spring semesters engage in research under a supervision of a faculty member. During the summer, graduate students are appointed as Graduate Summer Workers (PAP or hourly). These positions are covered by the Contract between Washington State University (WSU) and the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW). The WSU/UAW union contract governs wages, hours, terms and conditions of employment, etc. Academic Student Employees (ASEs) are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this contract. <https://hrs.wsu.edu/employees/labor-relations/collective-bargaining/ws-uaw/ws-uaw-contract-2024-2026/> Contact [HRS Labor Relations](#) with any questions pertaining to the WSU/UAW union contract.

### **Research Assistants**

Employment as an RA involves commitments, not only to thesis and dissertation research, but to the goals and objectives or deliverables of the sponsored project

providing salary support. RAs should, therefore, be aware of responsibilities attendant to the University's Intellectual Property and Conflict of Interest policies and procedures.

Graduate School required all graduate students on assistantships to complete the web-based Responsible Conduct of Research Training ([MyDashboard](#)) Please notify our office of the date you completed it. International students have one semester upon arrival to complete this training.

Effective Fall 2026, CITI RCR training will need to be renewed every **4 years**.

## **Research Fellows**

Recipients of research fellowships should understand the goals and objectives of sponsoring programs. These goals and objectives may require completion of training modules or internships, the development of a scholarly document (e.g., thesis or dissertation), or specific uses of support funds. It is the responsibility of RFs to be aware of such expectations and to meet them as completely as possible.

## **Academic Student Employee (ASE) Time Off**

Graduate students on assistantships (ASE's) are expected to be at work every standard work day, including periods when the university is not in session (classes not in session) with the exception of the 11 holidays set by State law. The same schedule is followed by administrators, faculty and staff of the University. If you have further questions about being away from work, contact your advisor.

1. Students on research assistantships at 50% FTE are expected to work, on average, 20 hours a week. The work may or may not be related to your research, at the discretion of your faculty supervisor.
2. Holiday schedule is outlined in the WSU Business Policies and Procedures Manual, section 60.76.2: [Holiday Schedule – Human Resource Services, Washington State University](#)
3. The [Paid Time Off Guide](#) describes time off options for ASE employees: paid Vacation, sick leave, leave without pay (LWOP) and other leaves such as bereavement, jury duty, military, parental and faith/conscience. Salaried ASE with 50% FTE on 9-month appointment receive 48 hours of paid vacation time off (24 hrs/semester). Salaried ASE with 50% FTE on 9-month appointment receive 36 hours of sick leave (18 hours/semester). Sick leave time off may only be used for reasons described in [Article 30.1.3](#). When ASEs need to be absent from work for sick purpose, they must submit the sick leave request to their supervisors through Workday as soon as the need is known.
4. Academic year leave balances expire May 15. Fall leave balances will rollover to Spring when reappointed. Spring balances expire May 15.

5. Requesting Time Off: ASEs are to enter accurate time off into Workday each pay period in which they request time off. See [Workday Knowledge Base Employee Request and Correct Time Off](#) for detailed instructions.
6. ASEs on summer PAP appointments are not eligible for paid vacation or sick leave.
7. ASEs on hourly appointments do not earn paid vacation; however, they do earn 1hr of sick leave per 40 hours worked.
8. The Short-Term Pregnancy/Parental Leave plan provides eligible salaried ASEs up to six (6) consecutive weeks of paid leave for the period directly before or after the birth, or adoption of a child, or at a time otherwise approved by the ASE's supervisor. In all cases, leave must be completed during the ASE's appointment term and within the same academic year as the date of the birth or adoption of the child." [Short-Term Pregnancy/Parental Leave | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#)

## Graduate Leave of Absence

- Graduate Leave Status is granted for individuals who must be away from their studies for one or more semesters for personal, family, job, financial, military or Peace Corps service, or other compelling reasons. ***Only graduate leave for medical reasons [Emergency Family/Medical Leave (EFML)], military service, and Peace Corps service is available to doctoral students in continuous doctoral status.*** Students should consult the WSU Graduate School Policies and Procedures manual for information regarding the types of leave available.
1. Students must apply for Graduate Leave through the Graduate School by completing the Graduate Leave form at the following link: [www.gradschool.wsu.edu/Documents/PDF/GraduateLeaveStatusForm.pdf](http://www.gradschool.wsu.edu/Documents/PDF/GraduateLeaveStatusForm.pdf)
  2. The leave must be approved by the student's Advisor/Mentor, Graduate Program Director, International Programs (for international F-1/J-1 students only) and Dean of the Graduate School. A student may be on Graduate Leave for a total of up to one calendar year during their studies, but leave time may be extended for special circumstances (e.g., for military or Peace Corps service). ***Graduate Leave beyond one calendar year during a student's studies is not guaranteed.***
  3. Graduate Leave entitles students to maintain access to library services if needed. At the end of the leave, the student will be able to reenroll for credits without completing the reenrollment form or paying the reenrollment fee. International students must submit information on their finances to the Graduate School if they require issuance of new immigration documents (more information regarding graduate student leave, parental leave etc. is available in Graduate School Policies and Procedure Manual, Chapter 5: [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#)

## Travel and Purchasing

CAHNRS Travel Office provides guidance on all aspects of work-related travel. [Travel | Finance and Administration | Washington State University](#)

Jorja Heinkel provides assistance to students in Pullman with the purchasing process. Contact info: [jorja.heinkel@wsu.edu](mailto:jorja.heinkel@wsu.edu); Office: LJ Smith Hall 209.

### Copier and Other Office Supplies

The department's copy machine, located in the work room, LJ Smith Hall 213B, is available for use on university business. It is not appropriate to copy homework or class assignments on the department's copier. The machine requires the use of a code that enables department to bill faculty members for using it. Each student will be granted unique copier code upon permission from their advisor. Contact Jorja Heinkel for the copier code once you join the department: [jorja.heinkel@wsu.edu](mailto:jorja.heinkel@wsu.edu).

Students should purchase paper, pens, notebooks and other office supplies for their coursework. Office supplies needed for research should be supplied by the students' advisors.

## Salary

### *Payment Schedule*

ASE's on salaried and hourly appointments get paid twice a month—on the 10<sup>th</sup> and on the 25<sup>th</sup>. For example, you will be paid on September 10 for the period August 16 – 31. You will be paid on January 25 for the period January 1 – 15.

### *Direct Deposit*

Graduate Students on paid appointments may have their paycheck deposited directly into a bank account. Further information and the request form to is available at: <http://www.wsu.edu/payroll>. When student opts not to set up a direct deposit, payroll will mail the paycheck to the student's local address.

### *Payroll Deduction of Tuition and Mandatory Fees*

Graduate Students on assistantships may enroll in payroll deduction that enables them to spread the payment of their residual tuition and mandatory fees (not already covered by waivers, scholarship, or other funding sources) over eight pay periods via payroll deduction. This program is offered for a nominal processing fee of \$8 per semester. The payroll deduction is available for the Fall and Spring semesters only. **Graduate students must sign up each semester.** Follow this [Reference Guide](#) to enroll in Grad Voluntary Deductions.

### *Summer Session*

Summer appointments at BSE are generally: PAP (period activity pay) or hourly. These appointments follow the same bi-monthly payout schedule. ASE's on

hourly appointments must submit their hours into Workday twice a month: on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last day of the month.

## Register for Classes

MyWSU is your portal to most student account services. Log in to register for classes, set up your email account, check finances, add money to your Cougar Card, check student financial aid status, academic records, schedules, and WSU announcements. Your advisor can help you with course selection. Please reach out to Joanna if you have any questions/need assistance with course enrollment, your finances and your academic record.

Department recommends that students on assistantship enroll in 12 credits per semester, including at least 2 research credits: BSysE 800 PhD / 700 MS Thesis/ 702 MS Non-thesis. Full time for graduate students is defined as 10-18 credits. PhD Students must enroll in BSysE 598 Graduate Seminar twice and present one seminar. The Seminar should take place after student passes the preliminary exam. MS students should enroll in BSYSE 598 once and do not need to present. (Starting Fall 2015, BsysE 598 will be offered only during Fall semester). All other policies regarding course work, research credits, credit transfers and other policies are as defined by the WSU Graduate School.

## Guidelines for Master's Degree

Chapter 7 of the [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#) outlines the requirements and procedures for obtaining a master's degree at Washington State University (WSU). It covers degree types, time limits, advisory committees, *Program of Study*, academic policies, and examination procedures.

### Departmental Requirements:

Minimum of 30 total credits required.

- Thesis: 21 graded A-F course credits (500 level). Up to 6 credits of non-graduate level (300 or 400 level) courses may be used
- Non-Thesis: 26 graded course credits (500 level). Up to 9 credits of non-graduate level (300 or 400 level) courses may be used.
- Optional graded courses may be added if desired/recommended by the advisor/committee.
- A minimum of 4 credit hours of BSYSE 700 (thesis) or BSYSE 702 (non-thesis), or as many as needed to reach 30 credit hours
- At least two credits of research (700, 702, depending on degree type) are required in the term of the final examination or project

## **Other Departmental Requirements:**

- Graduate Studies Committee - committee members selected, expected during 2<sup>nd</sup> semester
- Program of Study - submitted to Graduate School, expected during 2<sup>nd</sup> semester
- Research Proposal (recommended for MS Thesis) - approved by Committee and copy in office file, expected end of 1<sup>st</sup> year
- Coursework - completed, expected end of 3<sup>rd</sup> semester
- Seminar Presentation and Final Defense – completed
- Completed Thesis (MS Thesis) submitted to Proquest
- Written Project (MS Non-Thesis) as defined by the Graduate Studies Committee
- Exit Interview - schedule meeting with department Chair prior to leaving WSU

## **Graduate Studies Committee:**

The graduate student committees will have a minimum of three members; a minimum of two members will be tenured/tenure-track faculty in BSE, and other members may be tenured/tenure-track WSU faculty members in another department. Approved professionals not officially participating as Graduate Faculty within any graduate program at WSU can participate as committee members in addition to the minimum three committee members defined above.

Tenured and tenure-track BSE faculty and BAE Graduate Affiliate Faculty can serve as chair or co-chair of student committees. BAE Graduate Adjunct Faculty and non-tenure-track BSE research faculty may serve as co-chairs.

## **Thesis / Dissertation Meetings**

During the first two semesters student should meet frequently with the committee to develop a common vision for the research, to agree on a generalized methodology to complete the research, and to identify course work required to prepare you to conduct the research. After the first year, you should continue to meet with your committee on a regular basis. At a minimum, you should meet with the committee once a year. More frequent meetings are encouraged.

You are responsible for consulting with your advisor and then requesting a committee meeting, setting an agenda and reserving a meeting room and/or scheduling a Zoom meeting.

## **Assessment of Academic Performance, ASE Employment Performance Reviews and Credit Expectations Agreement:**

The student's academic performance will be assessed independently from their performance of research assistantship duties. Advisors will conduct semester reviews to evaluate student's academic performance and progress toward completion of the thesis or dissertation. Review forms will be completed every

semester by set deadlines, signed by both the advisor and the student and will be retained in departmental student files.

In addition to the review forms, each student enrolled in research credits (**BSYSE 700/702/800**), needs to complete the Credit Expectation Agreement for the following semester. This agreement establishes expectations between Faculty Advisor and their student enrolled in research credits.

BSE Academic Performance Semester Evaluation Template: [Current Students | Biological Systems Engineering | Washington State University](#)

ASE Evaluation Template available under FORMS: [ASE Offer Letter Templates | Graduate School Finance | Washington State University](#)

Credit Expectations Agreement:

<https://emailwsu.sharepoint.com/:w:/t/gradschool.documentshare/IQCBsKR7uyeaTKYB1DmjE-1sAbxZJ8115WzD0A18qfiCoEg?rtm=E=TJhn3fqQ3kg>

## **Forms, Signatures and Deadlines:**

All forms needed to progress through the graduate program are located on the Graduate School web site at <http://gradschool.wsu.edu/forms> Please contact the Academic Coordinator, Joanna Dreger ([Joanna-dreger@wsu.edu](mailto:Joanna-dreger@wsu.edu); 509-335-1578) to check the form before obtaining the signatures of the committee members. This is especially important for the Program of Study but also for the Preliminary and Final Exam scheduling forms, Program Change and petitions. After Joanna verifies the completeness of the document, student will obtain signatures of the committee members and hand deliver or email the original document to Joanna, who will obtain the signature of dept. chair and submit the document to the Graduate School through the GRM. All forms must be submitted by the Graduate School's deadlines.

## **Guidelines for PhD Degrees**

72 total credits required;

- Minimum of 15 WSU graded course credits, 500 level only
- Optional graded courses may be added if desired/recommended by the committee.
- A minimum of 20 BSYSE 800, or as many as needed to complete 72 credit hours
- At least two credits of research (700, 702, depending on degree type) are required in the term of the final examination or project

## **Courses:**

Department suggests for full time students to enroll in 12 credits per semester, including at least 2 credits of BSysE 800. Please note that full time for graduate students is defined as 10-18 credits. Students must enroll in BSysE 598 Graduate Seminar two times and present one seminar (starting Fall 2015, BsysE 598 will be offered only during Fall semester). All policies regarding course work, research credits, credit transfers and other policies are defined by the WSU Graduate School [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#).

## **Ph.D. Departmental Requirements:**

- BSysE 512 Research and Teaching Methods (3 credits)
- BSysE 598 Graduate Seminar – must enroll two times and present one seminar
- BSysE 800 Research Credits – must be enrolled each semester
- A graduate math/statistics course beyond differential equations. For example (not limited to): Stat 512 Analysis of Variance of Designed Experiments (3 credits) or Stat 523 Statistical Methods for Engineers and Scientists (3 credits) or Soils 502 Introduction to Statistics in R (3 credits).

## **Area Required Courses:**

### *Agricultural Automation Engineering Requirements*

BSyse 541: Instrumentation and Measurements (3 credits)

plus at least 5 credits from two or more of the following courses:

- BSysE 530: Machine Vision for Biological Systems (3 credits)
- BSysE 551: Special Topics: Sensors in Phenomics (1-2 credits)
- BSysE 552: Special Topics: UAS in Agriculture (2 credits)
- BSysE 532: Electrohydraulic Systems and Control (3 credits)
- SOIL\_SCI 568: GIS Spatial Analysis (4 credits)
- SOIL\_SCI 574: Remote Sensing and Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)
- ME 581: Control Systems (3 credits)
- EE 501: Linear System Theory (3 credits)
- CPT\_S 541: Artificial Intelligence (3 credits)
- CPT\_S 558: Wireless Sensor Networks (3 credits)
- CPT\_S 570: Machine Learning (3 credits)
- CPT\_S 555: Computer Communication Network (3 credits)
- AFS 505: Computational and Analytical Methods for Scientists (1-6 credits)
- CPT\_S 575: Data Science (3 credits)

### ***Bio-energy and Bio-product Engineering Requirements***

- BSysE 593 Renewable Energy Technologies (3 credits) – This course is required for students who joined in Fall 2024 and thereafter.
- BSysE 596 Biomass Thermo-chemical Conversion (3 credits) or CHE 575 Biochemical Engineering
- BSysE 597 Biomass Biological Process Engineering (3 credits)
- BSysE 594 Design and Analysis of Biomass Conversion Processes and Systems (3 credits) This course is only required for students without an engineering background.

### ***Suggested Elective Courses***

ChE 529	Chemical Engineering Kinetics
ChE 541	Chemical Engineering Analysis
ChE 546	Mass Transfer Operations
ChE 552	Process Optimization
ChE 560	Biochemical Engineering
ChE 575	Introduction to Biochemical Engineering
MBIOS 503	Molecular Biology I
MBIOS 503	Molecular Biology II
MBIOS 506	Molecular Techniques in Microbiology
MBIOS 513	General Biochemistry I
MBIOS 513	General Biochemistry II

### ***Food Engineering Requirements***

- BSysE 581 Advanced Physical Properties of Foods (3 credits)
- BSysE 582 Food Process Engineering I (3 credits)
- BSysE 583 Food Process Engineering II (3 credits)
- BSysE 584 Thermal and Non-thermal Processing of Foods (3 credits)

### ***Suggested Elective Courses***

FSHN 416	Food Microbiology	2
FSHN 417	Food Microbiology Laboratory	2
FSHN 460	Food Chemistry	3
FSHN 462	Food Analyses	3
FSHN 470	Advanced Food Processing Technologies	3
ME 404	Heat Transfer	3
ME 513	Conduction Heat Transfer	3
ME 514	Thermal Radiation Processes	3
ME 515	Advanced Heat Transfer	3
ME 521	Fundamentals of Fluids I	3
ME 522	Fundamentals of Fluids II	3
EE 517	Numerical Solutions to EM problems	3
EE 518	Advanced Electromagnetic Theory I	3

EE 538	EM Simulation	3
CE 534	Finite Elements	3
CE 556	Numeric Modeling in Fluid Mechanics	3
ChE 441	Process Control	3
ChE 510	Transport Processes	3

***Land, Air, Water and Environmental Engineering Requirements***

12 credits from three or more of the following courses:

- BSysE 541: Instrumentation and Measurements (3 credits)
- SOIL\_SCI 514: Environmental Biophysics (2 credits + 1 credit lab)
- BSysE 552: Agroecosystems Data & Modeling (3 credits), or
- BSysE 556: Surface Hydrological Processes and Modeling (3 credits)
- SOIL\_SCI 568: GIS Spatial Analysis (4 credits)
- SOIL\_SCI 574: Remote Sensing and Geospatial Analysis (3 credits)
- CPT\_S 570: Machine Learning (3 credits)
- SOIL\_SCI 513: Environmental Soil Physics (3 credits)
- CE 502: Applied Meteorology (3 credits)
- CE 550: Hydroclimatology (3 credits)
- CE 545: Stochastic hydrology
- CE 560: Advanced Hydrology (3 credits)
- CE 562: Environmental Flow and Transport Processes (3 credits)
- CPT\_S 575: Data Science (which is easier for many new students than the Machine Learning Class) (3 credits)
- AFS 505: Topics in Computational and Analytical Methods for Scientists (2 options – R and Python )

**Note:** Other courses will be added to each group if/when relevant courses become available. Course structures were defined to meet the minimum requirement of 15 credit hours for the PhD program at BSE. Students may take additional courses after consulting with their advisors. Students' program committee may also require students to take additional courses.

**Other Ph.D. Departmental Requirements:**

- **Graduate Studies Committee** - committee members selected, expected end of 1<sup>st</sup> year
- **Program of Study** - submitted to Graduate School, expected end of 1<sup>st</sup> year
- **Research Proposal** - approved by Committee and copy in office file, expected 3<sup>rd</sup> semester (Research Proposal Cover pages template is located on BSYSE website, under Student Resources)
- **Coursework** - completed, expected end of 3<sup>rd</sup> semester

- **Preliminary Exam** - expected end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year (approved research proposal required before student will be allowed to schedule an exam)
- **First Article** - based on doctoral research submitted to peer reviewed journal
- **Second Article** - based on doctoral research submitted to peer reviewed journal
- **Completed Dissertation** submitted to Proquest
- **Final Defense** - public presentation and oral exam (two papers required)
- **Exit Interview** - meeting with department Chair prior to leaving WSU

### **Graduate Studies Committee:**

The graduate student committee will have a minimum of three members; a minimum of two members will be tenured/tenure-track faculty in BSE, and other members may be tenured/tenure-track WSU faculty members in another department. Approved professionals not officially participating as Graduate Faculty within any graduate program at WSU can participate as committee members in addition to the minimum three committee members defined above.

Tenured and tenure-track BSE faculty and BAE Graduate Affiliate Faculty can serve as chair or co-chair of student committees. BAE Graduate Adjunct Faculty and non-tenure-track BSE research faculty may serve as co-chairs.

### **Program of Study:**

The [Graduate Program of Study](#) is an official document that lists the student's research topic, Graduate Advisory Committee members, and all courses that will apply towards the graduate degree. For master's degree students, the Program of Study should be filed with the Graduate School by the end of first year/beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester but no later than one semester prior to the anticipated semester of graduation (e.g., if the anticipated graduation were spring, the Program of Study would be due no later than the beginning of the preceding fall semester).

For doctoral students, the Program of Study should be filed with the Graduate School by the end of the first year/beginning of third semester but no later than one semester before the student anticipates taking the preliminary examination. The student's advisor, in consultation with the advisory committee members, should aid the student in developing the proposed Program of Study, taking into consideration student's research topic and their strengths/weaknesses.

Please see the BSE MS and PhD course requirements and guidelines. For information regarding grade requirements, Incomplete grades, Pass/Fail courses and Transfer course policy, please see Chapter 6.7:

<https://gradschool.wsu.edu/graduate-school-policies-and-procedures/#chapter-six--general-academic-requirements>

The Program's draft should be submitted to the BSE graduate coordinator to ensure the program meets the requirements of the BAE Graduate Program and the Graduate School. Once the program is approved by the graduate coordinator, it

must be signed by the committee members and the Graduate Program Chair. The graduate coordinator will submit the finalized program to the Graduate School through the GRM and maintain the electronic copy in departmental student records.

Once processed, Graduate School will send the approval announcement to the student, the advisor, and the graduate coordinator. Once approved, the Program of Study becomes the basis of the requirements for the student's degree.

Changes to coursework are made using the Program Change form, whereas changes to the faculty advisory committee are made using the Committee Change form. <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/forms/>

## **Thesis / Dissertation Meetings**

During the first two semesters you should meet frequently with your committee to develop a common vision for the research, to agree on a generalized methodology to complete the research, and to identify course work required to prepare you to conduct the research. After the first year, you should continue to meet with your committee on a regular basis. At a minimum, you should meet with the committee once a year. More frequent meetings are encouraged.

You are responsible for consulting with your advisor and then calling a committee meeting, setting an agenda and arranging for a meeting room.

## **Preliminary Examination (PhD only):**

**Purpose:** It serves as a check point to evaluate: 1) if the student has adequate disciplinary knowledge and understands the context of the discipline, and 2) if the student can integrate knowledge into researchable questions and demonstrates the capacity to successfully conduct their PhD. research.

**When:** The preliminary exam should be conducted before the end of the second year as a full-time PhD student.

**Format:** A preliminary exam consists of two parts, **written and oral. Both parts are required.** The goal of the written examination is to evaluate students' command of core knowledge required for the specific area of his/her research, and his/her ability to integrate the knowledge for PhD research; the oral exam evaluates student ability to defend his/her PhD research proposal submitted prior to the Preliminary Exam.

Student should start preparing for the preliminary examination during the semester when completing the final courses in their program of study.  
Coursework: Prepare a dissertation proposal and submit it to all members of the

committee. Once the proposal is approved, signed, and copy submitted to the department graduate coordinator, the student may begin scheduling a preliminary examination. Students must have an approved Program of Study on file with the Graduate School before scheduling a preliminary examination (Program of Study must be submitted one semester before scheduling a preliminary examination).

Students need to enroll for at least two credits of BSysE 800 in a semester in which the preliminary examination is to be taken. Minimum of 3.0 cumulative grade point average is required.

Once the date and time have been identified and agreed upon by your committee, book the desired conference room or classroom via BSysE Sharepoint.

Once rooms have been identified, please include this information on the Preliminary Exam Scheduling form before obtaining signatures of your committee. Once the form has been signed by all committee members, submit the form to the department graduate coordinator, Joanna Dreger. Joanna will obtain the Department Chair's signature, make a copy for department's record and submit the form to the Graduate School. The Preliminary examination scheduling form must be submitted to the Graduate school at least two weeks (ten working days) before the oral examination.

The exam consists of a written and an oral section. Both parts are required. The written portion will consist of one set of questions per committee member. Each committee member will set the format (e.g.: in a classroom setting or take-home; open or closed book, etc.) for his or her portion of the written exam.

The format of the oral portion of the examination is determined by the dissertation committee. You may be asked to summarize the research proposal, questioned about your answers to the written portion of the exam, and/or asked about completed coursework. You should discuss the format of the preliminary exam with the committee before the examination date.

The members of the doctoral committee must be present at the examination or ballot meeting, and all must vote. Any other Department of Biological Systems Engineering faculty members may be present and may vote. At the discretion of the Department Chair, members of the faculty from other departments/programs and faculty members from the major and minor departments/programs may be present, may ask questions, but shall not vote. All faculty members wishing to vote or required to vote must be in attendance during the entire examination. If a faculty member wishing to vote or required to vote must leave the room during the examination, the examination is to be recessed until said member returns.

The content and conduct of preliminary examinations is the responsibility of the department's faculty and will be administered by the department chair, or someone delegated by the chair. The department chair shall be responsible for

conducting a fair and searching examination and for affording a reasonable opportunity during the oral portion for all examiners to question the student. There is no time limit for either the written or oral examination, but all aspects of the examination must be completed within 30 days from the beginning.

At the conclusion of the oral exam, the candidate’s total performance on the examination should be discussed and ballots cast based on the entire examination. Students will be evaluated on the criteria outlined in the BSE Evaluation Rubric: [Evaluation -Rubric Preliminary -Examination BSE.pdf](#)

Per the Graduate School’s Policies and Procedures: [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#), the student will be determined to have passed the exam if the number of “passed” ballots is equal to or greater than the minimum listed in the table below:

Table of Preliminary Exam Ballots	
<i>Number of Ballots</i>	<i>Minimum Number of Affirmative Ballots</i>
3	3
4	3
5	4
6	5
7	6
8	6

A student who has failed a preliminary examination has a right to a second examination. At least three months must elapse between a failed examination and a re-examination. During the re-examination, a Graduate School representative and the entire committee must be present and vote. A student who has failed two preliminary examinations may not become a candidate for the doctorate degree and the student’s enrollment in the Graduate School will be terminated.

### **Final Exam (Master’s and Doctoral)**

**Deadlines and Documents** [Deadlines | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#)

1. A minimum of one full semester must elapse between successful completion of a preliminary examination and the scheduling of a final PhD examination.
2. Student must be enrolled in at least 2 credit hours of BSysE 700 or BSysE 800 at the beginning of the semester or summer session in which the exam is to be taken.
3. Application for Degree form must be on file in the Graduate School.
4. The Final Examination Scheduling Form [Graduate School Examination Scheduling Form](#) must be completed and signed by the thesis / dissertation

committee and submitted to the Graduate School (via department graduate coordinator) at least two weeks (10 working days) prior the final exam. Please follow the same procedures as when scheduling the preliminary exam.

5. The thesis/dissertation committee is responsible for approving all aspects of the final document before you may schedule the final examination. When committee members sign the Final Examination scheduling form, they indicate that a thesis or dissertation draft is suitable in format for submission to Proquest. They also indicate their acceptance of the date, time, and place of the final examination.
6. Thesis/dissertation draft must be submitted to Proquest at least two weeks (10 working days) prior the final exam.
7. Students will have 10 working days after the final exam to submit the final version of the thesis / dissertation to Proquest and to submit all other documents to the Graduate School. All documents are located on the Graduate School's website under FORMS (type "FINAL" in the search box for a complete list): [Graduate School Forms | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#)

### ***Thesis / Dissertation Requirements***

#### **Length of Thesis / Dissertation**

The length of your thesis or dissertation will depend on the research topic, and will be determined in consultation with your committee. The department's minimum requirements are one chapter (equivalent to a peer-reviewed journal article) for a Master's thesis and 2 chapters (equivalent to 2 peer-reviewed journal articles) for a doctoral dissertation. PhD advisors have the authority to recommend/require additional chapter(s) for students in their group.

### ***Thesis / Dissertation Format Requirements***

There are specific format requirements for your thesis / dissertation that can be found on the Graduate School's website under FORMS:

1. Thesis/Dissertation Formatting Guidelines:  
[gradschool.wsu.edu/documents/2014/12/dissertation-and-thesis-formatting-guidelines.pdf](http://gradschool.wsu.edu/documents/2014/12/dissertation-and-thesis-formatting-guidelines.pdf)
2. Thesis/Dissertation Word Template: [thesis-dissertation-template 2025.docx](#)
3. Final Dissertation/Thesis Acceptance Checklist:  
[gradschool.wsu.edu/documents/2014/12/etd-formatting-checklist.pdf](http://gradschool.wsu.edu/documents/2014/12/etd-formatting-checklist.pdf)
4. Dissertation/Thesis Submission Guidelines:  
<https://gradschool.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2014/07/DissertationThesesSubGdlnes.pdf>

### ***Final Exam – Seminar (Master’s and Doctoral)***

As part of the final examination, students will present a 50-minute seminar describing their research prior to the oral examination. The seminar should be prepared for a general audience of engineers and scientists.

Final exam seminar/presentation is open to the public and whenever possible, all graduate students are expected to attend these seminars. Audience at large may ask questions; however, the student’s responses should not have any influence on the final outcome of the oral exam.

### ***Oral Examination***

#### **Master's Examination**

A final oral examination is required of all candidates pursuing the master’s degree. This examination will be conducted in a closed session (the student, the graduate committee and BAE graduate faculty if desired) and is intended to test the candidate’s ability to carry out a critical dialogue integrating and interpreting material in the major and supporting fields with emphasis on the work presented in the thesis or special problem.

Examinations are to be held in an academic environment. All faculty members wishing to vote must be in attendance during all of the examination. If a faculty member wishing to vote must leave the room during the examination, the examination is to be recessed until said member returns. Final examinations shall be held during regular working hours on the Pullman, TC campus, Prosser and Puyallup REC and/or via Zoom when the university is in session for classes. Exceptions to this policy will be made by the Dean of the Graduate School only under unusual circumstances.

All faculty members, regardless of discipline, are encouraged to attend. The examining committee shall include the members of the master’s committee whose chair presides, the Graduate Studies Committee and any other member of the faculty in attendance. The chair of the committee will lead the final examination and be responsible for its conduct.

Any faculty members of the BAE Graduate Program may attend a final examination, ask questions and vote. All members of the master’s committee must attend and vote.

Students will be evaluated on the criteria outlined in the BSE Final Exam Evaluation Rubric:

[https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/888/2021/08/Evaluation\\_-\\_Rubric\\_Final\\_-Defense\\_BSE.pdf](https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/888/2021/08/Evaluation_-_Rubric_Final_-Defense_BSE.pdf)

Per the Graduate School’s Policies and Procedures: [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State](#)

University, the student will be determined to have passed the exam if the number of “passed” ballots is equal to or greater than the minimum listed in the table below:

Table of Master Final Exam Ballots	
<i>Number of Ballots</i>	<i>Minimum Number of Affirmative Ballots</i>
3	2
4	3
5	4
6	4
7	5
8	6

A student who has failed a Master’s examination has a right to a second examination. During the re-examination, a Graduate School representative and the entire committee must be present and vote. A second failed Master’s examination will result in termination of the student’s enrollment in the Graduate School.

***Doctoral Examination***

*A candidate for a doctorate must pass a final oral examination that primarily shall be a defense of the dissertation but may cover the general fields of knowledge pertinent to the degree. This examination will be conducted in a closed session (the student, the graduate committee and BAE graduate faculty if desired).*

Final oral examinations will be held over a completed dissertation suitable in format and content for submission to Proquest. Under extraordinary circumstances, on the recommendation of the student’s committee and upon the advice of the Graduate Studies Committee, the Dean of the Graduate School may approve alternate arrangements.

Examinations are to be held in an academic environment. Final examinations shall be held during regular working hours on the Pullman, TC campus, Prosser and Puyallup REC and/or via Zoom when the university is in session for classes. Exceptions to this policy will be made by the Dean of the Graduate School only under unusual circumstances.

All faculty members, regardless of discipline, are encouraged to attend. The examining committee shall include the members of the doctoral Graduate committee whose chair presides, and any other members of the

faculty in attendance. The chair of the committee will lead the final examination and be responsible for its conduct. Any faculty members of the BAE Graduate Program may attend a final examination, ask questions and vote. All members of the doctoral committee must attend and vote.

All faculty members wishing to vote must be in attendance during all of the examination. If a faculty member wishing to vote must leave the room during the examination, the examination is to be recessed until said member returns.

Students will be evaluated on the criteria outlined in the BSE Final Exam Evaluation Rubric:  
[https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/888/2021/08/Evaluation\\_-\\_Rubric\\_Final\\_-Defense\\_BSE.pdf](https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/888/2021/08/Evaluation_-_Rubric_Final_-Defense_BSE.pdf)

The final examination including the student's presentation is limited to 2.5 hours.

Per the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures: [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#), the student will be determined to have passed the exam if the number of affirmative ballots is equal to or greater than the minimum listed in the table below. If the number of ballots exceeds the numbers listed in the table, then a minimum of 75% of the ballots must be affirmative for the student to pass:

Table of Final Exam Ballots	
<i>Number of Ballots</i>	<i>Minimum Number of Affirmative Ballots</i>
3	3
4	3
5	4
6	5
7	6
8	6

A student who has failed a Doctoral examination has a right to a second examination. During the re-examination, a Graduate School representative and the entire committee must be present and vote. A second failed doctoral examination will result in termination of the student's enrollment in the Graduate School.

## **Forms, Signatures, and Deadlines:**

All forms needed progress through the graduate program are located on the Graduate School website: <http://gradschool.wsu.edu/forms>

Please contact the Academic Coordinator, Joanna Dreger ([Joanna-dreger@wsu.edu](mailto:Joanna-dreger@wsu.edu); 509-335-1578) to check the form before obtaining signatures of your committee members. This is especially important for the Program of study and Preliminary Exam and Final Exam scheduling forms. After Joanna verifies the completeness of the document, student will obtain signatures of the committee members and hand deliver or email the original document to Joanna, who will obtain the signature of department chair, make a copy for departmental records and deliver the document to the Graduate School.

All deadlines can be found on pages 30-34 of this handbook as well as on the Graduate School's site: <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/deadlines/>

## **Length of Time to Complete Graduate Study**

The length of time required to complete a graduate degree can vary widely. Factors that affect the length of time to complete the degree include: academic background, scheduling of courses, the amount of preparation needed to prepare experiments, and the time demands of employment. Except under unusual circumstances, Departmental expectations are: a Master's degree student is expected to complete the degree requirements within two years, and a Doctoral student is expected to complete the degree requirements within three years of study past the Master's degree.

## **Research Portion of Graduate Education**

Research is the cornerstone of graduate student training. The Graduate School and Biological Systems Department are committed to fostering high ethical standards among graduate students engaged in research and supports faculty in educating students on the responsible conduct of research. Responsible research requires an environment that encourages open communication, upholds best practices, and cultivates a culture of integrity and scholarly excellence.

Graduate students are guided on topics such as human subjects, animal welfare, and conflicts of interest as they develop into responsible researchers. Understanding data

acquisition, management, sharing, and ownership is crucial, as is adhering to publication practices and responsible authorship.

[Chapter 11 of the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures](#) manual provides an overview of the essential guidelines and links to policies, procedures, and resources that graduate students should consult to conduct responsible research at WSU, including Research Conduct, Conflict of Interest, Export Controls, Grants submission support, Patents and Copyrights, Research Involving Animal and Human Subjects, Research Involving the Use of Biohazards, Hazardous Chemicals, Ionizing Radiation.

### **Advisor**

In most cases the advisor – student relationship is identified before the student arrives on campus. For a student admitted with funding support, the faculty member providing the funding will serve as their main advisor.

In case the student is admitted with external funding sources (personal support, fellowships, foreign scholarships), and the advisor has not been identified, the student will be assigned a “temporary” advisor upon joining the program. The student has the responsibility to interview the department’s faculty members, and to reach a mutual advisor-student agreement with one of them during the first semester.

### **Resolving Conflicts Between Students and Advisors**

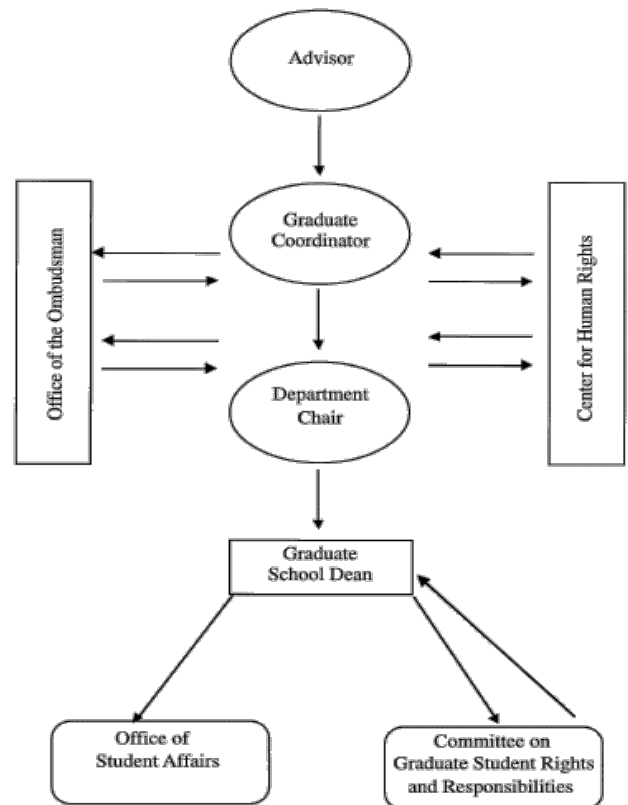
Chapter 12 of the [Graduate School Policies and Procedures | The Graduate School | Washington State University](#) provides guidelines on the Graduate Student’s Rights and Responsibilities, including guidelines pertaining to academic advancement and related grievance procedures. It provides resources regarding student conduct, academic dishonesty, discrimination, sexual harassment, and drug and alcohol policies.

The department, the college, the Graduate School, and the University are all committed to ensuring that graduate students are treated fairly during the course of their graduate studies.

Graduate students seeking assistance in resolving concerns related to their graduate program may seek assistance from the [Office of the University Ombudsman](#).

The ombudsman is an impartial and neutral resource to assist all members of the university community.

The ombudsman provides information related to university policies and procedures and facilitates the resolution of problems and grievances through informal investigation and mediation.



The policies and procedures in [WAC 504-26-415](#) cover student disciplinary proceedings for misconduct, including plagiarism and cheating. For disciplinary matters, please view the information at the following links:

- [Center for Community Standards](#)
- [Compliance and Civil Rights](#)

## Requesting Reasonable Accommodations

The Graduate School is committed to providing equal opportunity in its services, programs, and employment for individuals with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. Students are responsible for initiating requests for reasonable accommodations and services that they need.

Graduate students with identified disabilities should contact Student Accommodations and Disability Resources before the semester they plan to attend and initiate the accommodations process. Accommodations are unique for each individual, and some require a significant amount of time to prepare, so students must notify Student Accommodations and Disability Resources as soon as possible. Students with a disability identified during the semester should contact Student Accommodations and Disability Resources as soon as possible to arrange an appointment and have an advisor review their documentation.

All accommodations must be approved through Student Accommodations and Disability Resources located on each campus:

- [Pullman Resources](#)
- [Spokane Resources](#)
- [Tri-Cities Resources](#)
- [Vancouver Resources](#)
- Students not on one of these campuses should contact the [WSU Pullman Student Accommodations and Disability Resources](#) for more information.

All students requesting reasonable accommodation must meet with the instructor before or during the first week of the course to review all proposed accommodations concerning course content and requirements. Exceptions to this timeframe will be granted only upon a showing of good cause.

## **Discrimination and Harassment**

WSU prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates in compliance with Title IX. Inquiries regarding Title IX and reports of sex discrimination can be directed to the WSU Title IX Coordinator. More information on WSU's policies and procedures for responding to discrimination and harassment is available here: [Nondiscrimination Statement](#).

WSU does not discriminate and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, disability, age, religion, creed, genetic information, marital status, protected veteran/military status, or immigration or citizenship status in any education program or activity that it operates in compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws and regulations. Inquiries regarding Title IX, ADA, or other civil rights laws, as well as reports of discrimination can be directed to the Compliance and Civil Rights, WSU ADA Coordinator, or WSU Title IX Coordinator. More information on WSU's policies and procedures for responding to discrimination and harassment is found in the [Nondiscrimination Statement](#).

A graduate student who believes that there has been unlawful discrimination, including sexual harassment, is strongly encouraged to contact [Compliance and Civil Rights](#). If the complaint involves discrimination or harassment by a student, a complaint may also be filed with the [Center for Community Standards](#).

## **Academic Integrity**

Students and faculty are responsible for upholding and protecting academic honesty standards within the university. At WSU, all cases of academic dishonesty or academic misconduct, including cases of plagiarism, will be handled according to the process in WAC 504-26-415. Through the [Academic Integrity Process](#), the reported student will receive notice of the concerning information and be given an opportunity to respond. The Standards of Conduct for Students cover cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to the following:

- Unauthorized collaboration on assignments;
- Facilitation of dishonesty, including not challenging academic integrity violations by others;
- Obtaining unauthorized knowledge of course assignments or exam materials;
- Unauthorized multiple submissions of the same work for different course assignments;
- Sabotage of another student's work;
- Knowingly furnishing false information or data to any university official, faculty, or staff; and
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any university document, record, or form of personal identification.

Note. For a complete definition of academic dishonesty, see WAC 504-26-415 [Standards of Conduct for Students](#).

Given the accessibility of electronic information, further discussion of commonly observed examples of plagiarism is warranted. Examples may include:

- Copying material (e.g., copy and paste) from any source without proper citation;
- Copying homework solutions from online sources such as CHEGG, Bartleby, Stack Exchange, and solutions manuals; or
- Using an essay-for-hire service or copying material from another student

When submitting group projects, any example of plagiarism may result in the entire group facing disciplinary action. It is appropriate to ask professors for further clarification of proper protocol. In addition to increasing the availability of information, technology also provided enhanced methods for identifying copied work. Plagiarizing another's work denies learning opportunities and does not advance one's academic pursuits.

If a graduate student becomes aware of any incidents of academic dishonesty, the graduate student should report the incident to the appropriate faculty member. The faculty member is responsible for contacting the reported student and notifying the Center for Community Standards. Sanctions imposed by the faculty member may include failure of the assignment, test, or entire course – or recommendation for dismissal from the graduate program. The Center for Community Standards will assign additional educational outcomes to a student found responsible for an academic integrity violation. See [Violations and Possible Sections](#) for information about possible outcomes from the community standards process. If a student is uncomfortable reporting another student to a faculty member, other resources, including the ombudsman, the Graduate School, and the Center for Community Standards, are available.

## **Finalizing/Cleaning Up**

1. An electronic copy of the final thesis / dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School (Proquest) within 10 working days following the final examination.

2. Submit a Thesis/Dissertation approval form via mywsu.
3. Submit a “Hold Harmless/Copyright Acknowledgement” form via email via mywsu.
4. Doctoral students should submit the “Survey of Earned Doctorates”
5. All forms can be found on the Graduate School web site: [FORMS](#)
6. Schedule an Exit Interview with the Department Chair.
7. Clean up your laboratory space and return equipment and materials along with the completed checkout form.
8. Clean up your office space and return any keys to department main office staff.

## **Doctorate’s Degree Deadlines**

All forms are available on the [FORMS](#) page and must be submitted to the Graduate School through your department’s academic coordinator.

### **Degree Program Action**

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#### **Obtain an Advisor/Committee Chair**

Refer to your graduate program's student handbook for more information.

Deadline: As soon as possible after admission to the Graduate School

#### **Submit a Program of Study to the Graduate School**

Doctoral students must submit the Program of Study form to their graduate program's academic coordinator during their third semester.

A graduate student cannot take an exam in the same semester they submit their Program of Study. If you plan to take a prelim exam in Fall 2026, your program form is due by the Spring 2026 deadline. Missing the deadline may be grounds for the Graduate School to deny an examination request.

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#### **Third Semester - Form Deadline**

**Fall 2025:** 10/1/2025

**Spring 2026:** 3/1/2026

**Summer 2026:** 3/1/2026

**Fall 2026:** 10/1/2026

**Spring 2027:** 3/1/2027

**Summer 2027:** 3/1/2027

**Fall 2027:** 10/1/2027

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**Spring 2028:** 3/1/2028  
**Summer 2028:** 3/1/2028

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### **Schedule Preliminary Exam**

*You must have an approved Program of Study on file with the Graduate School to schedule your preliminary exam (see above).*

Submit your exam form at least 10 working days prior to the proposed exam date. You must have no more than 6 graded credits of outstanding and/or in-progress coursework remaining on your Program of Study to schedule your exam.

*Second attempt preliminary exam scheduling forms are due 15 working days prior to the proposed date of the exam.*

### **Third Semester - Form Deadline**

**Fall 2025:** 11/19/2025  
**Spring 2026:** 4/17/2026  
**Summer 2026:** 7/17/2026  
**Fall 2026:** 11/25/2026  
**Spring 2027:** 4/16/2027  
**Summer 2027:** 7/16/2027

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### **Complete Preliminary Exam**

Students may take their preliminary exams at any point during the semester, Monday - Friday, between 8am and 5pm, excluding holidays. Preliminary exams may not be held during finals week.

See the above deadlines for scheduling your preliminary exam.

### **Semester of Prelim - Last Day for Prelim Exams**

**Fall 2025:** 12/5/2025  
**Spring 2026:** 5/1/2026  
**Summer 2026:** 7/31/2026  
**Fall 2026:** 12/11/2026  
**Spring 2027:** 4/30/2027  
**Summer 2027:** 7/30/2027

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### **Semester of Graduation - Application Deadline**

**Fall 2025 = 10/3/2025**  
Applications open 6/9/2025  
w/\$50 late fee: 10/4 - 10/31  
w/\$75 late fee: 11/1 - 11/21

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**Spring 2026 = 3/6/2026**

Applications open 10/13/2025

w/\$50 late fee: 3/7 - 3/31

w/\$75 late fee: 4/1 - 4/24

**Summer 2026 = 5/29/2026**

Applications open 1/1/2026

w/\$50 late fee: 5/30 - 6/30

w/\$75 late fee: 7/1 - 7/31

**Fall 2026 = 10/2/2026**

Applications open 6/8/2026

w/\$50 late fee: 10/3 - 10/31

w/\$75 late fee: 11/1 - 11/20

**Spring 2027 = 3/5/2027**

Applications open 10/12/2026

w/\$50 late fee: 3/6 - 7/31

w/\$75 late fee: 4/1 - 4/23

**Summer 2027 = 5/28/2027**

Applications open 1/1/2027

w/\$50 late fee: 5/29 - 6/30

w/\$75 late fee: 7/1 - 7/30

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**Schedule Final Exam**

*You must have applied for graduation to schedule a final exam.*

Meet with your committee to identify a final exam date well in advance. Submit your exam form and upload a complete draft of your dissertation to ProQuest at least 10 working days prior to the proposed exam date at <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/dissertations-theses/>.

*Second attempt final exam scheduling forms and drafts are due 15 working days prior to the proposed date of the exam.*

**Graduation Semester - Form Deadline**

**Fall 2025:** 11/6/2025

**Spring 2026:** 4/10/2026

**Summer 2026:** 7/17/2026

**Fall 2026:** 11/5/2026

**Spring 2027:** 4/9/2027

**Summer 2027:** 7/16/2027

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**Graduation Semester - Last Day for Final Exams**

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**Fall 2025:** 11/21/2025  
**Spring 2026:** 4/24/2026  
**Summer 2026:** 7/31/2026  
**Fall 2026:** 11/20/2026  
**Spring 2027:** 4/23/2027  
**Summer 2027:** 7/30/2027

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### **Commencement Participation**

Doctoral students wishing to participate in commencement must have applied for graduation. You (and the faculty member hooding you) must also register for the ceremony at the Graduation Fair or at <https://commencement.wsu.edu>.

## **Master's Degree Deadlines**

All forms are also available on our [FORMS](#) page and must be submitted to the Graduate School through your department's academic coordinator.

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### **Obtain an Advisor/Committee Chair**

Refer to your graduate program's student handbook for more information.  
Deadline: As soon as possible after admission to the Graduate School

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### **Graduation Semester - Form Deadline**

**Fall 2025:** 2/1/2025  
**Spring 2026:** 9/1/2025  
**Summer 2026:** 2/1/2026  
**Fall 2026:** 2/1/2026  
**Spring 2027:** 9/1/2027  
**Summer 2027:** 2/1/2027  
**Fall 2027:** 2/1/2027  
**Spring 2028:** 9/1/2027  
**Summer 2028:** 2/1/2028

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### **Semester of Graduation - Application Deadline**

**Fall 2025 = 10/3/2025**  
Applications open 6/9/2025  
w/\$50 late fee: 10/4 - 10/31  
w/\$75 late fee: 11/1 - 11/21

**Spring 2026 = 3/6/2026**

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Applications open 10/13/2025  
w/\$50 late fee: 3/7 - 3/31  
w/\$75 late fee: 4/1 - 4/24

**Summer 2026 = 5/29/2026**  
Applications open 1/1/2026  
w/\$50 late fee: 5/30 - 6/30  
w/\$75 late fee: 7/1 - 7/31

**Fall 2026 = 10/2/2026**  
Applications open 6/8/2026  
w/\$50 late fee: 10/3 - 10/31  
w/\$75 late fee: 11/1 - 11/20

**Spring 2027 = 3/5/2027**  
Applications open 10/12/2026  
w/\$50 late fee: 3/6 - 7/31  
w/\$75 late fee: 4/1 - 4/23

**Summer 2027 = 5/28/2027**  
Applications open 1/1/2027  
w/\$50 late fee: 5/29 - 6/30  
w/\$75 late fee: 7/1 - 7/30

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### **Graduation Semester - Form Deadline**

**Fall 2025:** 11/6/2025  
**Spring 2026:** 4/10/2026  
**Summer 2026:** 7/17/2026  
**Fall 2026:** 11/5/2026  
**Spring 2027:** 4/9/2027  
**Summer 2027:** 7/16/2027

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### **Graduation Semester - Last Day for Final Exams**

**Fall 2025:** 11/21/2025  
**Spring 2026:** 4/24/2026  
**Summer 2026:** 7/31/2026  
**Fall 2026:** 11/20/2026  
**Spring 2027:** 4/23/2027  
**Summer 2027:** 7/30/2027

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**All final documents (final thesis, Hold Harmless, and the Thesis/Dissertation Approval form along with myWSU approval by your committee chair) are due 10 working days**

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**after your final exam.**

For example, if your final examination is held on 4/3/2026, these documents are due by 5pm on 4/17/2026.

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### **Commencement Participation**

Students wishing to participate in commencement must have applied for graduation by set deadline. Students may register to walk in commencement at the in-person Graduation Fair or at <https://commencement.wsu.edu>.

## **HELPFUL LINKS:**

- **BSYSE PhD Guidelines:** <https://bsyse.wsu.edu/graduate-program/phd-guidelines/>
- **BSYSE MS Guidelines:** <https://bsyse.wsu.edu/graduate-program/ms-guidelines/>
- **BSYSE SAFETY/Trainings:** <https://bsyse.wsu.edu/on-line-safety-training/>
- **BSYSE Student Resources:** <https://bsyse.wsu.edu/graduate-program/current-students/>
- **BSYSE LJ Smith Hall Room Reservation:**  
<https://emailwsu.sharepoint.com/sites/cahnrs/bsyse/resources/SitePages/Home.aspx>  
[X](#)
- Academic Calendar: <https://registrar.wsu.edu/academic-calendar/>
- Bursar's Office: <https://bursar.wsu.edu/>
- CAHNRS:  
[College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences | Washington State University](#)
- CAHNRS Directory: <https://cahnrs.wsu.edu/people-directory/>
- CAHNRS IT: <https://it.cahnrs.wsu.edu/>
- CAHNRS Travel: <https://business-center.cw.wsu.edu/travel/>
- Child Care Center: <https://childrenscenter.wsu.edu/>
- Child Care Reimbursement Program (WSU/UAW Contract, Article 21):  
<https://gradschool.wsu.edu/finance/apply-for-childcare-reimbursement/>
- Commencement: <https://commencement.wsu.edu>
- Compton Union Building (CUB): <https://www.cub.wsu.edu/>
- Cougar Health Services: <https://cougarhealth.wsu.edu/>
- Cougar Health Student Care Network: [studentcare.wsu.edu](https://studentcare.wsu.edu)
- Deadlines and Procedures for Doctoral and Master's Degrees:

- <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/deadlines/>
- Final Semester Grad School Guide: <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/graduating-this-semester/>
  - **Graduate School:** <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/>
  - **Graduate School Policies, and Procedures:** <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/policies-procedures/>
  - **Graduate School FORMS:** <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/forms/>
  - Human Resource Services: <https://hrs.wsu.edu/>
  - Health Insurance (International Students): <https://cougarhealth.wsu.edu/studentinsurance/international-students/>
  - Health Insurance (Graduate Student Assistants): <https://cougarhealth.wsu.edu/studentinsurance/graduate-students/>
  - International Programs: <https://ip.wsu.edu/on-campus/about-us/>
  - MyWSU: <https://my.wsu.edu>
  - Payroll: <https://payroll.wsu.edu/>
  - Pullman Campus Map: <https://map.wsu.edu/>
  - Pullman Parking Info: <https://transportation.wsu.edu/parking-maps/>
  - Registrar's Office: <https://registrar.wsu.edu/>
  - Registrar Forms and Requests: <https://registrar.wsu.edu/forms-and-requests/>
  - Residency: <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/establishing-residency/>
  - Schedules of Classes: <https://schedules.wsu.edu/>
  - Student Resources for all WSU Campuses: <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/graduate-student%20resources/>
  - Tuition and Costs - <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/student-finance-page/>
  - Workday: <https://workday.wsu.edu>
  - WSU Jobs, Scholarships and Fellowships: <https://gradschool.wsu.edu/scholarships-fellowships-awards/>
  - WSU/UAW Contract: [WSU/UAW Contract 2024 – 2026 – Human Resource Services, Washington State University](https://gradschool.wsu.edu/graduate-student%20resources/)