

**Department of Statistics**

**Graduate Program Handbook**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE DEGREES**

August, 2017

Department of Statistics  
250 Drillfield Dr  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0439

# Preface

The Department of Statistics offers graduate programs leading to the Master of Science degree (with thesis and non-thesis options) and the Doctor of Philosophy degree with five concentrations or “tracks”. The following pages describe specific requirements for each degree. Together with the Graduate Catalogue and the Policies and Procedures Manual of the Graduate School, this information should provide a clear and precise understanding of both university and departmental requirements for graduate degrees in statistics. In those cases where university rules and department policies do not precisely coincide, the more stringent requirements apply.

This manual is available on the Department of Statistics’ web site at

[www.stat.vt.edu/graduate/grad-handbook.pdf](http://www.stat.vt.edu/graduate/grad-handbook.pdf).

# Table of Contents

<b>Checklists of Requirements</b> .....	<b>4</b>	
MS Requirements .....	4	
PhD Requirements .....	4	
<b>Planning the Program</b> .....	<b>5</b>	
Advisory Committee (MS & PhD) .....	5	
Required Courses (MS & PhD) .....	5	
MS Core Courses .....	5	
PhD Core Courses .....	6	
Plan of Study (MS & PhD) .....	7	
General Requirements .....	7	
Masters Requirements .....	7	
Doctoral Requirements .....	7	
Internship in Statistics (Stat 5754) .....	8	
Procedure for the Plan of Study .....	8	
Changing the Plan of Study .....	8	
Transfer Credit (MS & PhD) .....	8	
Financial Support .....	9	
<b>Requirements for Degree Candidacy</b> .....	<b>9</b>	
Qualifying Process (MS & PhD) .....	9	
Format of the Qualifying Examination .....	10	
Results of the Qualifying Process .....	10	
Final Examination (MS, non-thesis option) .....	11	
Eligibility .....	11	
Start of Semester Defense Exception Request .....	12	
Procedure .....	12	
Scheduling the Examination .....	12	
Format of the Examination .....	12	
Possible Results of the Examination .....	12	
Final Examination (MS, thesis option) .....	13	
Format of the Examination .....	13	
Possible Results of the Examination .....	13	
Preliminary Examination (PhD) .....	13	
The Proposal and the Proposal Defense .....	13	
The Proposal .....	14	
Procedure and Format of the Proposal Defense .....	14	
Possible Results of the Proposal Defense .....	14	
Final PhD Oral Examination Guidelines .....	15	
Purpose of the Final Exam .....	15	
Graduate School Policies and Their Interpretation .....	15	
Oral Presentation .....	16	
The Final Exam .....	16	
Guidelines for the Final Exam .....	17	
<b>Additional Requirements</b> .....	<b>17</b>	
Collaboration (MS & PhD) .....	17	17
Internship in Statistics .....	18	
Grade Point Average (MS & PhD) .....	19	
Time Limits (MS & PhD) .....	19	
Revalidation of Course Work .....	19	
Student Awards .....	19	
<b>Appendix</b> .....	<b>21</b>	
Ph. D. Traditional Track .....	21	
Ph. D. Computational Track .....	22	
Ph. D. Bioinformatics Track .....	23	
Ph. D. Industrial Track .....	25	
Ph. D. Environmental Track .....	26	

# Checklists of Requirements

## MS Requirements

To receive the MS degree in statistics the student must:

- Successfully complete the course requirements of 35 credit hours consisting of ten three-hour courses (six MS core courses and four elective courses), stat 5014 (statistical software), stat 5024 (collaboration course), and stat 5984 (special topics). (These requirements are usually completed by the end of the student's third semester).
- Establish an advisory committee (by mid spring semester, first year).
- Complete an approved plan of study (by mid spring semester, first year).
- Pass the qualifying examination at the MS level (given in May after the week of finals, end of first year).
- Participate in statistical collaboration through SAIG (usually in third semester).
  - Prepare a "collaboration project."
- Pass the oral examination (by late fall semester, second year).
- Complete, submit, and have approved Master's thesis (if the thesis option is selected).

## PhD Requirements

To receive the PhD degree in statistics the student must:

- Successfully complete the course requirements of 60 credit hour consisting of 18 three-hour courses (including the six MS core courses and four 6000-level courses), stat 5014 (statistical software), stat 5024 (collaboration course), and two sections of stat 5984 (special topics) (These requirements are usually completed by the end of the student's sixth semester).
- Select an advisory committee.
- Complete an approved plan of study in one of the five doctoral tracks.
- Pass the qualifying process at the PhD level.
- Participate in statistical collaboration for at least three semesters.
- Teach at least one statistics course.
- Prepare a proposal.
- Pass the proposal presentation (the preliminary exam).
- Give an oral presentation of the dissertation topic to the department. In that semester, register for STAT 5924.
- Pass the final examination.
- Complete, submit, and have approved the doctoral dissertation.

The individual components of these checklists are described in the sections that follow.

# Planning the Program

## Advisory Committee (MS & PhD)

The advisory committee serves to approve the plan of study, monitor progress and offer advice as needed. The committee also serves as the examining committee for the final oral examination. For doctoral students, and Master's students electing the thesis option, the committee chairman is the director of the research project for the dissertation/thesis.

Students in the MS program must have an advisory committee of at least three faculty members. Doctoral committees must have at least four faculty members. Technically, the Graduate School upon recommendation of the department head appoints the committee. In practice, the student and the Department's Graduate Committee actually choose the student's MS committee with the student picking the chair of the committee and the Graduate Committee picking the other two members.

The procedure for selecting the MS Advisory Committee is as follows:

The student selects the Chair of their MS Committee. The Chair may or may not be the student's advisor. The Graduate Committee will then select the remaining two members of the MS Committee by a process that will consider variety of faculty areas of expertise regarding the core courses and an equitable distribution of faculty membership on the committees, accounting for faculty members' current service loads. So that this process will proceed in a timely fashion, the Graduate Program Director will set a date by which all MS candidates must have their Committee Chair selected.

For doctoral students, and Master's students electing the thesis option, the student should confer with the committee chairperson (their dissertation advisor) to select those faculty members best able to contribute constructively to the proposed research topic. The student and/or committee chairperson should confer with the Director of Graduate Programs on the availability and appropriateness of members serving on the advisory committee.

The student's temporary advisor (appointed by the department to assist in initial registration) need not be included. The committee chairman must be a full-time resident faculty member.

Timing of committee selection is the same as that for the plan of study, as the committee's first official function is to approve the plan of study. Specifically, Master's students must establish a committee prior to completing 15 semester hours at this university (typically during the spring semester), and PhD students should select a committee prior to completing 15 hours beyond the Master's degree. There is no specific form to complete when selecting a committee; the student should have the Chair of the committee and the Director of Graduate Programs sign the plan of study before it is submitted.

Changes in committee membership can be requested by submitting a form available in the graduate program office, Hutcheson 4056-A.

## Required Courses (MS & PhD)

### MS Core Courses

The following courses are required of all Master's students:

**Fall**           STAT 5034, Inference Fundamentals, 3 hours  
STAT 5044, Regression and ANOVA. 3 hours  
STAT 5104, Probability and Distribution Theory, 3 hours  
STAT 5014, Introduction to Statistical Program Packages, 1 hours, P/F only

**Spring**        STAT 5114, Statistical Inference, 3 hours  
STAT 5124, Linear Models Theory, 3 hours  
STAT 5204, Experimental Design and Analysis I, 3 hours  
STAT 5024, Effective Communication in Statistical Collaboration 3 hour, A-F.

In addition, all Master's students are required to pass one section of Special Topics in Statistics (Stat 5984, 1 hour). Usually, the Special Topics in Statistics course is taken either during the student's first spring semester or during the second fall semester.

Note: The seminar on computing (STAT 5014) may be omitted, at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Programs, for students already proficient with SAS, R, and Latex.

### **PhD Core Courses**

Flexibility is provided to the graduate program through five Ph.D. concentrations or "tracks", which include the Traditional Track, the Computational Track, the Industrial Track, the Bioinformatics Track, and the Environmental Track. The Traditional Track encompasses the general pursuit of research in statistical theory and methods, allowing considerable freedom in choice of coursework within and outside the department. The Computational, Industrial, Bioinformatics, and Environmental Tracks offer more specialized statistical training geared towards applications areas in which the department has particular expertise. In accord with their specialized nature, these four tracks are more stringent in requirements for relevant coursework than the Traditional Track. A thorough description of each of the tracks is given in the Appendix.

Doctoral students, regardless of track, are expected to complete the entire set of MS core courses listed above, unless equivalent courses are approved for transfer credit. All PhD students must complete two sections of Special Topics in Statistics (Stat 5984, 1 hour each).

All PhD students, regardless of track, must take:

**Spring**        STAT 6114, Advanced Topics in Statistical Inference, 3 hours.

All PhD students, regardless of track, are required to take four 6000-level statistics courses from an approved list of courses. These courses, which vary by track, and other requirements for the individual tracks are given at <http://www.stat.vt.edu/students/courses.html#gcourses>.

#### **Note:**

**Oral Presentation (Graduate Seminar) Requirement:** Doctoral students must also register for STAT 5924 (Graduate Seminar, 1 hour, P/F) during the semester in which the oral presentation is delivered.

# Plan of Study (MS & PhD)

The plan of study is a list of all courses that the student plans to take in fulfillment of degree requirements. For doctoral students, the expected date (semester/year) for completing the preliminary examination must also be submitted with the plan of study.

## General Requirements

All courses on the plan of study must be taken on a letter grade (A-F) basis unless they are only offered pass/fail. (Note: Students required to take advanced calculus and/or linear algebra may not include these courses on the plan of study.) Courses on the plan of study may not be audited. Any course on the plan of study (and/or any course in statistics) must be repeated if a grade below "C-" is earned. The overall GPA for all courses on the plan of study must be at least 3.0.

All courses in statistics must be at the graduate level (numbered 5000 and above). A maximum of 3 hours may be taken at the 4000 level if these courses are: (i) outside of statistics, (ii) approved for graduate credit, and (iii) deemed appropriate by the student's advisory committee.

Students must register for STAT 5924 – Graduate Seminar every semester.

Students on assistantship must return to campus one week before the start of classes.

## Masters Requirements

For the Master's degree the plan of study must include at least 34 semester hours, of which at least 31 hours must be in statistics. Students electing the thesis option must include 6 to 10 hours of STAT 5994, Research and Thesis. Students selecting the non-thesis option cannot include Research and Thesis hours on the programs of study. A typical schedule of courses, by semester, is listed in the table below.

**Example Schedule for Typical MS Student**

<b>Fall, first year</b>	<b>Spring, first year</b>	<b>Fall, second year</b>
Stat 5034 3 hrs	Stat 5114 3 hrs	Stat elective 3 hrs
Stat 5044 3 hrs	Stat 5124 3 hrs	Stat elective 3 hrs
Stat 5104 3 hr	Stat 5204 3 hrs	Stat elective 3 hrs
		Stat elective 3 hrs
Stat 5014 1 hr	Stat 5024 3 hr	
<b>Total 10 hrs</b>	<b>Total 12 hrs</b>	<b>Total 12 hrs</b>

## Doctoral Requirements

A plan of study for the doctoral degree requires at least 90 semester hours, including at least 60 hours in actual course work (not research credits), and at least 12 hours of course work in statistics at the 6000 level. The plan must also include 30 to 60 hours of research credits (typically STAT 7994, Research and Dissertation, but, if a Master's thesis was completed at Virginia Tech, then hours earned under STAT 5994 may be included). The course requirement for the Ph. D. is to pass 24 hours above the number of hours required by the M.S. pass plus one hour for a second, required Special Topics course. This means that the number of courses required for the Ph.D. is eight three hour courses above the M.S. degree and one more Special Topics course (for a total of two Special Topics courses). All of these additional eight three hour courses must be graded on the A-F scale. Four of these eight courses must be at the 6000 level (with 6105 and 6114 required for the Traditional Track and only 6114 required for the Bioinformatics or the Environmental or the Industrial or the Computational Tracks). Specific requirements for each track are listed in the Appendix.

## **Internship in Statistics (Stat 5754)**

Students may use the Internship in Statistics course for one of the elective three-hour courses for the MS degree and, under appropriate circumstances, two three-hour electives for the Ph.D. degree. Details concerning this course may be found on page 18 of this document.

## **Procedure for the Plan of Study**

For the MS degree the plan of study must be submitted to the Graduate School prior to completing 15 credit hours at Virginia Tech (typically during the spring semester). For the PhD degree the plan must be submitted prior to completing 15 hours beyond the Master's (for PhD students who have earned the MS in statistics at another institution, this is also typically during the spring semester).

A tentative list of electives to be offered in the summer and in the fall semester of the second year will be distributed during the spring semester.

Each student should first choose an advisor (chairperson of the advisory committee), then plan a tentative plan of study and discuss it with the advisor. After agreement has been reached the student should complete the plan of study form, obtain the signatures of the chair and the Director of Graduate Programs, and return the form to Hutcheson 406A where it will be submitted electronically for Graduate School approval.

## **Changing the Plan of Study**

If necessary, the composition of a student's advisory committee may be changed. Such committee changes should be discussed with the committee chairperson and must be approved by all members of the old committee as well as the new committee. Replacement members of an advisory committee, due to resignations, leaves, and so on, require the approval of each new committee member.

Changes in the courses on a student's plan of study require the approval of each member of the student's advisory committee. It should be noted that once a course on the plan of study has been taken for a grade, it must remain on the plan of study.

Forms for making changes to a student's plan of study are available in the Graduate Program Office, Hutcheson 406-A.

## **Transfer Credit (MS & PhD)**

As many as 15 semester hours (five three-credit courses), obtained at an accredited institution other than Virginia Tech, may be considered for transfer toward the MS degree. The number of credits earned at Virginia Tech that may be transferred toward the MS degree is unlimited, but subject to approval of the Director of Graduate Programs and the student's advisory committee. Transfer credit in the doctoral program is limited to a maximum of 27 semester hours (nine three-credit courses). Only course work can be transferred; research hours cannot be transferred. Transfers credits must correspond to grades of "B" or better, have been earned while a graduate student in good standing, and are acceptable for graduate credit at the "home" institution. Grades of "P" are not acceptable unless the course was offered only on a pass/fail basis. All transfer courses must be acceptable to the student's advisory committee and must have been completed within the prescribed time limits for the degree sought. Transferred courses count only as credit hours and are not included in the calculation of the GPA.

In general, courses will be accepted for transfer by the Department of Statistics if they satisfy the requirements above, are appropriate for a graduate degree in statistics, and were offered at a level of rigor deemed consistent with our own graduate program. The liberal limit for transfer credit at the PhD level usually allows students completing



the Master's degree at another institution to submit for transfer virtually all of the credits earned for course work on the Master's degree. When appropriate, transfer credit may even be substituted for required courses. To show transfer credits on the plan of study the courses are listed on the form with a footnote indicating the institution at which these credits were earned. Credits earned under a quarter system are converted to semester hours by multiplying by  $2/3$ .

## Financial Support

The Department of Statistics strives to provide financial support for graduate students *who are qualified and who continue to make satisfactory progress on their approved degree program*. Judgment of satisfactory progress is based on coursework, performance in assistantship duties, research production, and participation in colloquia and other departmental programs for student enrichment. Additionally, certain forms of financial assistance require specific obligations on the student's part. For example, a graduate student must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours to be eligible for a tuition waiver. Most bank loans require an enrollment of at least 12 credit hours.

The Department of Statistics works within constraints on the amount of funding that can be given to any graduate student. Except in rare cases, the following limitations will apply:

1. A graduate student enrolled to receive a Master's degree in Statistics will be funded (counting all sources of funding) for at most the first three semesters of enrollment.
2. A graduate student enrolled to receive a PhD degree in Statistics will normally be funded up (counting all sources of funding) to the first seven (7) semesters, from all departmental sources, if the student enters the program with a Master's degree in Statistics from an institution other than Virginia Tech. Students who are not finished but are making satisfactory progress may be funded for a final eighth semester at a reduced funding level. Final semester funding will depend on availability.
3. A graduate student enrolled to receive both Master's and PhD degrees in Statistics will normally be funded up (counting all sources of funding) to the first nine (9) semesters, from all departmental sources. Students who are not finished but are making satisfactory progress may be funded for a final tenth semester at a reduced funding level. Final semester funding will depend on availability.

For purposes of the above: (i) funding of a 50% or greater assistantship will be considered "a semester of support", and (ii) funding for summer sessions is not counted because this funding is provided by different administrative units and is more limited in amount. Currently, funding for one summer session each year at 50% to 100% of stipend level is usually available to those graduate students who are funded during the Fall and Spring semesters.

The above limitations on funding should be considered by the student when planning the plan of study, examinations, and so on. To help ensure timely progress, the department encourages regular meetings of students with their advisory committees.

## Requirements for Degree Candidacy

### Qualifying Process (MS & PhD)

The Department of Statistics employs a single qualifying process for both Master's and doctoral students, a major (but not sole; see below) component being the qualifying examination on the MS core courses. The examination is designed to test the student's understanding of the content in the MS core courses and may lead to qualification at either the MS or PhD level. This examination is generally offered twice each year: in May after the week of final exams, and again near the end of the fall semester. Students are required to take the examination the first time it is offered after they complete the core courses, or equivalent course work elsewhere. Thus, Master's students must generally take the examination at the end of the student's first year after the week of final exams in May. Doctoral

students entering with a Master's degree from another university take the examination at the end of their first fall semester or at the end of the student's first year after the week of final exams in May, but no later than two semesters after entering the graduate program. **A student may take the qualifying examination no more than two times.**

Students having taken the basic courses within the department will automatically know the range of topics subject to examination. Students entering the department with advanced standing from another university who do not take the basic courses here are advised to find out the content of these courses as soon as possible. Sources for this information include (i) the professors who have most recently taught the courses or who will teach them during the current year, (ii) department syllabi for these courses, and (iii) class notes from students who have taken the courses. On the basis of this information the student and his or her advisor can determine whether the student should take or audit certain of the basic courses prior to attempting the qualifying examination. The previous examinations from years past are kept in the secretary's office in 406-A and are available to Department of Statistics' students upon request.

### **Format of the Qualifying Examination**

The Qualifying Exam Committee, usually consisting of the professors who taught the MS core courses and the Director of Graduate Programs, will administer the examination. There are three separate four-hour written examinations, each covering two of the MS core courses, as follows:

#### **I. Application of Statistical Theory and Methods (4 hr exam)**

5034 Inference Fundamentals and 5044 Regression and ANOVA

#### **II. Probability Theory and Statistical Inference (4 hr exam)**

5104 Probability and 5114 Inference

#### **III. Linear Models and Design (4 hr exam)**

5124 Linear Models and 5204 Experimental Design I

The time limits indicated are *absolute maximums*. The exams will typically be given on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in a single week. The exam is usually given after the week of final exams in May. The exam is offered again toward the end of fall semester and is usually given in late November or early December, the first week after the Fall Break.

For each part of the exam, students will be required to answer several questions. If the questions are unequal in value, relative weights will be given. In scoring, each of the three parts of the exam will be equal in value. Decisions regarding the MS-level pass will be based on a student's total score. In order to pass at the PhD level, however, a student must produce both a high total score and satisfactory scores in each of the three parts of the Qualifying Examination.

Each student will receive a letter from the Director of Graduate Programs indicating the result earned on the examination, and the level of qualification. Any student desiring to take the exam a second time, and final time, must take the entire exam, even if the first exam was only unsatisfactory in a single area.

### **Results of the Qualifying Process**

The final decision of the Qualifying Process will be determined from a combination of inputs, including

- a. the results of the qualifying examinations of the MS core courses (this will be the major input),
- b. performance in coursework
- c. performance in assistantship duties

- d. attendance of colloquia and other departmental programs for student enrichment
- e. an assessment by the faculty on the potential to do creative research necessary to complete a doctoral dissertation.

Inputs (b), (c), and (d) are listed to indicate that information in addition to the results of qualifying examinations may be used by the faculty in arriving at the final decision in the Qualifying Process. It is anticipated that in most cases, the results of only the qualifying examinations will be sufficient to make the decision. When the results of the qualifying examinations do not lead to a clear-cut decision, additional inputs (such as those listed in (b), (c), (d), and perhaps others) will be used, in individual cases, to arrive at the final decision.

The possible decisions of the Qualifying Process are:

1. The student has passed at the PhD qualifying level and is therefore qualified to proceed towards a doctoral degree. If the student is a candidate for a Master's degree, he or she is also eligible to take the Master's final examination.
2. The student has passed at the PhD qualifying level subject to a specified condition, which must be removed within the timeframe specified if the doctoral degree is sought. Such a condition will usually be remedial course work, or reading assignments evaluated by his or her advisor. If the student is a candidate for a Master's degree, he or she is, without condition, eligible to take the Master's final examination. (This decision will be rendered only rarely.)
3. The student has passed at the Master's qualifying level and may take the Master's final examination. He or she may also repeat the qualifying examination in an attempt to qualify at the PhD level. The letter from the Director of Graduate Programs will indicate areas that need improvement, and the faculty recommendation on whether or not the student should attempt the examination again. Except in extenuating circumstances, a student must have a GPA of 3.5 or better to repeat the qualifying examination for a PhD qualifying pass.
4. The student has passed at the Master's qualifying level, subject to a specified condition which must be removed before taking the Master's final examination. Such a condition will usually consist of reading assignments evaluated by his or her advisor. Except for this condition, (3) above applies. (This decision will be rendered only rarely.)
5. The student has failed at the Master's qualifying level. The letter from the Director of Graduate Programs will indicate areas that need improvement, and the faculty recommendation on whether or not the student should attempt the examination again.

**Note: A student may take the qualifying examination no more than two times.**

## **Final Examination (MS, non-thesis option)**

The final examination represents the last requirement for the MS degree in statistics under the non-thesis option.

### **Eligibility**

Qualifying at the MS level (or higher) is a prerequisite for this examination. The examination must be scheduled after the second half of the semester in which all course requirements (according to the plan of study) will be completed. In general, students must be registered for at least 3 hours during the term in which the final examination is administered. An exception is made under certain circumstances: see "Start of Semester Defense Exception Request Enrollment."

## Start of Semester Defense Exception Request Enrollment

Start of Semester Defense Exception Request (SSDER) enrollment, formerly referred to as Defending Student Status enrollment, is available to those graduate students who have fulfilled all course and residency requirements and have completed all requirements for the thesis or dissertation except for the final defense. Eligible students may not hold an assistantship. Minimum registration is for 1 hour and the defense must occur within the first 15 class days of the term. Eligibility for SSDER may be found at

[http://graduateschool.vt.edu/forms/academics/Start\\_Semester\\_Defense\\_Exception.pdf](http://graduateschool.vt.edu/forms/academics/Start_Semester_Defense_Exception.pdf)

Prior to the beginning of the term in which the defense is to occur, defending students must complete an eligibility certification form and return it to the Graduate School Programs and Clearances Office. The form is available at [http://graduateschool.vt.edu/forms/academics/Start\\_Semester\\_Defense\\_Exception.pdf](http://graduateschool.vt.edu/forms/academics/Start_Semester_Defense_Exception.pdf). The cost associated with of SSDER may be found at [http://www.bursar.vt.edu/students\\_parents/defending\\_status.php](http://www.bursar.vt.edu/students_parents/defending_status.php).

## Scheduling the Examination

Scheduling the examination is the responsibility of the candidate. A time must be chosen agreeable to the members of the examining committee (which is generally the same as the advisory committee) and at a time when the department Conference Room is available. The student must then request permission, via the internet, to take the examination from the Graduate School. **This request must be made at least two weeks before the examination date.** The Department of Statistics' Graduate Secretary should be contacted for details concerning this request.

## Format of the Examination

This is an oral examination in which the candidate is expected to demonstrate a general proficiency in statistics at the Master's level, including the ability to communicate knowledge orally. The candidate is responsible for material related to all courses taken, including those in current term.

Faculty will be invited and may attend and participate in the examination, but the result will be determined by vote of the examining committee only.

## Possible Results of the Examination

The candidate may pass or fail the examination, according to the majority vote of the examining committee.

If the result is a pass, the Master's degree will be conferred upon completion of any outstanding course work, and satisfaction of all Graduate School requirements.

If the result is a fail, the candidate may elect to repeat the examination after 15 weeks have elapsed, as required by Graduate School policy. **The oral examination may be repeated only one time.**

The *Policies and Procedures* manual should be consulted for details of Graduate School requirements.

## Final Examination (MS, thesis option)

With the exception of submitting the approved thesis to the Graduate School, the final examination is the last requirement for the MS degree in statistics under the thesis option. Qualifying at the MS level (or higher) is a prerequisite for this examination.

Scheduling of the examination is the responsibility of the candidate and must follow the same procedures and requirements as for the non-thesis option. In addition, a typed copy of the thesis must be delivered to each member of the advisory committee at least two weeks prior to the examination date.

### **Format of the Examination**

The candidate will be given not more than thirty minutes to present the highlights of his or her thesis. The floor will then be opened for questions by the advisory committee which acts as the examining committee. Questions will relate to the thesis either as presented or as it appears in writing.

Faculty will be invited and may attend and participate in this examination, but the result will be determined by majority vote of the examining committee only.

### **Possible Results of the Examination**

1. The candidate has passed the examination and the thesis is approved.
2. The candidate has passed the examination and the thesis is approved subject to revisions. In this event the cover page of the thesis will not be signed until the revisions are completed.
3. The candidate has failed the examination. This may occur for two reasons:
  - a. Although the thesis is satisfactory the candidate has failed to demonstrate adequate understanding of the work contained therein. The examination may be repeated one time, using the same thesis, but after a period of no less than 15 weeks.
  - b. The thesis itself is inadequate. The candidate will be informed how the thesis may be made adequate and may repeat the examination one time, after a period of no less than 15 weeks.

The Policies and Procedures manual should be consulted for details of Graduate School requirements.

## **Preliminary Examination (PhD)**

### **The Proposal and the Proposal Presentation**

As set forth in the Graduate Catalog, each PhD student is required to take a preliminary examination to evaluate their progress in the chosen field of study, i.e. to evaluate their knowledge in advanced areas of probability and statistics and preparation for research toward a dissertation.

The Department of Statistics administers this examination through the dissertation proposal and the proposal presentation.

## **The Proposal**

The dissertation proposal presents the student's proposed dissertation topic. The proposal should contain a thorough literature review of related methods with discussion of their advantages and disadvantages, and a presentation of the student's proposed methodology and theory with methods for their evaluation. The student is expected to demonstrate excellent technical writing skills in the preparation of this document. A poorly written proposal can be cause for failure regardless of technical excellence.

The student is strongly encouraged to seek advice from their dissertation advisor on the proper format for a proposal. The student is also encouraged to examine previous successful proposals as examples.

Upon approval of the proposal by the dissertation advisor, the student may schedule the proposal defense.

## **Procedure and Format of the Proposal Presentation**

The proposal presentation (called the Oral Preliminary Examination by the Graduate School, a requirement for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree) is taken only after the student has received approval of the proposal by the dissertation advisor. The dissertation advisory committee acts as the examining committee.

Scheduling of the presentation is the responsibility of the student. A time agreeable to the members of the advisory committee must be chosen and the Graduate School must be notified at least 14 days in advance. Requesting the date is accomplished by using the Electronic Signature System (<https://gradexam.stl.vt.edu/pages/login.php>).

The candidate will be given not more than fifty minutes to present the highlights of their proposal. The floor will then be open for questions by the examining committee. Although emphasizing questions related to the student's proposal, the examination may also include questions of a more general statistical nature.

## **Possible Results of the Proposal Presentation**

The student will pass or fail the proposal defense according to the vote of the examining committee. In order to pass, a candidate is allowed at most one negative (unsatisfactory) vote.

If the result is a pass the student will proceed with work on their dissertation and, at the appropriate time, schedule the oral presentation and final defense (see below).

If the result is fail, the student may elect to repeat the proposal defense one time, after a period of no less than one full semester (15 weeks).

The *Policies and Procedures* manual of the Graduate School should be consulted for details of Graduate School requirements.

# Final PhD Oral Examination Guidelines

## Preamble

The Final Oral Exam is a formal part of all PhD programs at Virginia Tech. Students **must** read the “Examinations” section of the on-line Graduate School Policies and Procedures found at:

[http://www.grads.vt.edu/graduate\\_catalog/poli/UIPo.jsp](http://www.grads.vt.edu/graduate_catalog/poli/UIPo.jsp)

## Purpose of the Final Exam

The purpose of the Final Exam is to determine whether a student demonstrates intellectual and professional aptitudes consistent with individuals who already hold a PhD degree in Statistics. The courses listed on the student’s Plan of Study provide the educational foundation for the degree, while the Dissertation describes the student’s research accomplishments in a scholarly context. In the Final Exam, the Advisory Committee assesses the originality, correctness, and importance of the dissertation, as well as the student’s ability to communicate those findings and to grasp their significance. The oral exam format allows these qualities to be assessed through direct, interactive questioning.

## Graduate School Policies and Their Interpretation

Enrollment. A Final Exam can only be held during a term in which the student is enrolled. With prior permission from the Graduate School, Final Exams may be held during Exam Week. Students who do not wish to enroll for the minimum 3 credits merely to hold the Final Exam should consult the Graduate Catalog section that describes “Defending Student Status” (DSS). The DSS policy allows a student to be registered for (and to pay for) only one credit hour, even during a summer session, providing certain conditions are met.

Scheduling the Final Exam. Ph.D. students must have the dissertation ready for defense (as judged by Advisory Committee members having read the document and signed the examination scheduling request) and the student must be able to complete all other degree requirements within the semester when the examination is held: all coursework on the Plan of Study will need to be completed with grades of C- or higher and both the Plan of Study GPA and the overall GPA must be a 3.0 or higher by the end of the semester. Because problems with deficient grades or credits may require retaking courses or adding credits, the Plan of Study should be examined at the beginning of the semester in which a student plans to take the Final Examination.

Two Week Rule. The Graduate School requires that the student request a Final Examination date no later than two weeks before the requested exam date. Requesting the date is accomplished by using the Electronic Signature System (<https://gradexam.stl.vt.edu/>). There are no exceptions to this two week rule.

Upon validation of the Final Exam date, the Graduate School will issue by campus email a Final Exam notification listing the date and time of the Final Exam to the student and all Advisory Committee members..

Unscheduled Exams. The Final Exam may *not* be conducted if the student’s Advisory Committee has not received notification from the Graduate School that the exam has been scheduled. *There are no exceptions to this policy.*

Latest Possible Proposal Presentation. Graduate School policy requires that students pass their Proposal Presentation (referred to by the Graduate School as the Preliminary Exam) at least six months before the Final Exam. Students need to plan their Proposal Presentation carefully to avoid violation of this policy.

Committee Attendance. Graduate School policy requires that the Advisory Committee be comprised of no fewer than four professors. These are the professors that will use the Electronic Signature System (<https://gradexam.stl.vt.edu/>) to grade the student’s Final Exam performance as satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Professors Must Review the Dissertation. Before requesting a Final Exam date using the Electronic Signature System, all members of the Advisory Committee will have read the dissertation and found it

ready for defense. This implies that those professors have had adequate time to review the dissertation. See “Deadline Recommendations” below. Note well: The Advisory Committee, by agreeing to meet for the Final Exam, are not certifying the originality, correctness, or importance of the work; rather, they are acknowledging that the document is readable and consistent, and thus ready to defend.

### **Oral Presentation (PhD)**

Prior to the Final Exam the student must give a colloquium presentation of the dissertation topic. This should be scheduled as part of the Department’s regular colloquium series, if possible. The purpose of the presentation is to inform the faculty and students in the department and to prepare the doctoral candidate for the colloquium generally required as part of most job interviews. The presentation is open to all faculty and students. The oral presentation may immediately precede the Final Exam. It is strongly recommended that each student, in consultation with his or her advisor, schedule the oral presentation prior to any actual job interviews.

The student must register for STAT 5924, Graduate Seminar for 1 hour, P/F, during the term in which he/she makes the Oral Presentation. The Advisory Committee makes evaluation of this presentation and the result (either pass or fail) is assigned as the grade for STAT 5924.

Upon passing the oral presentation and completion of the dissertation the student is free to schedule the Final Exam following the guidelines as set below.

### **The Final Exam (PhD)**

Time Allotted for Exam. It is not uncommon for an exam to last three hours. It is recommended that rooms be reserved for that length of time.

Deadline Recommendations. Meeting the Two Week Rule can require considerable lead time. Though individual circumstances may vary, most candidates should plan for a timeline at least as lengthy as that described next. A student planning to take the Final Exam in a given semester should give their Advisor (Chair of the Advisory Committee) a substantially complete document a minimum of **eight weeks prior to the desired Final Exam date**. The eight weeks allow for:

- Two weeks for the student’s Advisor to read/review the document.
- Two weeks for the student to make the changes suggested by the Advisor.
- Two weeks for Advisory Committee members to read the dissertation after the Advisor and student agree that it is ready to move forward.
- Two weeks advance notice is required by the Graduate School for scheduling the exam. The Final Exam cannot be scheduled until all members of the Advisory Committee have read the dissertation and agreed that it is ready to defend.

Thus, students should give a nearly completed version of the dissertation to the Advisor eight weeks prior to the desired exam date and should give their *final* dissertation version to their Advisory Committee members **at least four weeks** before the planned exam date. There is, however, no guarantee that the intended exam date can be achieved; should your committee members encounter problems with the dissertation, further time may be required. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the student’s Advisory Committee to carefully review and critique the dissertation before it is submitted to the Advisory Committee.

It is highly recommended that PhD students working on their dissertations meet on a regular basis with their Advisor (perhaps weekly) and with their Advisory Committee (perhaps once per semester) to present progress toward completion, discuss new developments, and discuss issues yet to be addressed. If such meetings are regularly held and dissertation chapters reviewed carefully by the Advisor as they are completed, it is possible to reduce the later time required to critically review the dissertation.



## Guidelines for the Final Exam

Exam Coverage. The Final Exam is based primarily on the dissertation. However the Final Exam is comprehensive, and questions of a general nature are permissible.

Refreshments. Students should *not* bring refreshments to their exams.

PowerPoint. Students should prepare their presentations in presentation software such as PowerPoint or LaTeX Beamer or similar software. The student's goal should be to summarize their main accomplishments and highlight technical details, assuming that their professors have already become acquainted with the literature background from the written document. The presentation should not be a repeat of a departmental or general seminar, because the audience is not a general audience. The audience is a committee of accomplished scholars who will want to know if the student has grasped the full significance of their findings and has critically evaluated the potential weaknesses of their own work.

Room Scheduling. Schedule the Conference Room by signing up for the room using the Google calendar under the email address [Hutch406Avt@gmail.com](mailto:Hutch406Avt@gmail.com) . The required password may be obtained from the department's Head Secretary.

Reminding the Committee. Students should send an email reminder to their Advisory Committee members the day before the Final Exam.

Executing the Exam. All graduate examinations are open to the faculty and faculty members are encouraged to attend and participate in such meetings. The student's presentation, should consume about 45 minutes, excluding interruptions for questions. The student should expect questions during the presentation and additional questions (including any comprehensive questions) following the presentation, for whatever time the Committee deems appropriate. The Committee will then convene privately (the student and any other parties present but not on the Committee will exit the room) to determine the result of the exam, after which they will convey the result to the student and use the Electronic Signature System (<https://gradexam.stl.vt.edu/pages/login.php>) to indicate the student's Final Exam performance as satisfactory or unsatisfactory within 24 hours of the Final Exam.

To pass the Final Exam, the student is allowed at most one Unsatisfactory vote. If a student fails this exam, one full semester (a minimum of 15 weeks) must elapse before the second examination is scheduled. No more than two opportunities to pass the PhD Final Exam are allowed. A student failing to pass the PhD Final Exam two times will be dismissed from graduate studies by the Graduate School.

## Additional Requirements

### Statistical Collaboration (MS & PhD)

Whether they work in government, industry or academia, graduates of statistics programs are invariably asked to participate in some form of statistical collaboration as a portion of their job responsibilities. Thus the department requires all graduate students to participate in collaboration projects through the Statistical Applications and Innovations Group (SAIG). Employers of previous graduates have remarked that such collaboration experience is an invaluable feature of our graduate program.

Masters students must participate for one semester in statistical collaboration activities and doctoral students for three semesters.

The collaboration requirement is liberally interpreted in two respects. First, comparable specialized activity, such as work on certain research projects, may be considered the professional equivalent of the collaboration experience. Second, the amount of time, which must be devoted to collaboration in any particular term, is unspecified. In

general, graduate assistants may assume that the collaboration requirement will be satisfied if they conscientiously complete their assigned duties. Graduate students not on university support will specifically be asked to participate in appropriate collaboration projects, generally requiring approximately five hours per week of collaboration activity.

Each semester of participation in SAIG is completed by the student after their “collaboration project” has been evaluated and approved by the Director of SAIG. The collaboration project may, for example, be a summary of several smaller projects involving the student during the semester or a more detailed report of a more substantial project.

## **Internship in Statistics**

The Internship in Statistics course (stat 5754) is a variable credit (from 1 to 3 hours) course, to be taken by statistics students who intern at an appropriate company or government agency performing statistical analysis under supervision of a corporate, or government, affiliate faculty member. The Internship in Statistics course may also be taken by students working on an approved data-based grant project in another department on campus or on an interdisciplinary grant project involving statistics and another department on campus. In this case, the affiliate faculty member will be the student’s supervisor on the project. This will be an optional course that may be taken for credit once by undergraduate or masters students, and twice by doctoral students.

The course will be graded on the A-F scale, where grades are assigned on the basis of an evaluation of the work performed on the job, a written report, and a seminar. The affiliate faculty supervisor will make the evaluation of job performance. The written report and the seminar will provide a detailed, technical presentation of at least one project completed during the internship. Both the written report and the seminar will be presented to the corporation, or government agency or other department, (evaluated by the affiliate faculty member) and to the Department of Statistics at Virginia Tech (evaluated by the student’s internship mentor, a faculty member in the department who has agreed, at the request of the student, to evaluate the student’s oral presentation and written report); the seminar will be scheduled in the outreach series. The written report must be approved by the internship mentor prior to presentation of either seminar. The final grade will be a combination of these two evaluations determined by the student’s internship mentor.

The written report and the seminar must be presented within the first month of the completion of the internship. Typically, this will be in the semester immediately following completion of internship responsibilities. Students will register for this Internship Course in the term when they submit their written report and present their seminar, not during the period of internship.

It is envisioned that the internship course can be applied in a variety of ways. For example, an undergraduate student might intern prior to his or her junior or senior years. A student with a B.S. degree in statistics can intern prior to the beginning of the M.S. program. A graduate student could intern after the first year of courses in the M.S. program. A Ph. D. student could intern several times.

For the M.S. student, one intern course will count up to three hours toward the 35 hours required for the M.S. degree. For the Ph.D. student, up to six hours of intern credit may be counted towards the doctorate. In this case, the two sets of hours for intern credit must occur in separate semesters. With these restrictions, the department is not limiting the amount of time a student may work as an intern, but limiting the number of credits of intern work that may be counted toward a degree.

Full credit for the internship is considered to be one credit hour for each month of full-time intern experience or equivalent. A summer internship is worth up to three credits. Similarly, a seven-month internship (from January to August, for example) is worth up to six credits. To receive full credit on the basis of time, it is expected that a B. S. student perform B. S. level statistics while working as an intern and an M. S. student and a Ph. D. student perform graduate level work. The required report and seminar should reflect the level of work performed by the student during the internship. If the internship is structured with a corporate faculty affiliate, who monitors the work, insuring that the internship is a true learning experience for the student and proper oral and written presentations are

satisfactory, then it is reasonable to give the full credit based on time. Otherwise, less than full credit may be given. For example, a Ph. D. student who only performs routine data analysis using SAS will likely receive less than full credit even if these tasks were performed in a highly satisfactory manner.

It is the student's responsibility to find a faculty sponsor for the internship who will serve as advisor and mentor throughout. The student must convince his or her mentor of the suitability of the proposal internship prior to its inception, and of the appropriateness of the work accomplished at the internship's completion. Regular communication with the faculty mentor is expected.

The Internship Course should be approved by the student's advisor and the affiliate faculty member, both in terms of the expected number of credits and the expected level of work required by the intern, prior to the internship. The actual number of credits earned for the intern experience may be higher or lower than the expected amount, depending on the actual work performed during the internship.

### **Grade Point Average (MS & PhD)**

Students should be alerted to the fact that the Graduate School requires each graduate student to maintain a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 for all courses on the plan of study and for all courses taken as a graduate student. Any course on the plan of study (and/or any course in statistics) must be repeated if a grade below "C" is earned. Students whose overall GPA falls below 3.0 are not eligible for assistantships.

### **Time Limits (MS & PhD)**

According to Graduate School rules, all requirements for the MS degree must be completed within 5 years, for the PhD degree within 7 years. These limits apply to transfer credit as well as to credits earned at Virginia Tech.

### **Revalidation of Course Work**

Coursework that was taken outside of the time limits can be revalidated. The responsibility for revalidation lies with the student's advisory committee and the department. Revalidation is sometimes accomplished by means of an oral or written examination given by the advisory committee.

The committee may elect to incorporate the revalidation examination within the written qualifying examination or the oral final examination for the M.S. degree or within the oral preliminary examination for the Ph.D. degree, for example.

### **Student Awards**

Our graduate students play a major role in helping the Department of Statistics make worthwhile and valuable contributions to the three areas of research, teaching, and service. The quality of the department depends greatly on the quality of our graduate students.

To help express appreciation for our graduate students' contributions to the department's success, seven graduate student awards are offered annually.

With these awards comes a certificate and the recipient's name is placed on a plaque, which is displayed outside the main office door. Additionally, the first five awards listed below include a sizable financial gift while the other two awards include a book of the recipients' choice.

The **Jean Dickenson Gibbons Statistics Award** is given annually to the outstanding new PhD candidate in statistics. Dr. Gibbons received her PhD from our department in 1962 and had an illustrious career as a professor of statistics. The **Raymond H. Myers Award** is given annually to the most outstanding student in the area of

design of experiments and linear models. Dr. Myers was a long-time member of our department with an international reputation in response surface methodology. The **Rose Costain Award** is given annually to the graduate student who exhibits outstanding citizenship in the department. Mrs. Costain worked in the department of 17 years in various administrative duties including assistant to the Graduate Administrator and editorial assistant for several journals. The **Boyd Harshbarger Award** is given annually for superior academic performance by a first year graduate student. The award is named after our department's founder and first department head. The **John Bartko Ph.D. '62 Award** is given annually for outstanding collaboration/consulting by a graduate student. Dr. Bartko received his PhD from our department in 1962 and had an illustrious career at the National Institutes of Health National Institute of Mental Health. The **Jesse C. Arnold Award** is given annually for outstanding teaching by a graduate teaching assistant. Dr. Arnold was our department's second department head. The **Klaus Hinkelmann Award** is given annually for outstanding service by a graduate student to the department. Dr. Hinkelmann was our department's third department head.

The awards are presented at the annual Corporate Partner Dinner during the Corporate Partner Conference.

# APPENDIX

Sixty credits of coursework are required for all PhD tracks in the Department of Statistics. These hours can be partitioned as follows:

- nine statistics courses taken by all PhD students (STAT 5014 (1 credit), 5024 (3), 5034 (3), 5044 (3), 5104 (3), 5114(3), 5124 (3), 5204 (3) and 6114 (3)) for a total of 25 credits;
- two special topics courses (STAT 5984 (1)) for a total of 2 credits;
- three 3-credit 6000 level statistics courses for a total of 9 credits; and
- eight other elective 3-credit STAT courses taken from either the 5000-level or the 6000 level list of available courses for a total of 24 credits (some of these elective courses may be from outside the Department of Statistics, provided they are approved by the student's PhD Advisory Committee. See the following information specific to each track to see a list of approved courses.).

Given a typical course load of three to four courses per semester, it is expected that PhD students complete their course requirements within five to six semesters of study.

## Ph.D. Traditional Track

The traditional track is designed to provide maximum flexibility for students wishing to design a particular course of study that does not fit within the framework of the four specialized tracks. As such, it is very important that the student, in conjunction with his/her advisor and the advisory committee, plan carefully a plan of study that provides a coherent set of courses supporting his/her career goals and objectives. By deliberating carefully and choosing wisely the student will construct a program that will serve him/her well for their entire professional career.

### Goals:

- (1) To give the graduates of this program a widely based knowledge of the methods and theory of statistical science, preparing them to enter an academic environment or an applications-based field of their choosing.
- (2) To train academic and nonacademic research statisticians who can not only manage and interpret data from a wide variety of sources, but who can develop new methodologies for novel situations.

### Program requirements:

While meeting the general course requirements for the PhD in statistics (as stated at the beginning of the Appendix), PhD students in the Traditional Track are required to take STAT 6105 (Measure and Probability) as one of the three elective 6000-level courses.

## Ph.D. Track in Computational Statistics

Modern statistical techniques tend to be highly algorithmically and computationally oriented. Abilities in numerical methods, computer programming, and algorithm construction and utilization are essential for the contemporary statistician. The Computational Track for the PhD allows the student to specialize in these abilities and to prepare for a research career in computational statistics.

### Goals:

- (1) To give graduates of this program the fundamentals of modern statistical computational theory, methods and techniques.
- (2) To train students capable of developing new theory, methods, and techniques in computational statistics.

### Program requirements:

While meeting the general course requirements for the PhD in statistics, the student in the Computational Track will have taken all of the following computationally oriented courses:

STAT 5304: Statistical Computing  
STAT 5314: Advanced Monte Carlo Methods  
STAT 5444: Bayesian Statistics  
STAT 5505: Data Analytics I  
STAT 5506: Data Analytics II  
STAT 6124: Stochastic Modeling and Inference

The **topic(s) of the dissertation** must be related to the Computational Track and must be approved by the student's dissertation committee.

## Ph.D. Track in Bioinformatics

### Goals:

- (1) To give the graduates of this program an adequate knowledge of statistical, computational and experimental methods, techniques and tools for the design and analysis of biological ‘omics’ (genomics, proteomics, metabolomics, phenomics) experiments, so that they may have successful academic careers in research institutions and universities or successful technical careers in industry.
- (2) To train academic and industrial research statisticians who can manage and interpret biological ‘omics’ data and who can work with scientists from various disciplines related to genetics, bioinformatics and biology.

### Program Requirements:

While meeting the general course requirements for the PhD in statistics, the student in the Bioinformatics Track will have taken all of the following courses:

STAT 5504 Multivariate Statistical Methods  
STAT 5444 Bayesian Statistics  
STAT 5564 Statistical Genetics  
GBCB 5314 Paradigms for Bioinformatics  
CSES 5844 Plant Genomics  
GBCB 5004 Seminar in Genetics, Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (1credit)

In the case where not all of these courses can be offered, the Director of Graduate Programs in Statistics can grant dispensation for substitute courses. In the first year, students in this track are required to take all the M.S. core courses in statistics plus two more bioinformatics core courses (these can be taken later for students coming into the program with a M.S. degree obtained elsewhere).

Additionally, students will take two courses from the following list of courses, taken with consent from their advisor:

- [CS 5114: Theory of Algorithms](#)
- [CS 5124: Algorithms in Bioinformatics](#)
- CS/Math 5485: Numerical Analysis and Software
- CS/Math 5486: Numerical Analysis and Software
- CS 5614: Database Management Systems
- CS 5804: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence
- CS 6104: Algorithms in Structural Bioinformatics
- CS 6104: Systems Biology and Drug Discovery
- CS 6604: Data Mining
- Math 5515/16: Continuous / Discrete Mathematical Models

Two different, suitable courses can be chosen with approval from the advisor.

Lastly, students in the Bioinformatics Track are required to take three 6000-level courses in statistics in addition to STAT 6114 (Advanced Inference). The remaining three courses can currently be chosen, with consent from the advisor, from the following courses: STAT 6424 (Multivariate Statistical Analysis), STAT 6514 (Advanced Topics in Regression), STAT 6494 (Advanced Bayesian Statistics), STAT 6504 (Experimental Design and Analysis), STAT 6404 (Advanced Topics in Nonparametric Statistics), STAT 6414 (Time Series Analysis II), STAT 6105 (Measure and Probability).

Students in the Bioinformatics Track will be required to take only one section of Stat 5984 (Special Topics in Statistics) instead of two.

The **topic(s) of the dissertation** must be related to the Bioinformatics track and must be approved by the dissertation committee members. The committee should consist of five faculty members including at least one member from outside of the Department of Statistics with expertise in genetics, bioinformatics and computational biology.



## Ph.D. Track in Industrial Statistics

### Goals:

- (1) To give the graduates of this program an appropriate combination of statistical and industrial systems backgrounds so that they may have successful technical careers in industry or successful academic careers doing research in industrial statistics
- (2) To train academic industrial statisticians who can serve as better bridges between the academic and corporate worlds.

### Program requirements:

While meeting the general course requirements for the PhD in statistics, the student in the Industrial Track will have taken all of the following courses:

STAT 5474 Statistical Quality Control  
STAT 5574 Response Surface Methodology I  
STAT 6504 Experimental Design and Analysis II  
STAT 6574 Response Surface Methodology II  
STAT 6494 Statistical Quality Control II

Additionally, students are required to take three 5000-level courses in the Department of Industrial & Systems Engineering from the following list of courses, taken with consent from their advisor:

ISE 5015-5016 Management of Change, Innovation, and Performance in Organizational Systems  
ISE 5124 Management of Quality & Reliability  
ISE 5134 Management Information Systems  
ISE 5204 Manufacturing Systems Engineering  
ISE 5405-5406 Optimization  
ISE 5424 Simulation  
ISE 5434 Economic Evaluation of Industrial Projects

Three different, suitable ISE courses can be chosen with approval from the advisor.

Upon completion of the M.S., or possibly later depending on the year of entry into the program, students are strongly encouraged to enter an extended internship program with one of the department's corporate partners.

The **topic(s) of the dissertation** must be in the area of industrial statistics and approved by the student's committee.

## Ph.D. Track in Environmental Statistics

### Goals:

(1) To give the graduates of this program an appropriate combination of statistical and environmental systems backgrounds so that they may have successful technical careers in environmental organizations and companies or successful academic careers doing research in environmental statistics

(2) To train academic environmental statisticians who can serve as better bridges between the academic and corporate worlds.

### Program requirements:

While meeting the general course requirements for the PhD in statistics, the student in the Environmental Track will have taken all of the following courses:

STAT 5304 Statistical Computing  
STAT 5504 Multivariate Statistical Methods  
STAT 5444 Bayesian Statistics  
STAT [5544 Spatial Statistics](#)  
STAT 5414 Time Series Analysis I

Students in the Environmental Track are required to take three 6000-level courses in statistics in addition to STAT 6114 (Advanced Inference). The remaining three courses can currently be chosen, with consent from the advisor, from the following courses: STAT 6424 (Multivariate Statistical Analysis), STAT 6514 (Advanced Topics in Regression), STAT 6494 (Advanced Bayesian Statistics), STAT 6504 (Experimental Design and Analysis II), STAT 6404 (Advanced Topics in Nonparametric Statistics), STAT 6414 (Time Series Analysis II).

Also, the student will be expected to complete advanced course work in appropriate areas of concentration, to be chosen by the student in conjunction with his advisory committee. Thus, as an additional requirement, students are required to take three 5000-level courses in the electives from partnering departments.

Possible courses are listed below.

### Graduate Courses in Environmental Studies from different departments:

Courses that may be used to satisfy requirements

#### Biology

5024: Population & Community Ecology  
5034: Ecosystem Dynamics  
5044: Aquatic Ecotoxicology  
5054: Hazard Evaluation Of Toxic Chemicals

#### Civil Engineering

5104: Environmental Chemistry  
5714: Surface Water Quality Modeling  
5184: Techniques For Environmental Analysis  
5194: Environmental Engineering Microbiology  
5204: Gis Applications In Civil Engineering  
5214: Analysis Of Imaging Systems  
5224: Adv. Gis Applications In Civil & Environmental Engr.

5324: Advanced Hydrology  
5334: Analysis Of Water Resources Systems  
5344: Environmental Systems Optimization  
5354 (Geol 5814): Numerical Modeling of Groundwater  
5364: Water Law

### **Biochemistry**

4204: Biochemical Toxicology  
5124: Probability Models In Agricultural Engineering  
5144 (Cee 5064): Knowledge-Based Expert Systems  
5304: Nonpoint Source Poll  
5354: Nonpoint Source Pollution Modeling  
4144: Biological Systems Simulation  
4304: Nonpoint Source Pollution Modeling & Management

### **Crop Soil And Environmental Science**

5634: Soil Chemistry  
5694 (Biol 5694): Soil Biochemistry  
4134: Soil Genesis & Classification  
4734 (Ensc 4734): Environmental Soil Chemistry

### **Entomology**

4354 (Biol 4354): Aquatic Entomology  
6164: Insecticide Toxicology  
6254: Population Modeling Of Insect Systems

### **Fisheries**

5214: Wildlife Population & Habitat Analysis  
5224: Wildlife Population Dynamics  
5734: Fisheries & Wildlife Planning  
5514: Fish Population Dynamics & Modeling  
5624: Fish Health

### **Forestry**

5104 (Geog 5104): Seminar In Remote Sensing & Geographic Information Systems  
5214: Advanced Forest Inventory  
5224: Forest Biometry  
5254: Remote Sensing Of Natural Resources

### **Geography**

5034: Analysis Of Spatial Data  
5104 (For 5104): Seminar In Remote Sensing & Geographic Information Systems  
5314: Advanced Spatial Analysis In Geographic Information Systems