

**GRADUATE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE Ph.D. DEGREE  
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCE**

**Adopted by Faculty Vote: 4/20/2007**

**DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SCIENCE  
GRADUATE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PhD DEGREE**

**Note: All students are bound by the rules and requirements outlined in the Graduate Catalog corresponding to their year of enrollment in the program. Each student must familiarize themselves with these requirements and those described in UCONN's Graduate Catalog upon enrollment.**

**1. GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Graduate Advisory Committee is charged with guiding the student through all matters pertaining to graduate study, and will evaluate and vote on many matters relevant to the student's progress through the program. For many matters (i.e. General Examination, Dissertation proposal, and the Dissertation defense) the vote must be unanimous among the Committee for passage. Each doctoral student in the Department of Animal Science must select and assemble their Graduate Advisory Committee, in consultation with their major advisor, within their first year of enrollment. The committee must be headed by a major advisor who is a member of both the Department of Animal Science (including jointly appointed faculty) and a member of the Graduate Faculty. The committee must also include at least two associate advisors whose expertise complements the area of anticipated research, including one member external to the department. In some instances, experts from outside the University can be included on the committee (See Graduate Catalog). Students are encouraged to schedule annual committee meetings to discuss their research and academic progress.

**2. PLAN OF STUDY**

An approved Plan of Study form must be submitted to the Graduate School within the first or second year of matriculation (prior to completion of 12 credits of graduate coursework). The Animal Science department is diverse, with a large variety of student and faculty interests. As a result, each student's program is quite flexible, and is shaped by the student in consultation with their major advisor and Advisory Committee. Students should obtain a basic understanding of Animal Science – but may specialize in courses offered in other departments such as Nutrition, Pathobiology, Physiology and Neurobiology, or Molecular and Cell Biology. Delays in the submission of the Plan of Study can result in delays in promotion to higher pay levels (see below). Final approval of the Plan of Study must be obtained before permission to take the General Examination will be granted.

**3. GENERAL EXAM**

The General Exam is administered by the graduate advisory committee near the end of the their didactic (classroom) courses, but not later than eight months prior to the date of completion of all degree requirements. The examination committee must include at least five faculty members, including the student's entire advisory committee. The major advisor serves as chair of the exam committee and will solicit written or oral questions from the examination committee. The exam can consist of a "closed book," take-home and/or oral examination covering the student's didactic course work (as delineated in the Plan of Study). Additionally, questions examining the student's ability to read and critique the scientific literature, or develop research ideas are appropriate. Students are encouraged to consult with committee members in advance of the exam to discuss its scope. After discussing the responses on written and/or oral portions of the General Exam, the committee members will vote (pass/conditional pass/fail). Conditional passage of the exam may be given when the student demonstrates sufficient strength in all but one or two areas. Often the submission of a research paper or satisfactory completion of an additional course in the area of weakness is sufficient remedial action, but this decision is made by the advisory Committee.

#### **4. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL (Formerly “Prospectus”)**

The Dissertation Proposal should be completed within six months of passing the General Examination. Its format will be determined by the Advisory Committee, but should consist of a detailed, hypothesis-based proposal in the format of an NIH, NSF or USDA grant application. Students should discuss these requirements with their major advisor before preparing the proposal. The proposal should be no more than ten pages in length (single-spaced) and should include:

- a. Specific aims stating the purpose of the proposed research, hypotheses to be tested and specific questions to be asked.
- b. Background and significance. Briefly describe the background and significance of the research proposal. Discuss how the specific aims of the proposal, relate to the more broad, long-term research objectives.
- c. Research and design methods. Provide an outline of the experimental design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims. A tentative sequence of investigations, statistical procedures by which the data will be analyzed, significance of the anticipated results, and a discussion of the handling of any hazardous materials should be included.
- d. Animals in research. Explain the use of animals if they are part of the research procedure. Provide rationale for the choice of the experimental animals and procedures that will be used following the IACUC guidelines.
- e. Literature cited (exclusive of the 10-page limit).
- f. Submission: The department head should be advised of the oral dissertation proposal presentation date at least one month in advance in order to make arrangements for two external reviewers to participate in the process. The written dissertation proposal must first be approved by the advisory committee, then two copies must be submitted to the Department head at least two weeks in advance of the dissertation proposal defense. In general, the external reviewers will be two individuals within the department who are not on the student’s committee. In some circumstances, reviewers outside of the department may be used. After review, the Department Head will forward the reviewers’ comments to the student and their advisor for consideration by the Advisory Committee before a final decision is rendered. Following revisions and the Advisory Committee’s recommendation, the Department Head will make a "pass/fail" decision, in consultation with the student's major advisor. This recommendation will then be communicated to the Graduate School. Approval must occur no later than six months prior to graduation, but it is highly advisable to complete the dissertation proposal 12- to 18-months in advance of the doctoral defense.
- g. Oral Presentation: A public presentation of the student’s research dissertation proposal is to be held prior to final approval. After the public seminar, faculty members will be invited to further discuss the student’s proposed project. After the general discussion, any remaining faculty will be excused and the committee and the external examiners will meet with the student for in-depth discussion of the research proposal. Modifications of the dissertation proposal may be required following the oral presentation and discussion. This presentation may be used toward satisfying the departmental requirement of two ANSC 5694 presentations if it can be arranged during a regularly schedule meeting of that class.

## 5. GRADUATE STUDENT STATUS:

Graduate students entering the Ph.D. program with a bachelor's degree will remain at Graduate Level I until they have completed 24 credits of advanced course work or have been granted a Master's degree. Students with a Master's degree will enter the program at the Graduate Level II. Once the General Exam, Dissertation proposal, and Plan of study have been passed or approved, the student will attain Graduate Level III status. Foreign language and certain residency requirements (see Graduate Catalog) may also apply. Compensation for graduate assistantship support increases with each increase in level. The Office of Sponsored Programs webpage can be consulted for current rates.

6. **ANIMAL SCIENCE COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS:** Students must successfully complete the Animal Science Seminar (ANSC 5694) twice, and Graduate Presentation Skills (ANSC 5693) once. The dissertation defense may not be scheduled to coincide with an ANSC 5694 presentation.
7. **FINAL EXAM—DISSERTATION DEFENSE:** Students must defend their dissertation at a well-advertised, public seminar. Advertising shall include publication in the *UCONN Advance*, posting flyers in conspicuous areas of relevant buildings, and by contacting the ANSC departmental secretary for email distribution. The *UCONN Advance* requires notification at least three weeks in advance. The public presentation must be attended by at least 5 UCONN faculty members (including those on the Advisory Committee). After the public presentation, the departmental faculty and advisory committee will remain for in-depth discussion, followed by the committee alone. After discussion, the committee will vote on the outcome of the exam. The student must submit a final "draft" of the dissertation to the committee members at least two weeks in advance of the defense date. A "working" copy of the thesis must be submitted to the Graduate School at least 7 days in advance of the defense with a "Tentative Approval" form signed by the Advisory Committee. The student is required to make all suggested revisions to the dissertation, in consultation with their major advisor, prior to final acceptance.
8. **PUBLICATION:** Students are expected to submit first-author manuscripts suitable for publication prior to their major advisor prior to defense of the dissertation.
9. **Departmental Assistantships:** Partial or full assistantship support may be offered to students based upon the availability of funding. Funding can come from independent research grants, Hatch projects, or departmentally funded projects through an annual competition. As part of their professional training, all students are required to assist with teaching and/or laboratory assistance as required by the Department at least one course per year. Course assignments are arranged by the Graduate Committee in late August or early September and are communicated by email. Students may not assist with the same course more than twice. Students will be given instructions regarding their duties and responsibilities prior to the first day of class by the instructors. Students will be evaluated on their performance by the course instructor, and possibly by the students in the class (at the discretion of the course instructor), and satisfactory performance is required. If a student's performance is judged to be unsatisfactory by the course instructor, future assistantship support may be cancelled (at the discretion of the Graduate Committee, in consultation with the Department Head). Students in the Ph.D. program may not receive Departmental assistantship support for more than 3 years (or 4 if both the Master's and Ph.D. degrees are obtained within the Department). [These requirements were adopted by faculty vote on 10/15/97 and 9/22/00].
10. **Exceptions:** Requests for exceptions to the above rules must be submitted to the Graduate Committee in writing by the faculty advisor. Requests for exceptions cannot override University of Connecticut graduate education regulations. In general, exceptions to departmental regulations are considered only

in cases of extenuating circumstances.

Last revised: 8/5/09

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## Ph.D. REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

- \_\_\_ SELECTION OF GRADUATE COMMITTEE. See requirements above.
- \_\_\_ PLAN OF STUDY. See requirements above.
- \_\_\_ FOREIGN LANGUAGE/SUPPORTING AREA OF STUDY. Competent reading knowledge of at least 1 foreign language, or at least six credits of advanced work in a related or supporting area.
- \_\_\_ GENERAL EXAM. See requirements above
- \_\_\_ RESEARCH DISSERTATION PROPOSAL. See requirements above.
- \_\_\_ DISSERTATION PROPOSAL EXAM. See requirements above.
- \_\_\_ SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION. A preliminary or “working” copy of dissertation must be distributed to the Advisory Committee at least two weeks in advance of the oral defense. In addition, a copy must be submitted to the Graduate School at least 7 days before the oral exam along with a signed Tentative Approval form.
- \_\_\_ FINAL ORAL EXAM—DISSERTATION DEFENSE. Notification must be sent using a special form issued by the Graduate School, submitted no later than 7 days in advance of the oral exam. The exam should be well advertised, and notice should be given to the *UConn Advance* not later than 3-weeks prior to the exam.
- \_\_\_ DISSERTATION—FINAL COPIES. Following any necessary revisions in the document, final approval must be submitted to Graduate School immediately after the final exam on “final-approval pages.”
- \_\_\_ DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS. When dissertation is submitted, 4 typed copies of the abstract, not to exceed 350 words, shall be submitted to Graduate School—abstract is published in *Dissertation Abstracts International*.
- \_\_\_ APPLICATION FOR DEGREE. Formal application must be filed on official form at the Graduate School.

### “Other” requirements:

- \_\_\_ Successful completion of ANSC 5694 (twice) and ANSC 5693 (once).
- \_\_\_ SUBMISSION OF FIRST-AUTHOR MANUSCRIPTS, SUITABLE FOR PUBLICATION, TO MAJOR ADVISOR PRIOR TO DISSERTATION DEFENSE.

GRADUATE STUDENTS MUST MAINTAIN “CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION.”

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*This document was developed in consultation with Mr. Tom Peters (Assistant Dean, Graduate School) and through discussions at faculty meetings. It was originally supplied to us courtesy of the Pathobiology Department, then modified for the Department of Animal Science. It was adopted by faculty vote on 6/6/2002. Minor revisions to this document may be made by the Chair of the Graduate Committee for the purpose of clarity and correctness. Please check the Departmental Website for the most up-to-date version.*