

Molecular Plant Sciences Program Bylaws
Washington State University
Administrative Home: Graduate School
Last Revised – by Faculty April 2022

I. Objectives

- A. Degrees offered: Ph.D., M.S.
- B. Discipline: Molecular Plant Sciences (MPS) is a general reference to the fields of plant biochemistry, physiology, cell biology, genetics, and molecular biology.
- C. Mission of the Program: To educate and develop leaders in the field of molecular plant sciences by providing competencies and skills needed by professional scientists in diverse careers.

II. Degrees

The primary focus of the MPS program is to foster the education of graduate students towards a Doctoral degree in Molecular Plant Sciences. As such all new students accepted to the program begin as Ph.D. candidates. A Master of Science degree option in Molecular Plant Sciences will only be offered if, at a later time point and with the approval from the MPS Director, a graduate student and their advisory committee decide that this would be beneficial for the graduate student.

III. Membership

- A. Graduate Faculty participating within the MPS program may be WSU tenured and tenure track faculty, WSU non-tenure track faculty, or WSU adjunct faculty, subject to the limitations and definitions in this document. All Graduate Faculty must be “Initial Program Faculty” (listed in Section XI of this document) or subsequently approved as Graduate Faculty through the process outlined in section B below.

1. WSU Campus Participation

- a. The Doctoral and Master of Science degrees in Molecular Plant Sciences are offered through the Pullman campus of Washington State University as approved and authorized by the Higher Education Coordinating Board of Washington State. The campuses at Vancouver, Spokane, and Tri-Cities support this program but are not approved and authorized by the HECB to directly advertise and offer the degree as individual campuses.
- b. Approved tenured and tenure track MPS Graduate Faculty and other affiliated university faculty at the Pullman campus may participate equally in the MPS program as supporting site faculty with full program rights and responsibilities. As such they are entitled to act as

chair, co-chair, or member of graduate student committees; teach graduate courses; supervise research; and act as a program director or committee member.

c. Molecular Plant Sciences program will require students to reach ABD status in Pullman before moving permanently to any Research and Extension Center location. Students can still do research with affiliated faculty in Pullman while taking courses and go to field stations during the summers before reaching ABD status. All students seeking to work at a Research and Extension Center station will establish a co-chair/co-advisor on the Pullman campus. No new Research and Extension Center faculty will be recruited as MPS faculty. Each student will be considered on a case-by-case basis to determine the best program of study.

2. Departmental Affiliations

- a. Graduate Faculty membership in MPS is independent and separate from academic department, school, or college affiliations.
- b. All active members of the Graduate Faculty of MPS are eligible to vote on program issues.

3. Disciplinary Expertise

Graduate Faculty within MPS are expected to have a PhD or equivalent doctoral-level degree in a field related to molecular plant sciences. In addition, they must have demonstrated disciplinary expertise in a field related to Molecular Plant Sciences, interest and experience in mentoring and teaching of graduate students in this field, and relevant professional accomplishments.

4. Active Research Appropriate to MPS

MPS Graduate Faculty must be actively involved in research and graduate level teaching related to Molecular Plant Sciences as evidenced by recent external grant or contract support, related peer-reviewed publications within the last 5 years, graduate student mentoring within the last 5 years, teaching of relevant graduate level courses, or other relevant professional accomplishments.

5. Non-Tenure Track Graduate Faculty

a. Internal to WSU

Non-tenure track Graduate Faculty internal to WSU include research, clinical, and affiliate faculty. This category of Graduate Faculty also includes USDA-ARS researchers. These researchers are classified as WSU adjunct faculty but may function in the same roles as WSU tenured and tenure-track faculty. USDA-ARS faculty are entitled to act as chair, co-chair, or member of graduate student committees; teach graduate courses; supervise research; and act as a program

director or committee member. Other non-tenure track faculty internal to WSU (research, clinical, affiliate faculty) may be active MPS Graduate Faculty and entitled to act as co-chair or member of graduate student committees; teach graduate courses; and supervise research. When serving as co-chair of a student committee they must work with a tenured or tenure-track or USDA-ARS faculty member who is also an active member of the MPS Graduate Faculty.

b. External to WSU

Professionals who are not WSU faculty may be granted Graduate Faculty participation within MPS if they are first officially approved as adjunct faculty for WSU. Adjunct faculty who are approved as active MPS Graduate Faculty are entitled to act as a member of graduate student committees; teach graduate courses; and supervise research. They may not serve as student committee chair or co-chair; Program Director; or as an MPS Program committee member.

6. External Individual Committee Members

a. **Individual Committee Member Internal to WSU:** Individuals not officially participating as Graduate Faculty within MPS (for example, a faculty member from another WSU department or program) may serve on graduate committees for MPS students as long as they are a member of the Graduate Faculty in their own program or discipline and their committee appointment is approved by the Program Director of MPS.

b. **External Individual Committee Members:** Individuals not officially participating as Graduate Faculty within any graduate program at WSU (for example, a faculty member from another university or research entity) may be approved to serve as a thesis/dissertation committee member for an individual student on a case-by-case basis. The committee chair for that student should forward the name and a curriculum vitae of the desired committee member to the MPS Program Director. With approval of the Program Director, the nomination (with accompanying CV or other documentation of expertise) is forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval.

B. Application for Membership

1. Initial Graduate Faculty within MPS are listed in Section XI of this document and have been approved by the MPS Program Director, MPS Program Assistant Director, and Dean of the Graduate School.

2. Candidates for Graduate Faculty participation within MPS should be nominated by an existing MPS Graduate Faculty member or may self-nominate. The nomination should include a letter of nomination, and a curriculum vitae for the nominee. The Program Director will circulate application materials to all active Graduate Faculty prior to voting. Acceptance as Graduate Faculty requires a positive vote from a majority of faculty who respond to the vote.
3. In addition to a commitment to maintain the highest standards of mentoring for graduate students, anticipated contributions or qualifications for all successful Graduate Faculty applicants include one or more of the following:
 - a. History or reasonable expectation of an active, funded research program that can plausibly be relied upon as the source of continuing support of an MPS graduate student.
 - b. History of or willingness to participate as appropriate in administrative, teaching, and other functions of the MPS graduate program. This may include serving on graduate program administrative committees; serving as a thesis or dissertation committee member or chair; or providing graduate level instruction.
 - c. History of publication of peer-reviewed manuscripts in a discipline related to molecular plant sciences

C. Continuation of Active Membership

1. Graduate Faculty appointments to MPS will be reviewed for continuation of active membership by the program Director every 3 years with one-third of the membership reviewed each year. They will be evaluated for contributions such as graduate instruction, research, and teaching. Contributions to the MPS program shall be a requirement for continued active membership. Contribution may take the form of:
 - a. Committee chair, co-chair or member for graduate students in MPS
 - b. Teaching or co-teaching a graduate course in MPS
 - c. Supervising research for graduate students in MPS
 - d. Serving in the administrative and committee structure of MPS
2. Faculty who do not make any of the contributions as stated in C.1 above to the MPS program for three consecutive years will be designated as inactive Graduate Faculty. Inactive Graduate Faculty do not have voting rights. Initiation of any of these activities described in C.1 above will result in restoration of active Graduate Faculty designation.
3. Faculty Members in the MPS Graduate Program who are granted Emeritus faculty status, as defined by WSU policy, shall be afforded all the rights and

privileges of Graduate Faculty of the Program, provided they continue to participate in the Program, as outlined above under Continuation of Membership (Article III. Section C. Sub-section 1).

- D. **Discontinuation of Membership**
Upon request of an active or inactive Graduate Faculty member, that individual membership will be discontinued. If that individual's research and graduate training activity should change, they may reapply for Graduate Faculty participation at any time.
- E. **Membership Appeal Process**
Faculty appeal of any membership decision in MPS must be made in writing to the Director of MPS within 30 calendars of the decision. The appeal is determined by a majority vote of all MPS Graduate Faculty (see Section IX for definition of quorum). Final written appeal may be made to the Dean of the Graduate School within 30 calendar days of the MPS Graduate Faculty vote.

IV. Administration

Administration of the program and its activities is vested in the Director with advice from the Executive Committee.

V. Graduate Program Director and Assistant Director

- A. The Director and Assistant Director of MPS will be nominated by the Executive Committee and accepted by majority vote of the active MPS Graduate Faculty. Final approval of the Program Director resides with the Dean of the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS), the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences (CoAS), and the Dean of the Graduate School.
- B. The Director and Assistant Director shall each serve a term of 4 years and are eligible for re-election if nominated to continue in this position in accordance within the terms of the initial appointment and with final approval of the deans as described in IV.A above.
- C. The Director may be removed from office by a majority vote of all active MPS Graduate Faculty and with the approval of the deans as described in IV.A above.

Duties of the Director and Assistant Director

1. Provide overall academic leadership for MPS.
2. Develop and implement policies for MPS.
3. Represent the interests of MPS to the campus and University administrators.
4. Call and preside at meetings of the Executive Committee.
5. Call and preside at meetings of the Graduate Faculty of MPS.
6. Be responsible for coordinating all MPS administrative matters within the Graduate School.

7. Manage the budgets of MPS.
8. Submit course or curriculum change or approval forms.
9. Submit bylaws change or approval forms.
10. Be responsible for the accuracy of all publications related to MPS including web pages and catalog copy.
11. Coordinate MPS graduate course teaching assignments with relevant department chairs.
12. Supervise the activities of the MPS Academic Coordinator.

VI. Curriculum

The Assistant Director coordinates, together with the Academic Coordinator, all activities related to review and revision of the MPS curriculum. Duties include:

- a. Regular (at least annual) review of the MPS curriculum.
- b. Make recommendations regarding curricular revision, which will be forwarded to the Director of MPS and presented to the Graduate Faculty for approval by majority vote.
- c. Prepare drafts of course or curricular change forms for revision and submission by the MPS Program Director.

VII. Committees

A. Executive Committee

Coordinates and advises the Director in administering MPS. The Academic Coordinator shall record and distribute minutes of each meeting to the faculty and maintain one copy in Program Records.

1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of 4 to 6 active Graduate Faculty members of MPS with representation from CAHNRS and CoAS appropriately reflecting faculty membership from the two colleges.
2. The MPS Director serves as the Committee Chair
3. Final membership will be determined by a majority vote of the voting MPS Graduate Faculty in a confidential ballot.
4. Members of the Executive Committee will serve 3 year terms with approximately 1/3 of the membership changing each year.
5. Areas in which the Executive Committee shall assist and advise the Director include:
 - a. Review, develop and update long-range goals for MPS and plans for their attainment. These ideas shall be presented at least once annually to a meeting of all faculty.
 - b. Serve as a sounding board for new ideas, changes, etc., in academic or administrative issues.
 - c. Provide guidance on administration of the Program.
 - d. Nominate members for service on other committees.
 - e. Assist with MPS program assessment process.

- B. Recruiting Committee
Coordinates all activities related to recruitment of MPS graduate students.
1. The Recruiting Committee shall consist of 3 active members of the MPS Graduate Faculty that will be nominated and approved by the Director.
 2. Members of the Recruiting Committee shall serve for one recruitment period. New members will be re-appointment every year at the beginning of a new recruitment phase.
 3. Duties of the Recruiting Committee include:
 - a. Work with the Academic Coordinator to develop and maintain recruiting materials as required.
 - b. Coordinate all recruitment efforts with the MPS Graduate Faculty
 - c. Organize annual recruiting events including the Integrated Plant Sciences Retreat.
 - d. Review all student applications and in conjunction with the Director and the Academic Coordinator, after consultation with appropriate MPS Graduate Faculty, decide the disposition of applications as to acceptance or rejection in a timely manner.
 - e. Make recommendations to the Director regarding the financial support of graduate students for their first year.
- C. Other Committees
Other ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Executive Committee and Program Director as needed. Addition of new, or changes to the existing, standing committees must be approved by amendment of bylaws.

VIII. Graduate Student Committees

- A. The initial selection, or subsequent changes, of a graduate student's committee shall be determined jointly by the student and the student's advisor.
- B. The graduate committee of each student shall have a minimum of four members for Ph.D, but can be reduced to three members if a student decides to leave the MPS program with a MS degree. A majority of committee members shall be active MPS Graduate Faculty members.
- C. As specified in the Graduate School's Policies and Procedures, the performance of each graduate student shall be reviewed annually.
- D. Faculty members that were granted Emeritus status can continue their participation in existing graduate student committees, but cannot serve on any new committees.

IX. Student Representatives

At the discretion of the MPS Program Director and Faculty, student representation may be added or deleted from any committee structure.

X. Graduate Faculty Meetings

- A. The MPS Program Director shall call MPS Graduate Faculty meetings as needed but at least once per academic year. All attempts will be made to provide a written agenda in advance.
- B. Other meetings may be called at the discretion of the Director or the Executive Committee.
- C. A special meeting of MPS Graduate Faculty may be called by petition of 5 or more Graduate Faculty members.
- D. Efforts will be made to communicate items of interest, including notification of a faculty meeting, to the faculty via e-mail. General MPS Graduate Faculty Meetings shall be called with a minimum of 1 week's notice.
- D. Faculty not present on the Pullman campus at the time of a general MPS Graduate Faculty Meeting may participate by telephone conference call or other electronic means.

XI. Quorum

- A. For all general graduate faculty meetings and votes unless otherwise indicated, a quorum shall be defined as a minimum of 50 percent of the Program membership.
- B. For programmatic committees to conduct a business meeting, a quorum shall be defined as a minimum of 50 percent of the committee membership.
- C. Unless otherwise indicated, a simple majority of the total number of ballots cast are required to pass a motion.
- D. In the event of a tie vote in which the entire graduate faculty is eligible to vote, the Program Director will decide the outcome of the vote. For tie votes that occur within programmatic committees, the committee chair will decide the outcome of the vote.

XII. Amendments to Program Bylaws

- A. The Program Bylaws document shall be reviewed every fifth year by the Executive committee and annually by either the Director or the Assistant Director.

- B. Amendments to the Bylaws may originate from any eligible MPS Graduate Faculty member. Proposed amendments must be forwarded to the MPS Executive Committee and Program Director. After discussion, amendments shall be forwarded to the MPS Graduate Faculty electronically at least 2 weeks prior to the faculty meeting at which the amendments will be discussed. After discussion, a minimum 2-week period will follow the faculty meeting prior to vote. Votes on amendments may occur at a faculty meeting or electronically. Amendments to the MPS Bylaws require a positive vote from the majority of all active MPS Graduate Faculty.
- C. All amendments and revisions must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee and Faculty Senate for review and final approval.

XIII. List of Active Graduate Faculty Members

A. List of MPS Graduate Faculty Participants

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| 1. Bartley, Laura | 15. Gleason, Cynthia | 30. Poovaiah, Joe |
| 2. Bates, Phil | 16. Hellmann, Hanjo | 31. Pumphrey, Michael |
| 3. Brueggeman, Robert | 17. Hulbert, Scot | 32. Roalson, Eric |
| 4. Burke, Ian | 18. | 33. Roje, Sanja |
| 5. Busch, Jeremiah | 19. Kalyanaraman, Ananth | 34. Sanguinet, Karen |
| 6. Garland-Campbell, Kimberly | 20. Kang, ChulHee | 35. Smertenko, Andrei |
| 7. Carter, Arron | 21. Kirchhoff, Helmut | 36. Steber, Camille |
| 8. Chen, Weidong | 22. Knoblauch, Michael | 37. Sullivan, Tarah |
| 9. Cousins, Asaph | 23. Lange, Mark | 38. Tanaka, Kiwamu |
| 10. Crowder, David | 24. Lewis, Norman | 39. Tegeder, Mechthild |
| 11. Ficklin, Stephen | 25. McCubbin, Andy | 40. Thomashow, Linda |
| 12. Friesen, Maren | 26. Neff, Michael | 41. Wyrick, John |
| 13. Gang, David | 27. Okita, Tom | 42. Zhang, Zhiwu |
| 14. Gill, Kulvinder | 28. Pappu, Hanu | |
| | 29. | |

- B. The Director of the MPS Graduate Program is responsible for submitting an updated list of active and inactive MPS Graduate Faculty participants to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval annually.