

College of Natural Resources and Environment
Graduate Program Procedures
2015-2016



VirginiaTech®

College of Natural Resources
and Environment



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Graduate Program Procedures

2015-2016

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College of Natural Resources & Environment (CNRE)

The information contained here has been prepared to assist graduate students in becoming familiar with the operating procedures and requirements of the College of Natural Resources and Environment (“CNRE”). The CNRE website is located at <http://cnre.vt.edu>.

Dr. Paul Winistorfer is Dean of the College of Natural Resources and Environment. He and other administrative staff are located in 324 Cheatham Hall.

CNRE’s academic offices are located in 138 Cheatham Hall. Renee Dillon (rldillon@vt.edu) and other CNRE staff in those offices can assist you with course registration and academic issues, as well as reserving classrooms in Cheatham Hall for committee meetings and other events.

Graduate School

Virginia Tech’s Graduate School is responsible for the development, administration, and evaluation of graduate education throughout the university. Dr. Karen DePauw serves as Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education. The Graduate School offices are located in the Graduate Life Center at Donaldson Brown. The Graduate School’s website is <http://graduateschool.vt.edu>. It would be to your advantage to visit the Graduate Life Center (GLC) and to review the Graduate School’s New Student Guide at <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/studentguide>.

All graduate students are expected to be familiar and comply with university, college, department, and subject area requirements. The Graduate School outlines its *Expectations for Graduate Education* online at <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/node/6042>.

In addition, graduate students must follow Virginia Tech’s **Graduate Honor Code** (<http://ghs.graduateschool.vt.edu>). Failure to comply satisfactorily with all requirements may seriously inconvenience the student and could lead to assistantship termination and/or dismissal from the program.

General academic procedures for graduate students can be found in the *Graduate Catalog*, available at http://graduateschool.vt.edu/graduate_catalog. The Graduate Catalog includes information on admission, degree requirements, preparation of documents, and other important topics. Departments, major professors, and advisory committees may prescribe requirements in addition to what is listed in the Graduate Catalog.

CNRE Departments & Contact Information

CNRE is divided into four different academic departments:

Fish and Wildlife Conservation

<http://www.fishwild.vt.edu/>

Department Head: Dr. Joel Snodgrass

Office Contact: Dana Keith

dkeith@vt.edu • 540-231-5573

Cheatham Hall Room 100

Geography

<http://geography.vt.edu/>

Department Head: Dr. Bill Carstensen

Office Contact: Karen Bland

kbland@vt.edu • 540-231-7557

Major Williams Hall Room 115

Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation

<http://frec.vt.edu/>

Interim Department Head: Dr. Jay Sullivan

Office Contact: Mary Williams

masmith5@vt.edu • 540-231-5483

Cheatham Hall Room 313

Sustainable Biomaterials

<http://sbio.vt.edu/>

Department Head: Dr. Bob Smith

Office Contact: Debbie Garnand

garnandd@vt.edu • 540-231-7757

Cheatham Hall Room 230

Graduate students should report to their department as soon as possible after arrival on campus in order to sign the necessary payroll forms. When reporting, be prepared to show proof of citizenship or immigration status. For U.S. citizens, a current photo identification card and either an **original** Social Security card or an **original** birth certificate are required. U.S. Passports are accepted. **Copies are not acceptable.**

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I register for classes?

Log into HokieSPA and go to your Registration and Schedule. (A tutorial is available online at <http://www.iddl.vt.edu/tutorial/hokiespa/>). When the university allows course registration, you will be able to add and drop classes here in HokieSPA. Be sure to check the Registrar's Timetable Calendar for important dates and deadlines regarding course registration each semester: http://www.registrar.vt.edu/dates_deadlines/timetable_calendar/index.html. We will also send reminders and information to you via email when it's time to start planning for course registration.

How do I request approval for an independent study?

You will need to complete the 5974 Graduate Independent Study Request Form. This form and other student forms are located on CNRE's website: <http://cnre.vt.edu/students/forms/index.html>. Follow the instructions on the form for completing it, obtain the appropriate signatures, and then return it to the Advising Center (Cheatham 138) for final review and processing.

How do I request to add a class which I am not able to add myself?

Courses requiring special approval or other restrictions cannot be added without a "Force Add," which requires the course instructor's approval and is processed by CNRE's Advising Center. Force Add forms are located at the front desk in the Advising Center (Cheatham 138). A Force Add form must have the course instructor's signature before it can be processed.

Where do I find the necessary forms I will need as a graduate student?

The Graduate School's student forms are located at <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/forms>. CNRE also keeps student forms available online at <http://cnre.vt.edu/students/forms/index.html>.

What do I do if I have an emergency and need to leave Virginia Tech?

Do not leave without taking care of the courses in your schedule. This will require your signature on necessary forms.

- Notify your advisor immediately
- You may need to talk to the Graduate School
- Resign from the semester if it is necessary

And, if you still need help, talk to someone in the Advising Center, Cheatham Hall #138.

How do I request to withdraw from a class or resign from the semester?

The "Graduate Course Withdrawal" and "Student Resignation/Withdrawal" forms are located on the Graduate School's website under the Enrollment section. You will need to complete these

forms, obtain appropriate signatures, and submit the forms to the Graduate School for processing.

Is there funding available for my research through CNRE?

Your department may or may not have funding for research. Please check with your major advisor on what might be available and how to apply for funding.

Is there other graduate student funding available?

The Graduate School offers many opportunities for funding. Review financial information online at <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/financial/>.

Are there rooms that can be reserved for committee and other meetings?

It is your responsibility to schedule the date, time, and location for your meetings, so please do not finalize a date and time to meet with your committee without first reserving a location. **Plan well in advance, as Cheatham Hall conference rooms and classrooms fill up quickly.**

There are three conference rooms in Cheatham Hall which can be reserved:

- Renee Dillon (231-5482) (rldillon@vt.edu) in Room 138 can reserve **136B, 315, and classrooms in Cheatham Hall.**
- **Room 147 Cheatham** is designated as a Fish and Wildlife Conservation departmental conference room. Dana Keith (231-5573) (dkeith@vt.edu) in Room 100 can reserve that room for you. It holds up to 10 people.
- Karen Bland (231-7557) (kbland@vt.edu) can make a reservation for **Major Williams Hall Room 117** in the Department of Geography.
- A conference room in **Fralin Hall** (next door to Cheatham) may also be available.
- As graduate students, you also have access to rooms in the **Graduate Life Center (GLC)** on College Avenue. Those reservations are made through the GLC (send an email request to glc@vt.edu).

Is mental health counseling available on campus to graduate students?

Cook Counseling Center (<http://www.ucc.vt.edu/>), located in McComas Hall, provides individual, group, and couples counseling, assessment, consultation, and campus outreach services to currently enrolled students. These services are included in the cost of your comprehensive fees.

Counseling support is also available in the GLC. Cook Counseling Center provides walk-in counseling support specifically to graduate students in the GLC's Green Room on Fridays from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. No appointment is necessary. Feel free to take advantage of this if you are stressed, anxious, need to develop better study habits, or just need someone to talk to.

Desks, Laboratory Space, and Keys

Desk and laboratory space will be provided for graduate students by the appropriate department head *if and when* such space is available.

Department of Geography graduate students should see Karen Bland in 115 Major Williams Hall regarding desk, lab space, and keys.

Keys for Cheatham Hall are available from Arlice Banks (arbanks@vt.edu) in the Dean's office in Room 324. A signed key slip (available from departmental administrative assistants) and a deposit of \$5.00 per key are required for each separate key request.

You are responsible for a key when it is issued to you.

Please remember the following rules regarding keys:

- **Keep Cheatham Hall and Major Williams Hall secure** by relocking entry doors at night and on weekends.
- **DO NOT PROP DOORS OPEN FOR ANY REASON.**
- **DO NOT SHARE KEYS.**
- **DO NOT SWAP KEYS WITH ANOTHER GRADUATE STUDENT.** If a key exchange needs to be made, then new keys need to be reassigned by Arlice Banks in 324 Cheatham or Karen Bland in 115 Major Williams Hall.
- **REPORT LOST KEYS IMMEDIATELY** to Arlice Banks or someone else in Room 324 Cheatham or to Karen Bland in 115 Major Williams Hall.
- **KEYS MUST BE RETURNED** prior to your leaving Virginia Tech as a graduate student.

The Dean's office in Room 324 will process a reimbursement request once you return the keys you were **originally** issued upon leaving Virginia Tech. A check will be direct deposited into your account, so please don't close your account until your refund check has been deposited. Cash refunds are not allowed.

Information Technology Assistance

How to contact the CNRE HelpDesk:

Phone: 1-9599
Email: CNREHelpDesk@vt.edu
Web: it.cnre.vt.edu
Location: 216 C Cheatham Hall

IT Contacts at CNRE:

Lon Weber – IT Director, Microcomputer Teaching Lab Manager

Les Fuller – Systems Administrator, CEARS lab manager, Geography computer lab manager)

Steven Lewis – HelpDesk Technician, Cheatham Hall and Brooks computer lab manager

Will Pfeil – Web and Media Specialist

A computer lab and printer, for student use, is located in 220 Cheatham Hall. You must have money on your Hokie Passport (student ID card) for printing. Classes are held in that room, so please be mindful of those classes.

Health Services and Health Insurance Benefits for Graduate Assistants

Certain immunizations are required for students attending Virginia Tech. Refer to the Schiffert Health Center's website (<http://www.healthcenter.vt.edu/>) for a list of requirements. Mandatory student fees include a charge for health services. Services include unlimited visits, most medications, and most laboratory procedures. As not all medical situations can be treated at the Schiffert Health Center, additional medical insurance is recommended.

If you are an international student, health insurance is mandatory for the duration of your stay. More information is available at <http://www.co.vt.edu/Risk/studenthealthinsr/>, or, for your convenience, the Student Medical Insurance office is located at the Student Services Building, Room 110. The hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. You may also visit the Frequently Asked Questions section from the Graduate School's website on insurance benefits: <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/life/health>.

Living in Blacksburg

Local Event Calendars:

Blacksburg Parks and Recreation – <http://recreation.blacksburg.gov>

Virginia Tech – <http://www.calendar.vt.edu/main.php>

Virginia Tech Women's Center – <http://www.womenscenter.vt.edu/>

Virginia Tourism – <http://www.virginia.org/>

Graduate Life Center – <http://www.graduatelifecenter.vt.edu/>

Next Three Days – <http://nextthreedays.com/>

Buy Eat Live Local – http://www.downtownblacksburg.com/live_music.aspx

Recreation Websites:

Appalachian Trail – www.appalachiantrail.org

Tangent Outfitters – www.tangentoutfitters.com

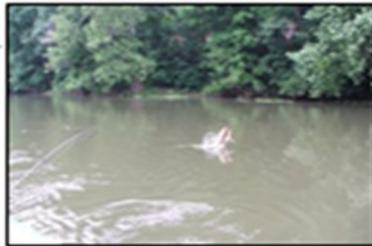
New River Junction – www.newriverjunction.com

Biking in Blacksburg – www.tcs.vt.edu/alternative/bike.asp

Bicycle registration – www.parking.vt.edu/

Hokie Sports – www.vt.edu/sports/

New River/Claytor Lake State Park



Huckleberry Trail



Hiking/GW-Jefferson National Forest



Pandapas Pond



Graduate Honor System

The Graduate Honor Code establishes a standard of academic integrity. The code demands a firm adherence to a set of values and is founded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others.

(<http://ghs.graduateschool.vt.edu/>)

Compliance with the **Graduate Honor Code** requires that all graduate students exercise honesty and ethical behavior in all their academic pursuits here at Virginia Tech, whether these undertakings pertain to study, course work, research, extension, or teaching.

Fundamental Beliefs of the Graduate Honor Code

To trust in a person is a positive force in making a person worthy of trust.

To study, perform research and teach in an environment that is free from the inconveniences and injustices caused by any form of intellectual dishonesty is a right of every graduate student.

To live by an Honor System, which places a positive emphasis on honesty as a means of protecting this right, is consistent with, and a contribution to, the University's quest for truth.

Introduction to the GHS: <http://ghs.graduateschool.vt.edu/about/overview>

Chief Justice: Nathan Carter, ghs@vt.edu

Advisor: Monika Gibson, gibsonm@vt.edu

Administrative Support: Pat Goodrich, goodm@vt.edu

Graduate Advisor and Advisory Committee

The department head, in consultation with the faculty, makes major professor (also known as “advisor,” “graduate advisor,” or “graduate committee chair”) assignments. Students are encouraged to consult with the appropriate department head if changes in major professor assignments or field of study become desirable.

Prior to initial registration, each graduate student's academic background is evaluated in accordance with department/section procedure. A temporary advisor is assigned who, along with the graduate student, will prepare a tentative plan of study. Prior to submitting the formal plan of study to the Dean of the Graduate School, an official graduate advisory committee will be formed for each student. This committee is selected by the major professor, in consultation with the individual student, and is subject to approval by the department head. Doctoral students must and master's students are advised to enlist at least one suitably qualified committee member from outside the student's department.

The College of Natural Resources and Environment requires that each student's graduate advisory committee meet with the student before the student has been in residence for one year and at least annually thereafter. While these meetings should center on the research project and coursework, an additional function will be evaluating the student's progress and making recommendations for improvement. It is the obligation of the student to arrange these meetings, in consultation with his/her major professor. Progress evaluations become part of the student's file.

Plan of Study

Each graduate student must file a Plan of Study with the Graduate School. This program lists courses the student plans to complete as part of his/her degree requirements. Modifications to the Plan of Study are allowed if approved by the student's committee and appropriate administrative officials. The Graduate School requires that MS students submit their plan of study by the end of the second semester enrolled. Ph.D. students must submit their plan of study by the end of their third semester in residence. The department of Geography requires the signed plan of study by the end of the first semester for full-time students.

Research Work Plan (PhD and MS Students Only)

Completion of graduate research is the requirement that most often extends the period of residency. Therefore, all graduate students should give prompt attention to choosing their research topic in consultation with their major professor and their advisory committee. Choice of topic should be guided by the student's interest, the availability of faculty to direct the research, research funding, and the college's ongoing research programs. An early choice of topic will allow for planning a more effective Plan of Study.

Following selection of a general research topic, the student should begin preparing a research work plan. The plan should include (at a minimum) sections related to justification, review of past research, research objectives, and the experimental design and methods to be used in the research. The plan should be prepared in accordance with the specific requirements of the department, section, and/or committee. An example format for the work plan is attached (Appendix A). Forms may vary between departments.

The work plan should be provided in writing to and approved by the student's graduate advisory committee by the end of the first year in residence. A signed, approved copy of the student's plan should be filed in the student's departmental office.

PhD Coursework and Examinations

The following requirements are specific to the college:

I. Minimum Competency in Statistics

The minimum competency for Ph.D. students regarding statistics is to pass STAT 5606 or STAT 5616 or another course of equivalent statistics content with a grade of "B" or better.

The statistics requirements must be satisfied before a student is allowed to take preliminary examinations. The college Student Policy and Affairs Committee recommends that this requirement be satisfied during the first year of residency.

II. Qualifying Examination

Departments or sections may require a qualifying examination for Ph.D. students. See the *Graduate Catalog* (http://www.graduateschool.vt.edu/graduate_catalog/). Click on the **Policies** tab for additional information.

III. Preliminary Examination

A preliminary examination is required for all Ph.D. students. The student's advisory committee administers this exam and determines the format. Departmental requirements and those of individual sections or committees may prescribe additional procedures regarding administration, format, timing, and evaluation. An expected preliminary examination date must be submitted with the Plan of Study for approval by the Graduate School. In addition, (1) the examination must be scheduled during academic sessions, (2) requests to schedule the examination must be received by the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to the examination date, (3) students must be registered during the term the examination is taken, and (4) the results must be reported to the Graduate School within two weeks of the examination (all in accordance with university procedures).

IV. Additional Coursework

Requiring additional courses (beyond those included on the Plan of Study) remains within the purview of the student's graduate advisory committee. Most often, such requirements are the result of weaknesses uncovered by progress evaluations, qualifying examinations, and preliminary examinations.

Thesis/Dissertation Preparation and Final Examination

(Note: all Graduate School policies pertaining to degree completion can be found at http://graduateschool.vt.edu/graduate_catalog/policies.htm)

Individual departments or sections may prescribe additional policies or procedures pertaining to thesis/dissertation preparation and final examination. Students are advised to consult their major professor and advisory committee concerning requirements and expectations. The preparation of the thesis/dissertation is time consuming and can be expedited by giving careful attention to the following details:

1. The thesis/dissertation is a permanent record of a major scholarly undertaking. Therefore, a satisfactory product may require several revisions before submission to the advisory committee at the time of the final examination and thereafter to prepare the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD).
2. During the initial stages of writing the thesis/dissertation, the major professor should periodically review the document to ensure it is properly organized, correctly stated and interpreted, and written in an acceptable style.
3. Once the major professor is satisfied that the thesis/dissertation is ready for review, a copy of the document is distributed to every member of the advisory committee. This review by the advisory committee must be carried out prior to scheduling the final examination to ensure that the thesis/dissertation is ready for defense. The major professor should ensure that the advisory committee has sufficient time to review the document. It is customary to provide at least two weeks for advisory committee review. Keep in mind that the final examination must be scheduled through the Graduate School at least two weeks in advance. This means that the advisory committee may need the document a month prior to the final examination. The student, major professor, and advisory committee should agree to a review timeline well before the conclusion of the degree program.
4. When the thesis/dissertation is ready for defense (as judged by the advisory committee members having read the document and signed the examination scheduling request), the student can schedule the final examination. Requests to schedule examinations must include the time, date, building and room number, title of thesis/dissertation, and the names and signatures of the advisory committee. These requests are due in the Graduate School at least two weeks before the examination date requested.
5. All students are responsible for the preparation of their thesis/dissertation in the required electronic format for archival by the university. Refer to the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation wiki (<https://secure.graduateschool.vt.edu/GSITWiki/Wiki.jsp?page=GAAPSETD>) for information about this process. The final version of the thesis/dissertation approved by the student's advisory committee must be submitted electronically as an ETD to the Graduate School no later than two weeks after successful completion of the final examination. If a committee member does not approve the thesis/dissertation, that non-approval will be designated on the ETD. A successful candidate is allowed, at most, one negative vote, regardless of the size of the advisory committee. Graduate degrees are completed after the approval of the ETD by the Graduate School and the completion of all other requirements for the degree.

Publication of Research

No research project is complete until the results are available for general use. Students are expected to publish their research promptly upon completion. In some instances it is advisable to publish research prior to the preparation of a thesis/dissertation. Publication should proceed

with the cooperation of the major professor, who should be incorporated as a co-author in recognition of the faculty contribution to the overall direction of the research. Some major professors require that theses/dissertations be in a form that is easily prepared for publication. In addition, major professors may require that manuscripts for publication be submitted at the time the thesis/dissertation is defended.

Use of College Facilities

The college's laboratories and equipment are available for research and teaching. In addition, other facilities—computers, electron microscopes, and many other items—are available within the university.

Arrange for the use of equipment and/or space by consulting the faculty member or technician in charge of the facilities. Your major professor will know who to contact. This person will ensure you know, or are shown, how to use the facilities. Be especially careful to clean up after you have finished. Do not leave notebooks, samples, or other items where they may prevent others from using the equipment or space. Laboratories should be maintained in a neat and orderly fashion at all times. Adherence to safety protocol in laboratories is mandatory. Consult with your major professor regarding the handling, storage, and disposal of chemicals.

Seminars

A variety of seminars are sponsored within the college and across campus. Students are encouraged to attend seminars of interest arranged by other departments. All graduate students are required to attend departmental or section-sponsored seminars. Departments may require that students register (pass/fail option) for the departmental graduate seminar (course no. 5004) every semester they are in residence. Students are expected to attend those seminars organized by the College of Natural Resources and Environment, regardless of topic.

General Duties

Detailed graduate student responsibilities are the mutual concern of the student and major professor. All graduate students are expected to broaden their experience by assisting in research programs other than those specifically designated as their research topic. This is particularly true when other graduate students need assistance in fieldwork for safety or other reasons.

Graduate students are expected to obtain teaching experience by giving seminars, assisting with undergraduate laboratories, presenting formal lectures, and grading. Since teaching, in one form or another, frequently forms a part of each student's later life, thought should be given to

including appropriate education coursework within the graduate Plan of Study. Also, students are expected to assist in the maintenance and operation of equipment in their area of specialization.

Graduate students on assistantships are expected to maintain regular hours. Each graduate research assistant is expected to work 20 hours per week (or a proportionately smaller number when employed less than half-time) for their assistantship and is considered to be 50 percent employed. It should be noted that this requirement does not provide for vacation time. Therefore, all graduate assistants who wish to be away from campus must make prior arrangements with their major professor concerning the fulfillment of their obligation to the university.

A summary of important degree requirements for master's and doctoral students, taken from the Graduate Catalog (http://www.graduateschool.vt.edu/graduate_catalog/) are attached for your convenience (Appendix B).

Information regarding enrollment limits and credit hour loads for employed graduate students can be found in Appendix C.

Graduate Student Ombudsperson

“The Graduate Student Ombudsperson, with an office in the Graduate Life Center, provides confidential help to graduate students to resolve issues and address concerns that arise within the university setting. The ombudsperson provides a resource for and information about institutional policies and acts as a facilitator to work toward resolutions of graduate students' concerns. The office is an informal avenue for graduate students, and consultations are kept confidential, unless the student grants permission for the ombudsperson to discuss issues with involved parties or administrators.”

Per Graduate School Catalog Policies and Procedures,
http://graduateschool.vt.edu/graduate_catalog/policies.htm

Continuous Enrollment

“Unless on approved in absentia or leave of absence status, graduate students in degree programs must be registered continuously at VT during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) and pay the prescribed tuition and fees (See [Policy PPM 291](#)). Students working on research/scholarly activity toward their thesis or dissertation should enroll in the number of credit hours that reflects the extent of a student's study or research activity. The minimum enrollment is for 3 credit hours at VT except in the case of a student who qualifies for Start of Semester De-

APPENDIX A

Research Work Plan—Example of Cover Page

RESEARCH WORK PLAN
for
John C. Doe
Candidate for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
in
FORESTRY

TITLE: The Growth of Open-grown Virginia Pine (*Pinus Virginiana*)

- OBJECTIVE: (1) To examine the vertical distribution of foliage and other components in the canopy of open-grown Virginia Pine.
- (2) To investigate the relationships between several parameters of tree measurements (Dbh, height, and others) and the dry weight of the above-ground portion (bole, branches, cones, and foliage) of open-grown Virginia Pine.
- (3) To use the above relationship and stem analysis to formulate growth curves for open-grown Virginia Pine.

APPROVAL:

Chair

Date

Committee Member

Date

Committee Member

Date

Department Head

Date

At a minimum, the Research Work Plan should contain the following sections:

1. Justification: The reasons for undertaking the research
2. Literature Review: A thorough review of past work
3. Objectives
4. Materials and Methods
 - Data Collection: A complete description of techniques to be used
 - Methods of Analysis: An outline of the statistical methods to be used
5. References

APPENDIX B

Credit Hour Requirements for Degrees and Certificates

(Taken from the Graduate Catalog)

I. Master's Degree

Virginia Tech allows for both thesis and non-thesis master's degrees. For each degree type, the student's Plan of Study must meet the semester credit hour requirements shown below.

Departments/programs may have additional requirements, and an advisory committee may add specific requirements needed for an individual student's academic development. Graded credits must be taken for an A/F grade unless the course is only offered P/F (see Grading System Requirements). See Transfer Credit for policies about the transfer of graduate credits for use on the Plan of Study. See Undergraduates Taking Graduate Courses for policies allowing students at Virginia Tech to transfer some courses from the bachelor's degree to the master's degree (also referred to as double counting courses toward both degrees).

A. Thesis Master's

Minimum total credits: 30 credit hours

Minimum graded credits: 20 credit hours

1. May include a maximum of 6 credits of Virginia Tech 4000-level undergraduate coursework. These 6 credits may include Special Study (4984) courses but may not include Undergraduate Independent Study (4974) or Undergraduate Research (4994) courses.
2. All other graded course work must be 5000-level or higher (i.e., graduate coursework).

The graded course work may include: A maximum of 9 credits total in 4984, 5974, 5984, and 6984 courses, and 3 credits of seminar.

Minimum research credits: 6 credit hours of Master's Research (5994) taken at Virginia Tech

B. Non-Thesis Master's

Minimum total credits: 30 credit hours

Minimum graded credits: 24 credit hours

1. May include a maximum of 6 credits of Virginia Tech 4000-level undergraduate coursework. These 6 credits may include Special Study (4984) courses but may not include Undergraduate Independent Study (4974) or Undergraduate Research (4994) courses.

-
2. All other graded course work must be 5000-level or higher (i.e., graduate coursework). The graded coursework may include: A maximum of 9 credits total in 4984, 5974, 5984, and 6984 courses, and 3 credits of seminar.

Maximum project and report or research credits: May include a maximum of 6 credits of Project and Report (5904) or Master's Research (5994) credits taken at Virginia Tech.

II. Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Doctoral degrees at Virginia Tech must meet the semester credit hour requirements listed below and include a dissertation that involves original research/scholarship. Departments/programs may have additional requirements, and an advisory committee may add specific requirements needed for an individual student's academic development. Graded course work on the Plan of Study must be taken for an A/F grade unless the course is only offered P/F (see Grading System Requirements). See Transfer Credit for policies about the transfer of graduate credits for use on the Plan of Study. Courses transferred from the bachelor's to the master's degree for a student in the master's program at Virginia Tech cannot be used for doctoral credit (i.e., they cannot be "triple counted").

Minimum total credits: 90 credit hours

Minimum graded credits: 30 credit hours

- A. At least 27 graded credits must be at the 5000-level or higher (i.e., graduate course work). Some departments have approval from the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies to reduce the minimum number of graded course work credits required for a specific degree program. See departmental degree requirements to determine if a department has approval for such changes in requirements.

The 5000-level course work may include a maximum 18 credits total in 5974, 5984, and 6984 courses and 4 credits of seminar.

- B. The Plan of Study may include a maximum of 6 credits of Virginia Tech graded 4000-level undergraduate coursework.

The 6 credits of Virginia Tech 4000-level course work may include Special Study

(4984) courses but may not include Undergraduate Independent Study (4974) or Undergraduate Research (4994) courses.

Minimum research credits: 30 credit hours of Doctoral Research (7994) taken at Virginia Tech

APPENDIX C

Enrollment Limits and Requirements

Taken from the Graduate Catalog

I. Full-Time Enrollment

Full-time enrollment for graduate students, for purposes of tuition and fees, consists of a minimum of 9 credit hours during academic year semesters. However, the Commonwealth of Virginia does not count students as full time unless they are enrolled for at least 12 credits, and in most academic contexts, 12 credits is considered full time. The maximum number of credit hours is 18 during academic year semesters. Overloads (more than 18 credit hours per semester, or more than 6 per summer session) require permission from a graduate dean.

II. Graduate Student Employment/Assistantships

The Graduate School recognizes that many students depend on part-time employment (including assistantships) and are part-time graduate students.

Maximum Credit Hour Load

<u>Percent Employed</u>	<u>Academic Semester</u>	<u>Each Summer Term*</u>
100	6	3
75	9	3
50 or less	12-18	6

* Maximum of 12 credit hours in both summer terms (maximum overload to 9 credit hours in a single summer term).

Graduate Assistants (GAs, GTAs, and GRAs) must enroll for at least 12 credit hours per semester to be eligible for their assistantship. Students on full assistantship are expected to work an average of 20 hours per week for the assistantship and are considered to be 50 per cent employed. Graduate students on assistantship can enroll for up to 18 credit hours of coursework in academic year semesters and up to 6 credit hours during each summer session.



VirginiaTech®

College of Natural Resources and Environment

QUESTIONS?

Contact CNRE's Advising Center—138 Cheatham Hall

310 West Campus Drive

540-231-5482

Renee Dillon — rldillon@vt.edu

www.cnre.vt.edu
